

# Voyage of Odysseus

## Enrichment Works

### Our Mission

Enrichment Works creates and presents theater to inspire learning.

## Classroom Connections

### Synopsis

Greek King Odysseus (Joshua Feinman) bids farewell to his wife Penelope and his son Telemachus and invites students in the audience to take a journey with him into the world of myth.

First stop: Troy, where, after a long siege, the Greek soldiers hide inside a statue of a giant horse, presented to the city as a ruse to penetrate its defenses, and win the Trojan War. On the return voyage, Odysseus stops on an island where he is captured by the cave-dwelling monster Polyphemos. He blinds the giant cyclops in order to escape and resumes his voyage home.

Next, our hero encounters Circe who turn his sailors into pigs then back into men again after she falls in love with him. Odysseus sails past the sirens and resists their dangerous song, after which he battles the whirlpool, Charybdis and Poseidon, God of the Sea.

Finally, after 20 years at sea, he returns to his family. Penelope is surrounded by suitors who want to marry her, but she remains faithful to her husband despite his long absence. Odysseus, disguised as a stranger, scares the suitors away, then reveals himself and reclaims his family.



Josh Feinman as Odysseus

### About the Artists

**Joshua Feinman** (Actor/Playwright) Josh's credits include "Charmed," "Transformers," "Men of Honor," "Without a Trace," and "The Unit." He is featured in the PBS documentary "Who's Dancin' Now?" as a dancer trained at the National Dance Institute by the legendary Jacques D'Amboise. For the Education Management Group in Arizona, he appeared as Odysseus and other characters in dozens of closed circuit TV broadcasts to classrooms throughout the U.S. He produced the web series "Front Seat Chronicles" in partnership with One Economy Corp. which won the People's Telly Silver Award (their highest honor) for 2012.

**Abraham Tetenbaum** (Director) holds a BS from the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University and an MFA in Playwriting from the University of Minnesota. Mr. Tetenbaum has written for Broadway ("Crazy He Calls Me"), network television ("Sisters") and scripted two pilot education projects for the Joy2learn Foundation. He is currently the Editor of Publications for the American Film Institute. Mr. Tetenbaum is a member of the Dramatists Guild (DG) and the Writers Guild of America, West, Inc. (WGA).

## Discussion and Writing Questions

- What makes someone a hero? Who is your hero?
- What do you have in common with Odysseus? How are you alike or different?
- What lessons do the characters learn in the play? Can these lessons be applied today?

## Vocabulary Words

cyclops  
formidable  
legend  
myth  
siege  
suitsors  
valor  
whirlpool

## Project Ideas

- Draw a map of the Greek Islands and trace Odysseus's journey back from Troy.
- Pretend that you are Odysseus and create and write postcards back to Penelope from the different stops on your journey.
- Design and build a model of a Trojan Horse.
- List the 12 main ancient Greek Gods. Select your favorite God or Goddess and draw a picture of them doing something that represents them. Act out some of the stories connected to each one.
- Read excerpts from the poem "The Odyssey" by Homer.
- What makes "The Odyssey" a poem? Find the stories in "The Odyssey" that were told in "The Voyage of Odysseus." Create your own myth. Try setting it in current times.
- Create your own myth based on existing Gods or create your own God-like characters. Try setting it in the modern world.

## Resources

### Websites:

<http://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/europe/gr.htm>  
[http://www.ancientgreece.com/s/Main\\_Page/](http://www.ancientgreece.com/s/Main_Page/)  
<http://www.aoidoi.org/poets/>  
[http://www.greekmythology.com/Books/Odyssey/O\\_Book1/o.book1.html](http://www.greekmythology.com/Books/Odyssey/O_Book1/o.book1.html)  
<http://www.mythweb.com/odyssey/>

### Booklist:

The Illiad by Nick McCarty, Victor Ambros  
Children's Homer: The Adventures of Odysseus and the Tale of Troy by Padraic Colum  
Usborne Book of the Ancient World: Early Civilization/the Greeks/the Romans/Illustrated World History by Jane Chisholm  
D'Aulaires' Book of Grek Myths by Ingri D'Aulaire, Edgar Parin D'Aulaire  
Black Ships Before Troy: The Story of the Iliad by Rosemary Sutcliff  
Tales of the Greek Heroes by Roger Lancelyn Green

## Contact Us

### Enrichment Works

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## Standards and Learning

Enrichment Works is a theater company whose productions are designed to inspire children to learn by creating an emotional connection to educational subjects. “Voyage of Odysseus” uses the Theater Content Standards of California to provide a positive theatrical experience. The performer interacts directly with students and asks them questions about the topic of the play, inviting students onstage to act out specific roles and events in the story.

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## Visual and Performing Arts Connections

### 1.0 Artistic Perception

Students process, analyze and respond to sensory information through language and skills unique to theatre. They learn theatrical vocabulary such as playwright, conflict, setting, script, etc. They analyze the elements of Voyage of Odysseus by identifying the who, what, when, where and why of the story. Students are engaged through direct address by the actor, scenery, costumes (his robe and toga) and stylized movement (pantomime).

### 2.0 Creative Expression

During Voyage of Odysseus, students help create, perform and participate in the performance through interaction with the actor. Students play multiple characters including the roles of Telemachus, Circe, the sailors and the sirens. The entire audience participates at key points during the play to create different moods.

### 3.0 Historical and Cultural Context

Voyage of Odysseus helps students understand the role of theater. They take part as both spectator and participant as the story unfolds. They learn what a Greek myth is, and have an understanding of the role of the hero within the tradition of storytelling. The theatre tradition of improvisation is utilized, allowing students to witness and respond to the actor’s guidance as he directs them to participate in the play with dialogue and action.

### 4.0 Aesthetic Valuing

Audience interaction throughout the play allows students to maintain a high level of emotional connection to the story of Odysseus. Following the play, students participate in a Question and Answer session where they can criticize and query the actors/characters about the content of the play or the artistic choices made in this production. Students are given the opportunity to express how they felt as a participating impromptu actor during the performance. Post performance activities provided through study guides, are available to help students understand the character’s journey and events in the play.

### 5.0 Connections, Relationship, Applications

Activities will be provided through study guides in order to help them encourage students to connect what is learned in Voyage of Odysseus to other subject areas. Through hands-on approaches, including improvisation and dramatization, students can explore concepts in other subject areas (e.g. ancient history, geography and literature) to learn how theatre can communicate content from other sources. Activities encourage students to learn more about the role of an actor, director and writer, and to use their imaginations and creativity to create their own heroes and myths.