

Odysseus Facts

Odysseus is the main character and hero of the epic poem *The Odyssey*, written by the Greek poet Homer in the 8th century BC. In *The Odyssey*, the poem tells of Odysseus' struggle to return home, which occurs over a ten year period following the Trojan War. During his ten year struggle Odysseus encounters Lotus-eaters, Cyclops, Aeolus, Scylla and Charybdis, and Calypso. Odysseus and his men took so long to find their way home because Zeus had become angry with the Greeks and pushed them off course, making it difficult for them to reach their home Ithaca. By the time he returned home to his wife, Odysseus had been away for 20 years. The war had taken ten years and the journey home had taken another ten.

Interesting Odysseus Facts:

Odysseus is pronounced o-diss-ee-oos.

Odysseus and Ulysses are the same person. The spellings differ because in Greek he is Odysseus and in Latin/English, he is Ulysses.

There is no proof to show that Odysseus ever existed, other than in the stories told by Homer and others. Homer's work was mostly fiction so it can be assumed that Odysseus was fictional as well.

Odysseus was the son of Anticlea and Laertes. He was the father of Telemachus, and the husband of Penelope. He was also the great grandson of Hermes, the Olympian god.

Odysseus' character was known for his cunning, versatility, and brilliant mind, along with his pride.

During the Trojan War Odysseus was one of the men who hid themselves in the Trojan Horse. Some believe that Odysseus was the one who came up with the brilliant idea to hide in the horse.

On his journey home after the Trojan War ended, Odysseus' first challenge was meeting the Lotus-eaters. The Lotus-eaters were plant-eating people that gave him food that made him forget about his home. In order to get his men to leave Odysseus had to drag his men away and chain them up on the ships.

Odysseus and his men then met Cyclops (one-eyed giants) on an island and were held captive until they managed to escape.

Odysseus and his men then landed on Aeolus' island. Aeolus was the god of wind and gave Odysseus and his men wind energy to send them home.

On the way Odysseus and his men encounter a monster with six heads and a whirlpool named Charybdis. They manage to escape and continue on their way.

Along the journey all of Odysseus' men perished. Odysseus' ships were destroyed and he was shipwrecked on an island with a nymph named Calypso for seven years.

Odysseus finally made it back to Ithaca to his wife.

Although Odysseus had been gone for 20 years, his dog Argos recognized him.

Odysseus is a popular character in many stories. While some cultures portray him to be a hero, others do not, The Romans believed him to be a villain and liar.

The story (poem) that Homer wrote about Odysseus contained tales that are believed to have been passed down over the years by others.

Additional websites:

https://www.ducksters.com/history/ancient_greece/odyssey.php

<https://kids.kiddle.co/Cyclops>

<https://kids.kiddle.co/Odysseus>