# Homer’s Odyssey

Week 8 · Books 9–12 and 23 · Short reading note

## Narrative journey

The presentation follows departure, trials and homecoming. Odysseus recounts the adventures of Books 9–12 at the Phaeacian court. His account creates a story within the larger narrative.

## Books 9–10

Polyphemus violates hospitality (xenia). Odysseus uses the name “Noman” to outwit him, yet revealing his real name provokes Poseidon’s anger. Aeolus’ wind bag, the Laestrygonians and Circe show how the crew’s choices make the return home precarious.

## Books 11–12

At the edge of the Underworld, a ritual allows Odysseus to speak with Tiresias, his mother Anticleia, Achilles and Agamemnon. The Sirens promise knowledge. Between Scylla and Charybdis, leadership requires a choice between certain losses and the possible destruction of the whole crew.

## Book 23 and question

Penelope tests Odysseus through the bed built around a living olive tree. Recognition rests on knowledge they share. When does Odysseus’ cunning save him, and when does it put the return at risk?