

The Odyssey Group Activity

The Task

A prestigious architectural firm who specializes in multimillion dollar theme parks has come to this class and asked for help. The Disney Company has contacted them and want them to submit a plan for their new "Heroes" theme park. Their part of the park is to be based on Odysseus and the *Odyssey*. Since we have just finish reading the *Odyssey*, and since you all know so much about theme parks, and further because some of the most creative minds in town are right in this room, the architects have asked that the plan be done here. In the end, each one of four groups will present their plan to the class before it goes to Disney. The epic will be divided into four parts, and there will be four groups working on individual parts of the park.

Each area of the park must have a flag, a slogan, attractions and rides, a food court and a menu, and a list of the characters that will be "live" in your area. The four divisions of the park will follow the chronological order of the epic and so will the presentations.

However, Disney has made it very clear that although there is quite a bit of violence in the *Odyssey*, they want us to concentrate on staying true to the epic but minimizing the violent aspect. Remember, they want their park draw families as visitors, and they want to entertain people of all ages. Remember this is for "The Happiest Place on Earth" not the scariest.

The park will also have a visitor's center/museum that will be divided into four parts, and each group will be responsible for a specific area of the museum. Each member of the class will have an active role in the presentation. The presentation must include a map or some kind of visual representation of your work and a museum guide for visitors. Your reputation as an *Odyssey* expert and as a theme park expert is riding on this proposal, so let's get started.

Resources for Group 1

Group 1 will be responsible for the first part of the voyage and any background material on the Trojan War. This part will cover from the theme Odysseus leaves Troy, include the land of the Lotus-Eaters, and go through the Cyclops' island. For the visitor's center, this group will research Homer's life and his work.

- * Keep a journal with daily entries on your progress, your questions, your research, your ideas, and even your ideas that sounded good until you tried to make them work. It is just as important to learn from our bad ideas as it is from our good ones.

- * Also in your journal keep notes on what the other members of your group are doing. They are your greatest resource and you need to know who to ask.
- * Review and study sources that tell about your portion of the voyage and the park.
- * As a group come up with the slogan and the design of the flag for your area.
- * Study and discuss the following jobs necessary for the project.
- * Each member of the group will take one of the following roles:
 - * **Project Superintendent:** The superintendent will oversee the project, and make sure that all of the individual parts come together to complete the project. The superintendent will also take notes on what everyone is doing and make sure that jobs and topics for the museum are not duplicated. This person will be responsible for keeping the group on task and on time. The superintendent will be the "right hand person" helping all of the other group members. This person is also responsible for working with the other Project Superintendents and making sure that all of the pieces of the larger project fit together and are done in a timely manner.
 - **Coordinator of Food Service:** This person takes the ideas of the group and makes the final decisions about what food to serve and the creation of the actual menu will be done by this person. Disney wants to see the menu exactly as the park visitors will see it. Be creative and stick to the theme.
 - **Groundskeeper:** This person will ensure that the flag and the slogan that the group has come up with are created, and are visible and that a physical representation of the theme is evident either in the lay out of the park or the plantings.
 - **Attractions Coordinator:** This person will turn the ideas of the group into the reality of the park. Remember that you need rides, and shows and games for a variety of age groups.
 - **Museum Co-Curators:** Every person must choose what topic they will research for the groups display in the visitor's center/museum. Include a creative presentation for your group's museum guide.
- * Decide who will take each role in your group and begin coming up with ideas. Be sure to write down all of the ideas, so that you can use the list to make your final decisions. Then keep the list as you may want to go back to them and rethink your plan as you do the work.
- * Review a few maps and get an idea of the topographical qualities of your area.
- * Read a few examples of much abridged versions of the epic. Some of these are quite comical and will help you formulate ideas for your project.
- * Review the following sites for ideas for your theme park project. These sites are more serious and deal with the epic in a more serious way.
- * Brainstorm with your group and come decide how you area will be laid out.
- * Work on you individual responsibilities and get help and suggestions from every member of your group.
- * Check out the resources listed below for each section of the visitor's center and gather ideas for that as you work. Make notes about which sites have information

- that you can use for the museum.
- * Be sure to make a decision on what part of the museum you will research for your portion of the guide and let the superintendent know so that there are not duplicates.
 - * Decide how you will make your group presentation and begin creating.
 - * Be sure to keep the superintendent informed and ask all member of your committee for help.
 - * As you conduct your research and work on the project, you should ask the following questions:
 - * What is the background of the story?
 - * Who is Odysseus and what are his feelings about the voyage?
 - * Who are the gods that are involved in Odysseus' life? Do they have a positive or negative influence on Odysseus?
 - * Do you want to include them in your park?
 - * What are the most important parts of the voyage that should be included in the park?

