

Name:

Period:

The Odyssey Unit: PIE Paragraph #2 (Book 9, the Cyclops)



Instructions: Read the following two selections – excerpts from Book 9 of the Odyssey and the short story “Blindness” by Zachary Mason – and answer the following question using the PIE method:

*How do Odysseus and Polyphemus characterize one another? Explain your answer and support it with evidence from **both** selections.*

Selection #1 – Book 9 of the Odyssey:

A prodigious man
slept in this cave alone, and took his flocks
to graze afield – remote from all his companions,
knowing none but savage ways, a brute
so huge, he seemed no man at all of those
who eat good wheaten bread; but he seemed rather
a shaggy mountain reared in solitude.

[...]

A wineskin full
I brought along, and victuals in a bag,
for in my bones I knew some towering brute
would be upon us soon – all outward power,
a wild man, ignorant of civility.

[...]

“Strangers,” he said, “who are you? And where from?
What brings you here by sea ways – a fair traffic?
Or are you wandering rogues, who cast your lives
like dice, and ravage other folk by sea?”

We felt a pressure in our hearts, in dread
of that deep rumble and that might man.
But all the same I spoke up in reply:

[...]

“We would entreat you, great Sir, have a care
For the gods’ courtesy; Zeus will avenge
The unoffending guest.”

He answered this
from his brute chest, unmoved:

“You are a ninny,
or else you come from the other end of nowhere,
telling me, mind the gods! We Cyclopes
care not a whistle for your thundering Zeus
or all the gods in bliss; we have more force by far.
I would not let you go for fear of Zeus –
you or your friends – unless I had a whim to.
Tell me, where was it, now, you left your ship –
around the point, or down the shore, I wonder?”

He thought he’d find out, but I saw through this,
and answered with a ready lie:

“My ship?
Poseidon Lord, who sets the earth a-tremble,
broke it up on the rocks at your land’s end.
A wind from seaward served him, drove us there.
We are survivors, these good men and I.”

Neither reply nor pity came from him,
but in one stride he clutched at my companions
and caught two in hind hands like squirming puppies
to beat their brains out, spattering the floor.
Then he dismembered them and made his meal,
gaping and crunching like a mountain lion –
everything: innards, flesh, and marrow bones.
We cried aloud, lifting our hands to Zeus,
powerless, looking on at this, appalled;
but Cyclops went on filling up his belly
with manflesh and great gulps of whey,
then lay down like a mast among his sheep.

Selection #2 – “Blindness” by Zachary Mason:

“In retrospect, it is obvious that ‘Nobody’ was a nom de guerre, the alias of an anonymous raider. The choice of sobriquet suggests a man infatuated with his own cleverness. He carried himself like a warrior, but preferred getting me drunk to attacking me openly. His mind, I thought, must be like a city of a thousand twists and turns, founded on deceit, with never an open line of sight or straight passage. Fluent in lies, he must have been the death of many men greater than himself.”



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Pre-Writing:

***Hint: When answering this kind of question, you might want to make use of different kinds of literary techniques as **illustrations** of your points. Consider using...

figurative language or simile/metaphor – nonliteral comparisons that help the reader understand the essence of what is being described

sensory detail – specific information that deals with the five senses to help the reader better imagine the scene

Point I: Odysseus characterizes Polyphemos as _____.

Illustration #1:	Illustration #2:	Illustration #3:
↓	↓	↓
Explanation #1:	Explanation #2:	Explanation #3:

Point I: Polyphemos characterizes Odysseus as _____.

Illustration #1:	Illustration #2:	Illustration #3:
↓	↓	↓
Explanation #1:	Explanation #2:	Explanation #3:



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Highlight or underline (preferably highlight) your point, illustrations, and explanations in different colors. Fill out the following color key:

= Point

= Illustration

= Explanation

