

English 9

Presentation: *The Odyssey*

Your task is to present your assigned book of *The Odyssey* in a way that is helpful, coherent, animated, and serious. Your presentation should be just under 10 minutes in length. You may add a costume or props if desired, but you may not use slides for this assignment.

Assume that the class has done the reading; I will give quizzes periodically to ensure that students are reading.

In your presentation:

1. Begin with an idea of the knowable purpose of the book: What does your book add to our understanding of the epic as a whole? Answers to this question might be about development of character, advancement of the plot, or the role of style or setting.
2. Then summarize action in light of that purpose. Understanding a main idea as a centerpoint will give your presentation focus. Show us relevant passages along the way, and give us a chance to follow you to your passages. Be careful to keep this part of the presentation interesting, focused, and coherent.
3. Highlight any stylistic elements (simile, epithet, repetition, etc.) and the effects of these devices.
4. Point out themes we have discussed—*xenia*, *kleos* vs. *nostos*, coming of age, etc.—and how the current text reflects our understanding of the theme.
5. Have a one-page handout that accompanies your presentation. I will assume I am the one making the photocopies; please turn your handout into the Jupiter slot the night before your presentation. This handout need not be comprehensive—it may provide a structure for students to use to take notes on your presentation.
6. After the presentation, not counting in the 10 minutes, give students a way to reflect on what you have said. A quiz, a discussion question, or some group work is appropriate. (N.B.: We have found that crosswords can be time consuming and obscure; word searches don't add enough depth. Avoid these two ways of assessing.)

A good presentation:

- is given from note cards or sticky notes in your book
- shows us particular passages that support your ideas—we can follow along and annotate our books further
- is delivered, rather than read, so we can understand what you want to emphasize
- requires no set-up time once class has begun
- is delivered in an animated way as you highlight what's interesting and important
- is delivered with seriousness, self-possession, and poise
- takes just under 10 minutes to deliver

You do not need to use outside sources, but if you do, you should cite those sources on the handout. You should use credible sources such as general or scholarly essays on the *Odyssey*—you may not use commercial summaries closely enough to cite them. A presentation that is not significantly and demonstrably based in our text cannot earn higher than a D.

I will end your presentation if it exceeds 10 minutes.

Prepare well for your presentation; it will be graded rigorously (unlike the *Iliad* presentations which were more supplementary) and counts 100 points.