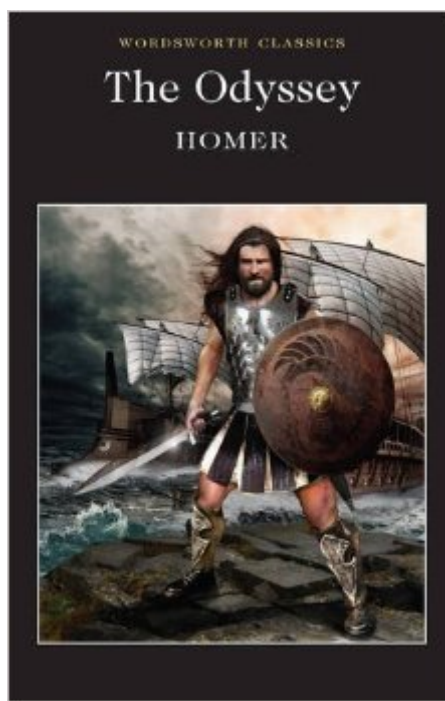


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# The Odyssey (Wordsworth Classics)



## Synopsis

With an Introduction and Notes by Adam Roberts Royal Holloway, University of London Homer's great epic describes the many adventures of Odysseus, Greek warrior, as he strives over many years to return to his home island of Ithaca after the Trojan War. His colourful adventures, his endurance, his love for his wife and son have the same power to move and inspire readers today as they did in Archaic Greece, 2800 years ago. This poem has been translated many times over the years, but Chapman's sinewy, gorgeous rendering (1616) stands in a class of its own. Chapman believed himself inspired by the spirit of Homer himself, and matches the breadth and power of the original with a complex and stunning idiom of his own. John Keats expressed his admiration for the resulting work in the famous sonnet, 'On first looking into Chapman's Homer': 'Much have I travelled in the realms of gold...'

## Book Information

Paperback: 488 pages

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Age Range: 10 - 16 years

Grade Level: 5 - 11

## Customer Reviews

Any rating of "The Odyssey" has to be primarily a rating of the translation, not of the work as such. Obviously "The Odyssey" does not measure up to the expectations of a modern novel, as it was probably written in the 8th century BCE. As such, it is \*the\* cornerstone of Western literature. Homer was for the Greeks what the Bible was for the Hebrews: "The Iliad" and its sequel, "The Odyssey," gave the loose Greek tribes a common identity in a semi-mythical history. Homer, in a way, gave

\*birth\* to Greece, and Greece contributed significantly to the birth of Western culture. For this reason alone, anyone who lives in or identifies with the West should read "The Iliad" and "The Odyssey." We wouldn't be here without them. Now as far as modern taste and entertainment value goes, "The Odyssey" is actually much more satisfying than "The Iliad." One feels much more with the characters, it includes entertaining fantasy, and its ending is much more gratifying than in "The Iliad." The latter tells the war at Troy with its principle heroes Achilles and Hector, but the story ends anti-climactically with the burial of Hector. The Trojan Horse is not mentioned in it, nor is the city conquered. For the retrospective account of the Trojan Horse and the fall of Troy, one has to turn to Virgil's "Aeneid" - or to this book, "The Odyssey." Now to this particular translation, made around 1600 CE by English poet George Chapman. To correct another reviewer, this is *not* a simple prose translation of Homer, but in fact one of the most poetic renderings of Homer in the English tongue. However, it is also one of the most difficult to read for the modern reader and should probably not be recommended as an introduction to Homer.

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