THE ODYSSEY

STUDY GUIDE: CHARACTERS

Odysseus - Odysseus is a Greek hero, king of Ithaka, husband to Penelope, the father of Telemachus, son to Laertes and the inventor of the Trojan horse.

Telemachus - As the son of Odysseus and Penelope. He is marked by his prudence and clear head. He doesn't rush into action before considering consequences.

Eurylochus - One of Odysseus men on the way back home from Troy. Very cautious (Refuses to enter Circe's hall even when accompanied by armed men)

Eurymachus - One of the rudest suitors. Plans to kill Telemachus and then deceives Penelope about it.

Penelope - Wife of Odysseus, mother of Telemachus and queen of Ithaka. She is the object of desire to every nobleman in Ithaka. (Also a very strong woman) Waits for Odysseus after 10 years, believing he will still return.

Athena - The daughter of Zeus, Athena is the goddess of wisdom and patroness of warfare. This explains why she likes a hero (Odysseus) with some brains. She strands Odysseus on an island naked to get help. She continues to help Odysseus return home.

Helios - Lord Helios is the god of the sun. Angered when Odysseus' men eat his cattle.

Hermes - The messenger of the gods, he doesn't seem to have any personality of his own but is Zeus' right-hand man.

Calypso - The goddess who holds Odysseus captured for 7 years for desire purposes.
Charybdis- A whirlpool given human characteristics that Odysseus and his men have to travel through on their way home.

Circe- The sorceress of the island Aiaia.

Cyclopes- One-eyed monsters that eat 2 men for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Odysseus and his men encounter them on their way to Ithaka.

Laertes- Father of Odysseus. Lives on the outskirts of Ithaka in a hut, while Penelope is planning his funeral shroud.

Lotus Eaters- The Lotus Eaters eat the Lotus, and then forget about their dreams, family, homes, and all memories.

Polyphemus- One-eyed monster that Ithakans come across on their way back to Ithaka. Polyphemus eats humans unfortunately though for Odysseus' men.

Poseidon- God of the sea, and a very angry and grudge-holder. He's the one who forces Odysseus to wander the sea for 20 years, all because the men stabbed Polyphemus.

The Sirens- Two dangerous females who lure men into their death with their voices and beauty. Odysseus becomes first mortal to have heard their voices and lived through to tell the tale.

Scylla- A monster with 6 heads and picks off 6 men off the ship when Odysseus passes by.

Eumaeus- Odysseus loyal swineherder and friend.

Elpenor- He became very drunk and fell off Circe's roof.

Antinous- When all the suitors think Odysseus is some
beggar, Odysseus rips off his disguise and kills Antinous with a bow!