

Comparison of Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*

	<i>Iliad</i>	<i>Odyssey</i>
Genre	Primary Epic - Realistic, psychological	Primary Epic - Romantic, archetypal
Theme/ concerns	Serious Dramatic portrayal of humans Study of human nature Conflicts between a person's own wishes and responsibility to community	Adventure, perhaps the greatest in literature Fantastic portrayal of world Exploration of monsters and dangers Conflict between a person's personal commitment and effort and the forces of fate and nature arrayed against him
Plot	Complicated and deep	Simple and episodic
Hero	Skill as warrior Reward of honor	Strength of will, purpose, and mind Reward for loyalty and faith
Moral issues	Complex characters who share a mixture of good and evil	Simple issues between binary oppositions of good and evil Heroes and villains Attention to others, especially servants and beggars
Characters	Aristocracy: Warriors, Priests, and Gods	Cross-section of Mycenaean world
Women	Prizes of honor	Women in position of power Penelope - smart - creative - beautiful - loyal Bed - tests for Odysseus
Divine Justice	Gods reward or punish by whim or personal bias	Divine justice exists Gods punish those who act improperly, even Odysseus