The Odyssey Unit Test

Multiple Choice (2 points each)
PLEASE ANSWER ON LOOSE LEAF.
Identify the letter of the choice that best completes the statement or answers the question.

Critical Reading

1. Part 1 of the Odyssey is mainly about Odysseus’
   a. influence with the gods.  
   b. love of travel.  
   c. heroic deeds.  
   d. loyalty to Helios.

2. Which of the following quotations contains a description of an epic hero?
   a. “Now I let go with hands and feet, plunging / straight into the foam beside the timbers, / pulled astride, and rowed hard with my hands / to pass by Scylla.”
   b. “I rather dwelt on this part of the forecast, / while our good ship made time, bound outward down / the wind for the strange island of Sirens.”
   c. “In the next land we found were Cyclopes, / giants, louts, without a law to bless them.”
   d. “So one day I withdrew to the interior / to pray the gods in solitude, for hope / that one might show me some way of salvation.”

3. The epithet “Laertes’ son,” frequently applied to Odysseus, emphasizes
   a. Laertes’ high standards for Odysseus.  
   b. Laertes’ trust in Ulysses.  
   c. Odysseus’ lack of maturity.  
   d. Odysseus’ loyalty to his family.

4. Which statement most accurately describes the role of Zeus in Odysseus’ adventures?
   a. Zeus encourages Odysseus’ crew.  
   b. Zeus controls the weather by which Odysseus sails.  
   c. Zeus strengthens Odysseus’ enemies.  
   d. Zeus protects Odysseus’ crew from harm.

5. Which aspect of Odysseus’ character keeps him from giving his heart to Calypso or to Circe?
   a. He is self-centered.  
   b. He is eager to get back to Ithaca.  
   c. He is incapable of love.  
   d. He prefers the sea to the land.

6. While Odysseus’ men want to steal the Cyclops’ cheeses and animals and depart immediately, Odysseus wishes to see what “the cave man … had to offer.” Considering Odysseus’ character, what might he be hoping the Cyclops will offer?
   a. An exciting challenge  
   b. A faster ship  
   c. A place to stay  
   d. A good meal

7. Which is the best rephrasing of the following lines?
   When the young Dawn with fingertips of rose lit up the world, the Cyclops built a fire
   a. When dawn first broke / the Cyclops built a fire.
   b. At daybreak, the Cyclops built a fire.
   c. When Dawn touched the world with her rosy fingertips, the Cyclops built a fire.
   d. Sun rises. Cyclops builds fire.

8. Which trait does Odysseus demonstrate by lying about his name to the Cyclops?
9. What is the meaning of Polyphemus’ words in the following lines?
‘Let him lose all companions, and return
under strange sail to bitter days at home.’

a. Let Odysseus return home without his companions.
b. Odysseus will sail home under a strange sail.
c. Let Odysseus return home, alone and troubled.
d. Curse Odysseus with a difficult journey home.

10. Odysseus demonstrates the realistic, human side of his character when he
a. resists the temptations of Calypso and Circe.
b. refuses to taste the honeyed Lotus plant.
c. ties his men beneath the Cyclops’ rams.
d. weeps upon meeting Elpenor’s ghost in Hades.

11. Which character trait does Odysseus display when he listens to the Sirens’ song?

a. Laziness  
c. Selfishness
b. Loyalty to Zeus  
d. Self-sacrifice

12. If written out in prose, how many sentences do the following lines equal?
I clambered
fore and aft my hulk until a comber
split her, keel from ribs, and the big timber
floated free; the mast, too, broke away.

a. One  
c. Three
b. Two  
d. Four

13. What is demonstrated by Odysseus’ failure to wake up and prevent his men from slaughtering the sun
god’s cattle?

a. Eurylochus’ skills as a leader  
c. The power of the gods
b. Odysseus’ exhaustion  
d. The disloyalty of the crew

14. Odysseus’ comment to Telemachus, “This is not princely, to be swept / away by wonder at your father’s
presence,” means that ancient Greek princes:

a. were easily amazed.  
c. honored their fathers.
b. believed in miracles.  
d. showed little emotion.

15. Which of the following is an example of a simile?

a. Odysseus in one motion strung the bow.
b. Odysseus stood watching the unruly suitors like a captain surveying a rough sea.
c. The suitors, both strong and weak, tried and failed to string the bow.
d. The setting of the epic is the Greek isles.

