

# The odyssey, an epic

[Literature](#), [Poem](#)



One Tough Trooper Homer's *Odyssey* has been shared for thousands of years, and its chief characteristics continue to shape epic storytelling. For example, its influence on films as old as *Lawrence of Arabia* and as recent as *Oh, Brother, Where Art Tho?* is obvious. Both feature heroic main characters who are tested by formidable challenges during their travels, as is Odysseus in Homer's enduring saga. In fact, the *Odyssey* is a template for the epic as defined by M. H. Abrams who suggests that the form's primary characteristics include a hero "of great national or even cosmic importance" (49), a vast setting, "worldwide or even larger" (50), and active participation of "the gods and other supernatural beings" (50) - characteristics all present in the *Odyssey*. Measured by these criteria, Homer's classic tale certainly qualifies as an epic: Odysseus, King of Ithaca and hero of the Trojan War, sails boldly around the Mediterranean on a difficult ten-year voyage, escapes from several perilous encounters, and reclaims his home after he acknowledges the powerful influence of the gods in the lives of mortal men. Like the protagonists of many other epics, Odysseus, the King of Ithaca, is both nationally and historically significant, a reputation he earned for his earlier exploits during the Trojan War. Being nationally and historically significant is a very huge deal because even if people may not know Odysseus is or what exactly what *The Odyssey* is about many people have heard either name at least once in their lifetime. Odysseus is a man with quite an inquiring mind. "ADD 2 QUOTES ABOUT ATHENA STATING HE IS WISE" Of course, the regard for his commendable attributes increases because he makes it back despite odds that would probably destroy a lesser man. Another characteristic that qualifies the *Odyssey* as an epic is its grand

scope, the broad region of the Mediterranean Sea over which Homer's protagonist wanders for ten long years. Odysseus is a man of bravery and also a top-notch athlete and it is definitely not questionable why many scholars refer to him as a powerful mythic hero after he overcomes many challenges like, for instance, bypassing a horrible storm made by no other than Poseidon, god of the sea. The journey is very long and strenuous as he gets older everyday. " ENTER 2 QUOTES ABOUT ODYSSEUS JOURNEY AND STRENGTH" By today's standards, the places Odysseus visits during his voyage home may seem relatively close to one another; in his day, however, they comprise a significant piece of the known world, a piece accessible only to intrepid seafarers. In the story Odysseus faces many struggles, going through dangerous encounters on his journey. He is a very brave traveler showing many deeds of courage, strength, agility, and confidence. He misses Ithaca dearly and all he wants to do is get home to his son and wife. Going on this journey while facing many challenges such as the Cyclops, one eyed giants, as well as the Isle of the Sirens where the song of the sirens bewitches men and draws them to shore where they would be smashed upon the rocks being shipwrecked. Next, after that they had to pass Scylla, the hideous sea monster, as well as the deadly whirlpool Charybdis. Also, Odysseus faces being sent to the underworld and meets the spirits of the dead, including his mother.