

Summarize: Books 6, 7, 8

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

You will be reading summaries of books 6-8. You will be responsible for completing a notetaking guide for these books.

**For each book summary, please complete the following on a sheet of notebook paper:**

1. The book begins with...
  - a.
2. Three major plot points:
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.
3. The book ends with...
  - a.

**Book Six:**

- Odysseus wakes up on the shores of an unknown land, battered by his experience at sea.
- As he gathers his bearings, we see Athena plotting to help Odysseus by speaking to Princess Nausicaa (Naw-si-kay-a—daughter of Alcinous and Arete) She disguises herself as a friend and convinces her that she needs to do laundry so that she can be dressed in her finery in case she meets a future husband soon.
- We learn that Odysseus has washed up on the shores of Scheria/Phaacia (Fee-ay-sha) (Ske-re-a): interchangeable names for island of Alcinous and Arete. The Phaeacians are known for sailing and weaving.
- Odysseus wakes up to hear Nausicaa and her handmaids washing clothes and makes a “cunning plan” to compliment her rather than scare her in order to secure aid, clothes, and find out where he is. (After all, he’s naked and looks like a wild man.)
- Odysseus asks for clothes and they give it to him and let him bathe. Athena lavishes a marvelous splendor upon him.
- Nausicaa invites him back to the palace but says to follow a ways behind so people don’t think the wrong thing. She advises him to appeal to her parents –her mother first—if he hopes to make it home someday.
- Odysseus prays to Athena for aid in securing mercy and love from the Phaeacians.

**Book Seven:**

- Odysseus makes his way to city. Athena protects him as he goes and disguises herself as a young girl who acts as his guide once he reaches the palace's walls.
- We learn that Odysseus will have to prove himself because the Phaeacians are not known to be welcoming of strangers. She tells him of the history of the Phaeacian royal lineage and that Queen Arete is highly respected by all. If he does not earn favor from her, he has no hope of receiving aid or safe passage towards home.
- When Odysseus reaches the palace, he kneels at Queen Arete's feet. He begs for help and references the arduous journey he's experienced.
- After a moment, a lord of Phaeacia suggests that they treat him with hospitality. King Alcinous gives him a royal treatment with food and drink. After the feast, he says in the morning they'll have an assembly, make sacrifices and then aid him in his journey home. He suggests that people never know when the gods are with them, and that perhaps Odysseus is a god in disguise.
- Odysseus assures him that he's mortal, and that he has experienced hardships. He speaks well enough to win the sympathy of the people. Once all have left for their beds, Arete, who has recognized the clothing he's wearing (from her palace) questions him sharply, asking for information about who he is.
- Odysseus tells her of how he was shipwrecked and after 10 days of drifting was "cursed" by the gods to Ogygia and how Calypso cherished him for 7 years (but how his heart stayed in Ithaca). He describes his journey from Ogygia to Phaeacia and how he came to have clothing from her palace.
- King Alcinous accepts his story and praises him for it. He says that if he would like to stay and marry his daughter he would be honored, but if he wants to sail home, his people (great sailors) will take him safely home.

#### **Book Eight:**

- In the morning, King Alcinous calls for a day of feasting, sacrifice, and songs. 52 able sailors begin to ready a ship for the travels. He calls for the best bard (Demodocus—dee-mo-doh-kus), a blind singer, who sings of the two great warriors of the Trojan War—Achilles and Odysseus. While he sings, Odysseus begins to weep. Only King Alcinous notices his weeping.
- The king calls for a day of contests to test men's strength and heroism.
- Odysseus sits watching, but one of Alcinous' sons, Laodamas (Lay-o-da-mas), challenges Odysseus to take part. Odysseus says no, saying he is too weighed down by his sorrows to play

these games. Laodamas challenges him further, calling him a profiteer, and claiming that he is no athlete.

- Odysseus rises to the challenge and in his anger at the slanderous words, throws a discus farther than anyone. He rages on, explaining how he could best any man there in any skill except sprinting.
- After it is clear that Odysseus has fully proved himself to the Phaeacians, King Alcinous calls for all to demonstrate for Odysseus the skills they have at dancing so that when he returns home, he can describe the Phaeacians in the best light. They also hear the story of Aphrodite's affair with Ares from the bard. Lastly, the men of the realm bestow Odysseus with fine gifts for his travels.
- As the day draws to a close, they call the bard, Demodocus again. Odysseus asks him to sing of the fall of Troy, and again weeps as he hears the tale. Alcinous notices his tears again, and this time calls for his guest to reveal his name and tell of his travels. The book ends as Odysseus prepares to launch into his tale.