16. Which of the following sentences best summarizes the Argus episode?

a. Odysseus fails to recognize his faithful dog Argus who then dies of neglect.
b. A dog named Argus is near death and lies unnoticed by his former master, Odysseus.
c. Odysseus’ faithful dog Argus, weak through neglect and abuse, wags his tail at the sound
   of Odysseus’ voice, and then he dies.
d. Before Odysseus can wean his dog Argus back to heath, the neglected animal dies.

17. The episode about Argus, Odysseus’ dog, is important to the overall plot of Part 2 because it emphasizes

a. the length of Odysseus’ absence from home.
b. Eumaeus’ awareness of Odysseus’ disguise.
c. Argus’ undying loyalty to his master.
d. the qualities that people and animals have in their youth.
18. Which of Telemachus’ actions best demonstrates his obedience to his father?
   a. His journey through Pylos and Sparta in search of Odysseus
   b. His suspicion that the beggar is a god
   c. The tears he sheds when Odysseus reveals his true identity
   d. His silence when Antinous confronts Odysseus

19. What is one result of Odysseus’ initial exchange with the suitor Antinous?
   a. Telemachus removes all the shields and weapons from the hall.
   b. Penelope summons the “beggar” Odysseus and questions him.
   c. The swineherd Eumaeus discovers Odysseus’ identity.
   d. Argus is killed.

20. The episode in which Penelope invites the old beggar to her room is important because it ____.
   a. allows suspense to build
   b. explains Penelope’s sadness
   c. foreshadows the ending
   d. reveals Odysseus’ identity

21. Why does the disguised Odysseus make up a story and tell Penelope that her husband will be home soon?
   a. To give himself a few days to figure out what to do
   b. To see whether her reaction to the news is one of joy or disappointment
   c. To prepare Penelope emotionally for recognizing and welcoming her husband
   d. To make the surprise of his true identity all the greater

22. Which character traits does Penelope reveal in Part 2 of the Odyssey?
   a. Stubbornness and fear
   b. Weakness and longing
   c. Prudence and loyalty
   d. Indecision and panic

23. Which of Odysseus’ traits allows his triumph in the bow-and-arrow challenge that Penelope sets for her suitors?
   a. His love for Penelope
   b. His loyalty to the gods
   c. His pride in his bow
   d. His skill as a marksman

24. Choose the phrase that best defines *epic simile*.
   a. A figure of speech in which one thing is spoken of as though it were something else
   b. Literary technique that involves differences between meaning and intention
   c. A work done in imitation of another
   d. A long elaborate comparison between two dissimilar actions or objects

25. Which is an important theme in the Odyssey, Part 2?
   a. Good triumphs over evil.
   b. Separation weakens relationships.
   c. The quest for power never ends.
   d. Old age triumphs over youth.

26. Which of the following best summarizes the conflict in Part 2 of the Odyssey?
   a. Odysseus fears his return to Ithaca will result in a civil war.
   b. Odysseus dislikes being home and wants to decide if he should stay before he reveals his true identity.
   c. Odysseus must deal forcefully with his wife’s suitors and determine her attitude toward him.
   d. Odysseus must choose between his loyalty to the gods and his affection for his family.

27. In a summary, a reader should
   a. restate all events in his or her own words.
   b. retell the plot briefly in his or her own words.
   c. list major events as briefly as possible.
   d. identify causes and effects for all events and happenings.

**Vocabulary and Grammar**

28. Which of the following statements is true?
a. Odysseus was able to **assuage** the winds that blew him off course.
b. Throughout the epic, Odysseus proves that he is **bereft** of common sense and physical strength.
c. The Sirens **plundered** Odysseus’ ships.
d. A **squall** forces Odysseus and his men into the land where Helios keeps his cattle.

29. Choose the item with the words that correctly complete the following sentence.

   Odysseus acts ____ a hero in challenging situations, and he expects his crew to act ____ he does.

   a. like … like  
   b. like … as  
   c. as … like  
   d. as … as

30. Two terms that best describe the Cyclops and his actions are ____ and ____.

   a. dispatched; assuage  
   b. squall; bereft  
   c. insidious; plundered  
   d. mammoth; titanic

31. Which of the following sentences contains an error in the use of **like**, **as**, or **as if**?

   a. It seems as if Odysseus’ crew would be killed by Cyclops.
   b. They hung like monkeys underneath the rams.
   c. Odysseus did not sail home soon like he thought he would.
   d. The sack of winds first seemed like a gift.

