

Grade 5 – Odysseus Meets the Cyclops

- 1- Look at the picture of the cyclops on page 3. Write a short physical description of it in a few sentences.
- 2- Read the text *Odysseus Meets the Cyclops* on pages 2 to 5.
- 3- Answer the comprehension questions on page 6. Send me your answers at melanie.custeau2@csmc.qc.ca .

Odysseus Meets the Cyclops

warm up

Look at the pictures of the Cyclops on these pages. How would you describe the Cyclops?

Adapted by Miriam Bardswich

This is a story from *The Odyssey*, by the Greek poet Homer. Odysseus was a hero of the Trojan War.

On their voyage back to Greece, Odysseus and his men land on an island and set out to explore it. They come to a cave with a very high entrance. Inside the huge cave are large baskets of breads and cheeses, enormous bowls of fruit, giant pails of milk, and lambs wandering about.

“What wonderful stores! We can take them back to our ship,” exclaims one sailor.

CHECKPOINT

What do you think “stores” means here?

“No!” says Odysseus. “We wait for our hosts!”

A shadow falls across the entrance to the cave — that of a monster, large and hideous, with only one eye in the centre of his forehead.

It’s the Cyclops! The Greeks sit very still, **cowering** in the shadows.

The Cyclops picks up a huge flat stone and sets it across the mouth of the cave as a door.

Then he roars, “Strangers! Who are you? Come to steal from me?”

cowering: *trembling*

"We are Greeks," says Odysseus. "We have been fighting the Trojans for a long time. Now we are returning home. In the name of Zeus, we hope that you will show us kindness."

Seizing two of the sailors, the Cyclops throws them to the ground. "I don't care for Zeus or any of your gods! Poseidon is our only god. I'd as soon eat these two creatures."

Minutes later, the Cyclops drinks from a large bowl. "They were tasty. Now I'm full and tired."

While the Cyclops sleeps, the Greeks try to figure out how to move the stone from the doorway and sneak out of the cave.

CHECKPOINT

How do you think they will do this?



The next morning, the Cyclops leaves the cave, putting the stone back in place.

Odysseus spies the giant's huge **staff**, a tree trunk in the corner of the cave. "We'll cut off a piece, and harden the end to make a **stake** that we can use as a weapon."

staff: a pole used for walking or climbing
stake: a thick stick sharpened at one end

That night, as the giant sits eating, Odysseus brings him something to drink. "Here, this will make your food taste better."

Cyclops: "What is your name?"

Odysseus: "Nobody."

Cyclops: "Then I shall eat you last, Nobody."



While the Cyclops is sleeping,
Odysseus and his men take their
weapon and put the end into the
fire. They plunge the end of it
into the eye of the Cyclops.
The Cyclops howls with pain.

Outside the cave door,
two other Cyclops call
out, "Who is hurting
you, Polyphemus?"

CHECKPOINT

Notice that Cyclops is spelled
the same way for the
singular and plural nouns.

"Nobody is hurting me."

"Then, if nobody is hurting
you, stop yelling."

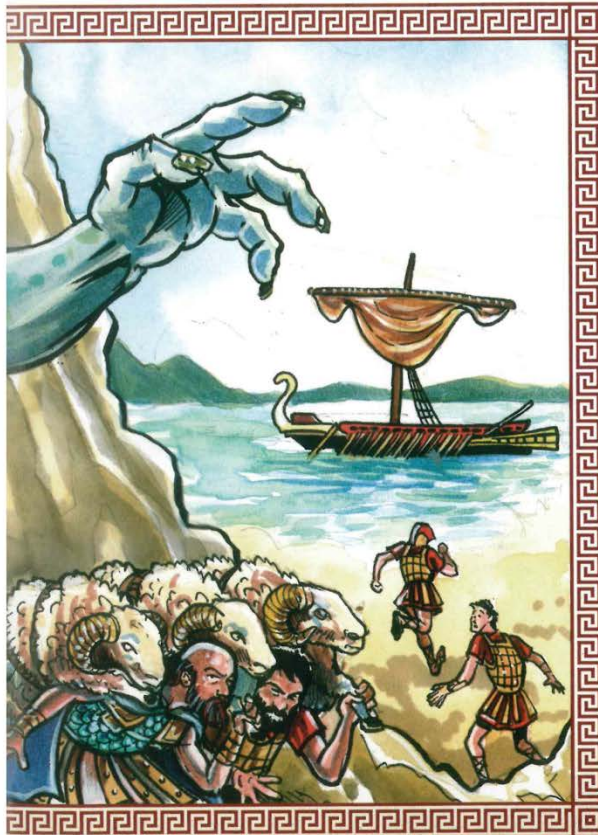
The injured Cyclops
moves to the doorway,
hands outstretched.
"It's cooler here."

Sheep, tied together
in threes, and with
sailors clinging underneath
their bellies, pass under the
arms of the Cyclops.

Odysseus and his men race
across the fields. "Hurry,"
shouts Odysseus, "before he
figures it out."

wrap up

1. How do the sailors react when they see the Cyclops? Write a short dialogue that two sailors might have whispered to each other when they first saw him.
2. With a partner, create two frames for a storyboard to finish this story.



Odysseus meets the Cyclops

- 1- What did Odysseus and his men find in the cave?
- 2- Odysseus tells his men to wait for their hosts before helping themselves to the food. What does this tell you about his personality?
- 3- Why did the other two Cyclops think that Polyphemus did not want help?
- 4-
 - a) How did the sailors escape from the cave?
 - b) Did you think their solution would work?
 - c) Why or why not?
- 5- How would you have solved the problem?
- 6- How did the images help you understand the story?