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Activity Pack

THE ILIAD

BY HOMER



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Name: _____

Date: _____

Books I – VIII**Theme****Objective:** Inferring and identifying major themes**Activity**

The following themes have been given letters. Place the letter of each theme in the box next to the quotation that illustrates that theme. More than one quotation may relate to a particular theme, and some themes may not have a quotation to go with them. Be ready to discuss your choices and expand on the themes with your class.

- A. interference by the gods
- B. jealousy and intrigue among the warriors
- C. the power of individual acts
- D. family loyalty as a powerful force
- E. the importance of hospitality and honor among enemies
- F. the belief that inanimate objects carried the power of former owners
- G. the gods' knowledge of the future
- H. the ability to love adds dimension to a hero.
- I. personal ambition as a motivator
- J. respect for the wisdom of older people

Name: _____

Date: _____

Books I – VIII**Drawing**

Objectives: Visualizing
Developing the ability to translate text into drawings

Activity

Draw or otherwise create, using clippings, sculpture, photos, etc., a visual interpretation of one of the following:

- Olympus, home of the gods
- The Achaean fleet
- The fortified Trojan city of Ilius

Name: _____

Date: _____

Books I – VIII**Art**

Objectives: Visualizing
Identifying concepts of interest
Marketing
Artistic interpretation

Activity

Propose a new front cover for *The Iliad* with text and illustrations, and a back cover with text and “blurbs” from other writers praising the book. Choose one of the following options:

- Market the book as a war story.
- Market the book as a story of adventure and romance.
- Market the book as a classic every student should read.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Books IX – XVIII**Characterization**

Objectives: Understanding character development
Tracing a character's changes

Activity

Write a will for one of the following important characters in this section of the story. Note that writing a will does not necessarily mean that the character dies. Be creative. Consider what else can be willed in addition to material possessions: character traits, hopes, situations, etc.

- Achilles
- Hector
- Helen
- Priam

Name: _____

Date: _____

Books IX – XVIII**Poetry****Objective:** Increasing proficiency with poetry**Activity**

The Iliad was originally spoken as poetry, although this translation is in prose form. Rewrite a passage from this section of the book in poetic form. You may do this by writing a song, poem, or rap message, with the content covering the interaction of two characters. Possible pairs (although there are many others you could choose) include:

- Agamemnon and Menelaus
- Nestor and Diomed
- Dolon and Ulysses
- Achilles and Patroclus
- Juno and Jupiter

Name: _____

Date: _____

Books IX – XVIII**Art**

Objectives: Identifying themes in a complex work
Expressing themes visually

Activity

Identify two themes from this section (Books IX-XVIII) and present them in a collage, drawing, or model. While your presentation can include words or slogans, this is to be an artistic, rather than a written, exercise.

Themes include:

- the glory and horror of war
- the arrogance of power
- the human-like qualities of the gods and goddesses, especially when those qualities are negative
- patriotic duty is more important than family life
- the role of fate and the fact that it cannot be escaped
- the rallying power of speech

Name: _____

Date: _____

Books XIX – XX

Poetry

Objective: Writing a poem based on the words in the text

Activity

A “found” poem is a poem made up entirely of phrases or quotations found in the text of a book, newspaper, conversation, etc. These are rearranged and written down as if the words make up a poem. Go back through these Books and make up a found poem of your own. The poem could tell the reader something about the plot of *The Iliad*, a character’s emotional state, or deal with a specific aspect of the Epic, but this is not necessary. Your found poem may be totally unrelated to the action of the story, which is one of the best parts of writing a found poem.

Your poem should be at least 10 lines long. The lines do not need to rhyme, but they certainly may. You can arrange the phrases in any way you like and change the punctuation, but do not deviate from Homer’s actual words. Give the poem a title, which may or may not come from the book. Below is an example taken entirely from Book II.

Sample Poem from Book II:

The Counsel of Heaven, Cowardice of Men

divided counsels among the gods
 (for we shall not take Troy)
like the waves of the Icarian Sea
 (a pell-mell of mad confusion)
 (a sound as the thunder of surf)
there is no viler creature blubbering back to the ships
 (stave off destruction for a day)
 (a prey to dogs and vultures)
 (they fall dying around him)
he was now lying under the earth
 (furious about the loss)
 (the earth groaned while war is at hand)
 (fate lured them to destruction)
 (gold was of no avail to save him)
Bunched in Knots and Clusters!

Name: _____

Date: _____

Books XIX – XXIV**Film**

Objectives: Visualizing contemporary individuals in an historical novel
Applying personality traits to character

Activity

Envision yourself as a professional actor. Which character would you want to play in a film version of *The Iliad*? Why? Be ready to discuss your reasons with the class.

If you were a casting director instead of an actor, who would you cast in the following roles and why? After making these decisions, fill in the casting chart that follows. Again, be ready to discuss your reasons.

- Achilles
- Apollo
- Hector
- Helen
- Juno
- King Agamemnon
- King Priam
- Minerva
- Neptune
- Thetis

Name: _____

Date: _____

Wrap-Up

Drama

Objective: Visualizing the action of a story through dramatic interpretation

Activity

Working in small groups, select a scene from *The Iliad* and develop a dramatic interpretation that expresses the tone and content of the scene. Your group will decide the method of presentation and assign roles. Gender does not need to be a factor when choosing roles.

Choose one of the following methods of presenting the scene:

- Act out your parts with dialog that you develop.
- Mime the actions as a narrator reads the re-worked scene.
- Have each character deliver a monologue reporting the action from his or her own point of view.