32. Despite Calypso’s ____ for him, Odysseus insists on returning to Ithaca.

   a. ardor  
   b. titanic  
   c. bereft  
   d. squall

33. Which of the following sentences contains an error in the use of **like**, **as**, or **as if**?

   a. Scylla made the sea burn like a crackling fire.
   b. It seemed like Odysseus would never get home.
   c. Every new danger seemed as if it would be the last.
   d. The men spent much of their days as oarsmen.

34. Odysseus would respond to an **insidious** member of his crew by

   a. praising him.  
   b. trying to befriend him.  
   c. punishing him.  
   d. ignoring him.

35. If Odysseus had continued to **dissemble** he would have

   a. hidden his identity from Telemachus and others.  
   b. forgiven the suitors instead of killing them.  
   c. left Ithaca and kept on traveling.  
   d. lied about why it took him so long to get home.

36. Telemachus spoke with **incredulity** when Odysseus said he was his father. This means Telemachus was

   a. angry that his father dared show up after so many years.  
   b. weeping uncontrollably.  
   c. disappointed that he had not recognized Odysseus earlier.  
   d. unable to believe the news.

37. Which pair of words correctly completes the following sentence?

   They sailed ____ the billowing waves, traveling ____ the two overhanging cliffs.

   a. among … among  
   b. between … among  
   c. between … between  
   d. among … between
38. To be maudlin is to be ____.
   a. focused on death  
   b. violently angry  
   c. foolishly sentimental  
   d. occupied by foolish thoughts

39. Which of the following sentences contains an error in the use of among and between?
   a. There is unrest between the many suitors.
   b. They talk among themselves to plot Telemachus’ murder.
   c. There is a fight between Odysseus and Eurymachus.
   d. Penelope is not sure she can tell the difference between Odysseus and an imposter.

40. Which of the following sentences contains an error in the use of among and between?
   a. The goddess Athena could tell the difference between Odysseus and a beggar.
   b. Argus had been the swiftest and strongest between all the dogs.
   c. Telemachus thinks that Odysseus stands among the gods.
   d. Odysseus is not recognized among the suitors.

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Short Answer (10 points each)
Please answer 2 of the following questions. You need to answer the questions using specific examples/references from the text.

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41. Why does Odysseus’ son, Telemachus, doubt that Athena and Zeus will help them in their fight against the suitors (lines 1112–1116)?

42. What member of the household recognizes Odysseus in the disguise of a beggar? Describe what happens to the person who recognizes Odysseus.
   a. Eumaeus, the swineherd
   b. Penelope
   c. Argus, the dog
   d. Eurynome, the housekeeper

43. In “The Suitors,” Antinous, thinking Odysseus is a beggar, throws a stool and hits him when Odysseus asks for food. Explain why one of the suitors rebukes Antinous for this action (lines 1252–1259).

44. According to “An Ancient Gesture,” what is the difference between the gesture made by Penelope and the gesture made by Ulysses (Odysseus)? Explain your answer.
   a. Penelope really had an apron; Ulysses did not.
   b. Penelope’s gesture is authentic; Ulysses’ is calculated.
   c. Penelope represents all women, while Ulysses represents all men.
   d. Penelope’s gesture is ancient; Ulysses’ is contemporary.

45. In “Ithaca,” why does the speaker suggest that the reader pray that the road to Ithaca is long?

46. After the ____, the ships were discovered ____ on the remote islands. Choose the pair of words that best fits this sentence. Then define each word in the answer.
   a. tempest; beached
   b. tempest; defrauded
   c. amber; beached
   d. picturesque; ebony
26. Sample answer: Students should explain that Telemachus believes Athena and Zeus are powerful, but thinks they are far away and may be concerned with other affairs besides the events on Ithaca.

27. Explanation: Students should explain that Argus wags his tale and acknowledges his master, and then dies. The dog’s last action is his final expression of loyalty to Odysseus.

28. Sample answer: The suitor says that the beggar could be a god in disguise, visiting earth to see how people are behaving.

29. Explanation: Students should explain that Penelope is wiping real tears of sadness and exhaustion away; Ulysses’ more calculated gesture shows the assembled throng that he is too moved to speak.

30. Sample answer: Students should explain that Cavafy uses the journey to Ithaca as a metaphor for life.

31. Explanation: Student definitions should state that tempest means a violent storm with strong winds; and beached means washed up and lying on a beach.