Resources for Group 2

Group 2 will concentrate on the island of Aenea and Circe, and follow the epic through the encounter with the Sirens at the island of Capri. For the visitor's center, this group will research examples of great works of art that relate to the gods, the characters, and the events of the Odysseus' travels.

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- * Also in your journal keep notes on what the other members of your group are doing. They are your greatest resource and you need to know who to ask.
- * Review and study sources that tell about your portion of the voyage and the park.
- * As a group come up with the slogan and the idea for the flag for your area.
- * Study and discuss the following jobs necessary for the project.
- * Each member of the group will take one of the following roles:
 - * **Project Superintendent:** The superintendent will oversee the project, and make sure that all of the individual parts come together to complete the project. The superintendent will also take notes on what everyone is doing and make sure that jobs and topics for the museum are not duplicated. This person will be responsible for keeping the group on task and on time. The superintendent will be the "right hand person" helping all of the other group members. This person is also responsible for working with the other Project Superintendents and making sure that all of the pieces of the larger project fit together and are done in a timely manner.
 - * **Coordinator of Food Service:** This person takes the ideas of the group and makes the final decisions about what food to serve and the creation of

the actual menu will be done by this person. Disney wants to see the menu exactly as the park visitors will see it. Be creative and stick to the theme.

- * **Groundskeeper:** This person will ensure that the flag and the slogan that the group has come up with are created, and are visible and that a physical representation of the theme is evident either in the lay out of the park or the plantings.
 - * **Attractions Coordinator:** This person will turn the ideas of the group into the reality of the park. Remember that you need rides, and shows and games for a variety of age groups.
 - * **Museum Co-Curators:** Every person must choose what topic they will research for the groups display in the visitor's center/museum. Include a creative presentation for your group's museum guide.
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- * Decide who will take each role in your group and begin coming up with ideas. Be sure to write down all of the ideas, so that you can use the list to make your final decisions. Then keep the list as you may want to go back to them and rethink your plan as you do the work.
 - * Review a few maps and get an idea of the topographical qualities of your area. Read a few examples of much abridged versions of the epic. Some of these are quite comical and will help you formulate ideas for your project.
 - * Review the following sites for ideas for your theme park project. These sites are more serious and deal with the epic in a more serious way.
Brainstorm with your group and come decide how you area will be laid out.
 - * Work on you individual responsibilities and get help and suggestions from every member of your group.
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 - * Be sure to make a decision on what part of the museum you will research for your portion of the guide and let the superintendent know so that there are not duplicates.
 - * Decide how you will make your group presentation and begin creating.
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 - * As you conduct your research and work on the project, you should ask the following questions:
 - * What is the background of the story?
 - * Who is Odysseus and what are his feelings about the voyage?
 - * Who are the gods that are involved in Odysseus' life? Do they have a positive or negative influence on Odysseus?
 - * Do you want to include them in your park?
 - * What are the most important parts of the voyage that should be included in the park?

Resources for Group 3

This group will take over when Odysseus gets to the strait where Scylla and Charybdis live and continue through the island of Thrinacia, the island of Ogygia where Odysseus meets Calypso, and finally the island of the Paeacians and the trip to Ithaca. The third part of the museum will cover references to the gods, the characters and events that can be found in literature.

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- * Review and study sources that tell about your portion of the voyage and the park.
- * As a group come up with the slogan and the idea for the flag for your area.
- * Study and discuss the following jobs necessary for the project.
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- * Review a few maps and get an idea of the topographical qualities of your area.

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 - * What are the most important parts of the voyage that should be included in the park?

Resources for Group 4

This group will study the final part of the epic that takes place on the island of Ithaca and tells of Odysseus' return and his battles to take back his kingdom and his wife and son. Your section of the museum will show references to Homer and the Odyssey film and entertainment of today.

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The Evaluation

- * Use the following questions to evaluate your work.
 - * Is your work accurate according to the epic?
 - * Does your park look and sound like someplace you would like to go? Is it exciting and informative and appealing ?
 - * Were you able to gather the information you need for both aspects of this project?
 - * Did you work well with the members of your group and help everyone for the good of the presentation?
 - * Is your part of the group proposal done correctly and does it enhance the overall quality of the presentation?
 - * Is your oral presentation well organized, informative, interesting, and prepared to give to the class?
 - * Is your journal complete, including research notes and a log of your daily activities?
 - * Will the visitors be interested in your section of the visitor's center and will they leave knowing something about Homer or the *Odyssey* that they did not know when they came?
 - * Does your information guide meet the written standards for this class and is it ready for publication?