



Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Study Guide – Books 21-24

Type or answer on loose leaf. Answers must be legible and edited.

### Book 21

1. Whose feast day is it on the day of the contest?
2. **Odysseus's bow** –Read the Note to 21.16 on page 515. Why is this a very special bow?
3. List the order in which the characters attempt to string the bow.
4. Who is *almost* able to string the bow?
5. Why does Antinous not even try to string the bow? (The answer to this question is in your interpretation of his actions; it is not provided in the book.)
6. What might the bow symbolize? (Consider who can, who almost can, and who can't string the bow.)



### Bk 22. (Due 1/3)

1. In the battle in the great hall:
  - A. Who is killed first & why?
  - B. What does Eurymachus do to try to save himself?
  - C. Who is saved from death & why?
  - D. Who is killed, notwithstanding his earlier favorable portrayal? Why is he killed & by whom?
2. Athena's role – What disguises does Athena adopt in this book? How does Athena “help” Odysseus to fight?
3. Find one epic simile. Explain what is compared and cite it.
4. Identify and briefly explain one way that Odysseus has changed and one way that Telemachus has changed over the course of the story? (Hint: For Odysseus, consider his comments to Eurycleia on page 452.)
5. Although the suitors are dead, are Odysseus's problems solved? What else does Odysseus need to deal with? Consider his worries expressed at Od. 20. 43-46.

### BK. 23 (Due 1/3)


1. Testing the tester:
  - A. When Penelope and Odysseus speak after he kills the suitors, how does Penelope test her husband?
  - B. How does Odysseus react?
  - C. Identify one key characteristic that Penelope and Odysseus show in this encounter. Briefly explain your support. (This does not need to be the same characteristic for both, but it can be.)

2. What does the Great Rooted Bed symbolize? Explain your answer by identifying what the bed has in common with the thing it symbolizes. (Why it is a fitting symbol? More than one thing in common is what you are aiming for.)
3. What does Athena do to give Odysseus and Penelope more time to re-adjust to each other?
4. When Odysseus leaves Penelope (at the end of Book 23),
  - A. Whom does he go to see?
  - B. Why is he armed for battle?
  - C. Who goes with him?

### **Book 24 (Due 1/3)**

1. What role does Hermes play in the last book?
2. Whose funeral is described in the last book? Describe some specific events of the funeral.
3. Describe the meeting of Odysseus and his father. How would you describe Odysseus's behavior in this encounter? Defend your answer.
4. What does Odysseus do to prove himself to his father?
5. How is peace finally achieved? What is supremely ironic about this ending?
6. One final irony question: What is ironic about Dolius's involvement in this book?

### **Not for homework/ We will discuss this in class**

 Some modern scholars have argued that Book 24 is not the work of the original author of the Odyssey, but instead, was written by an inferior poet and added later. However, Bernard Knox, the Director for Harvard's Center for Hellenic Studies and the author of the Introduction to your text, defends the authenticity of Book 24. If you were Homer's editor, would you advise him to cut, change, or to keep Book 24?

### **GENERAL/ Summing up**

1. What do we know will happen to Odysseus in his later years?
2. List the order in which Odysseus reveals his identity to his household servants and his family.
3. List the order of deaths beginning with Antinous.