

# The odyssey by homer essay

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The most striking feature of Odysseus is deception. It is evident that in the land of the gods, the tricksters have a better chance of survival. The reader might view it as acts of lack of honor, which could be true. However, deception was the best resource that Odysseus possessed.

The character's ability to improvise false stories and devise trickery plans is outstanding and draws the reader's attentions closer. Throughout the play *Odyssey* does not struggle to reveal himself to anyone as a trustworthy person. Deception is a vital tool for survival in this story, considering that not all events favor the protagonist. This paper seeks to show how lying has been employed as a survival tool in Homer's work "the *Odyssey*".

The Trojan horse trick against Polyphemos is an instance that gets Odysseus out of trouble. The soldiers disguise themselves in a body of Trojan horse to conceal their identity. Odysseus and his accomplices disguise themselves as rams to hide from Polyphemos. Another instance of deception is when Odysseus pretends to be a beggar to keep himself safe. He also pretended to be a beggar to test the loyalty of others and to devise his plan of overthrowing the other suitors (Homer 93-96).

Amid all deceptions, the protagonist is viewed as an honest soldier going against all odds. The protagonist uses the deceits to acquire a strong team of followers. The followers view the protagonist as the voice of reason, an inspiring figure to continue fighting. Their hero is their reason of continuing no matter the change of challenges.

The hero uses deception to create a symbol of ideals and exemplifies what the group believes. The hero makes his followers to respect him in order to

obey him. As a consequence of deception, the hero endures more problems than his followers.

In the story, deception is not always meant to cause harm to other people. Some instances of deception are meant to help other people to get out of trouble. In the story lies have been used as tool for encouragement especially in family relationships. In the absence of the father, a woman takes the role of the husband in form of disguise. This is not meant to do any harm but just as way of encouraging a child who may be totally dependent on the father's advice (Homer 99-105).

Deception has been used as a manipulation tool. The protagonist lies to be someone he is not in order to manipulate people to do something that will be to his advantage. By way of embodiment Odysseus is able to pretend to be somebody else. A good example was when Odysseus pretended to be a beggar, and also when he pretended to be somebody else to test his wife's trust. In the story, a character is able to achieve this by lying that she is a god and at the same time makes sacrifices as a human (Homer 435).

Lies have been used to test the hospitability of other people. Odysseus transforms himself to beggar so as to test character of others whether they can be hospitable or not. Odysseus was able to pretend to be a beggar and creep all along the borders of enemy line that he was fighting without being noticed. His creativity as a liar gives him an advantage over his enemies. This made him win battles and came out as a war hero but it was all through deception (Homer 255).

Deception has been used as tool to get honor. Many instances of deception have made Odysseus to stand out as a hero to his acquaintances. The soldiers trust his wit and follow his ideas which end up rescuing them in times of trouble.

When Odysseus went to a new place where the natives did not recognize him and, it became easy to win their honor through lies. Odysseus lies to have come from a lineage of a wealthy family. He lied that his wealthy father died and left him with a lot of properties. The story represents a community that emphasizes on an individual's lineage in matters relating to marriage.

In order to win the trust of a wealthy family, it becomes important to use deception. Due to honor of his father as a wealthy person, he is able to marry a girl from family with a lineage of wealth. This is arguably the negative consequence of deception, but on the contrary, Homer has used it to show the readers the extent of desperation that his protagonist was going through (Homer 220).

Deceptions have been used in testing other people's emotions. Sometimes it is hard to know what people are capable of when they are emotional. As means to protect yourself from their emotions you can lie to them so as you can know them better. In the play Odysseus tests the emotions of his father by lying to him about his identity by pretending that he was another person. He only reveals his identity when his father gets emotional. This deception gave him an opportunity to read his father's mind, a chance to understand how he would react when the emotions take the best of him.

Deception has been used as a way of testing someone's love. This is based on the fact that a person in love is primarily supposed to defend her love especially to strangers. Odysseus talks ill about himself when disguised to give him an opportunity of reading the mind of Penelope. In this way Odysseus uses his disguise to test if Penelope loves him by speaking to her as a stranger (Homer 200).

Deception has been used to show cleverness. Cleverness has been used to depict the characters of people in the play. Many of the actions displayed by Athena throughout the play shows how clever she was. She wants to help Odysseus after realizing he was lying . She does this using deceptive means.

It is through cleverness that gives Penelope value which makes Odysseus to like her but achieves this through lies. Athena wants Odysseus to be inspired by the beauty of Penelope so that he can know what he would be fighting for. She must be clever enough to accomplish this and does it using lies (Homer 503).

Deception has been used as a test of loyalty for the protagonist to know the people he could trust. In the play Odysseus was able to spy his servants to know whether they were loyal to him. He was able to know those who were disloyal to him by his act of sleeping outside.

Even though he gets them he is unable to take any actions because he feared being blackmailed by another nurse who had identified him. He used deceit to identify the men who had invaded his home. The reasons for doing

this was to enable him identify the loyal people who he could trust and work with (Homer 502).

Deception has been used as a tool of vengeance. Odysseus revenge could not have gone through if he had not used deceit. He is able to accomplish his revenge mission on the suitor who once a conflict with by killing him through deceit. He takes the advantage during the contest to win Penelope in marriage to kill the suitor first.

Using deceits he kills those suitors who were disloyal to him and saves those who seemed of good character to him. In the end he is able to kill the maids who were disloyal to him by using by blackmailing the old nurse who brings them to him. It was the plan of deceit that enabled him to accomplish his vengeance.

Homer. *The Odyssey*. New York: Plain Label Books, 2009. Print.