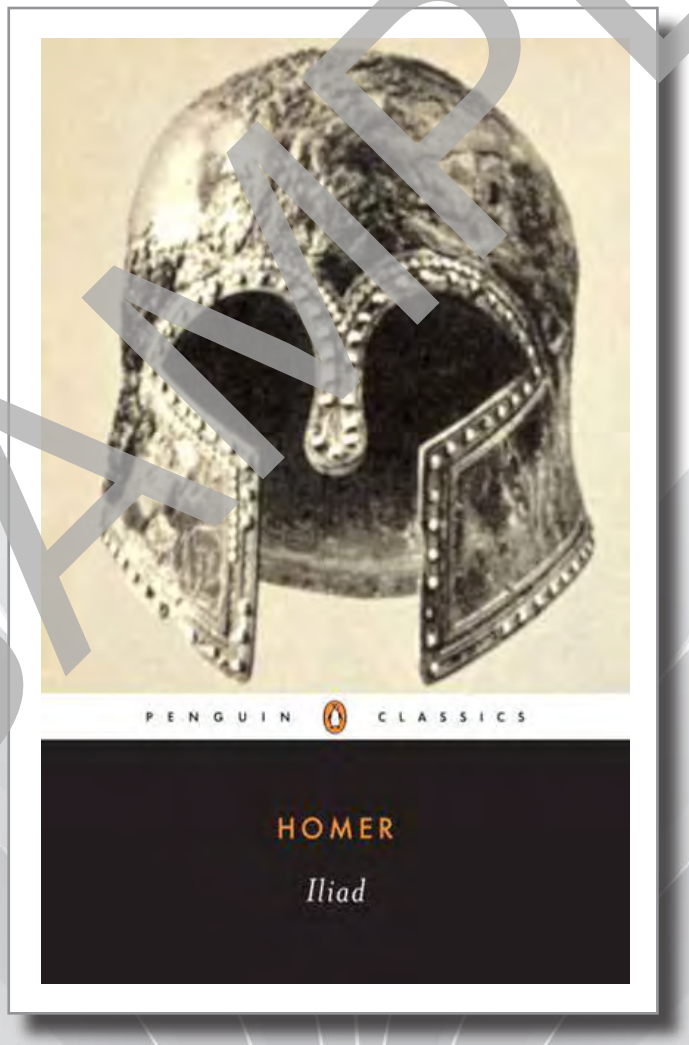
NOVELUNITS

STUDENT PACKET

GRADES 9-12

The Iliad

Homer



SAMPLE

READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT

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NOTE:

The trade book edition of the novel used to prepare this guide is found in the Novel Units catalog and on the Novel Units website. Using other editions may have varied page references.

Please note: We have assigned Interest Levels based on our knowledge of the themes and ideas of the books included in the Novel Units sets, however, please assess the appropriateness of this novel or trade book for the age level and maturity of your students prior to reading with them. You know your students best!

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Study Questions

Book One

1. In the first lines, what does Homer ask the Muse to do?
2. What started the quarrel between Akhilleus and Agamémnon? How did the god Apollo make the Greek army suffer—and why?
3. What did Agamémnon take from Akhilleus after he let Khrysêis go?
4. Why did Akhilleus come to fight the Trojans—and why did he refuse to fight them any more?
5. What appeal did Thetis make to Zeus?
6. Why did Zeus threaten to "lay [his] inexorable hands upon" his consort, Hêra? (line 653)

Book Two

1. Briefly describe the dream that Zeus made Agamémnon have.
2. What did Agamémnon do as a result of his dream?
3. Why did Nestor suggest that the soldiers should be organized by nation and clan?

Book Three

1. What were the terms of the contest between Paris and Meneláos? (What would happen if Paris were victorious? If he lost?)
2. How did Aphrodítê protect Paris during the contest with Meneláos?
3. Cite one or two lines from this book that show Helen's scorn for Paris.
4. Why did the Greeks claim victory after the contest between Paris and Meneláos?

Book Four

1. How did Zeus's suggestion about the outcome of the contest between Meneláos and Paris anger Hêra?
2. How did Athêna trick Pándaros?
3. What was the result of Meneláos's injury?

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Directions: Your project is to create a pair of interior monologues that reveal two characters' views of Hektor. Assume that your audience is composed of a group of high school students assigned the *Iliad.*

Prewriting:

1. Choose one of these pairs: Akhilleus and Hektor's wife Andromakhe; Priam and his wife; Aías and Paris; Poseidon and Zeus.
2. Students who have selected the same pairs discuss the characters' relationships with Hektor, then improvise conversations about Hektor.
3. After the improvisations, students discuss ad-libbed lines that seemed particularly appropriate to the character, effective, insightful. Group members suggest additional comments characters might have made.

During Writing:

As you write your interior monologues, keep these questions in mind—

1. **Voice:** What am I like? How do I sound? What tone do I use? What sort of language do I use? What is my attitude toward my subject—Hektor?
2. **Audience:** Who is the reader? What help does the reader need to understand my thoughts?
3. **Purpose:** Why am I thinking about Hektor? How will I let the audience know the situation in which I am having these thoughts about Hektor? Am I arguing with myself about something? Am I trying to make a decision? to soothe myself? to enjoy my thoughts? to figure something out about myself or Hektor?
4. **Content:** Think about these questions—What is my relationship to Hektor? How did I meet him? How does he feel about me? How do I feel about him? What do I like about him? What don't I like? Does anything about him puzzle me? What values do we share? What differences do we have?
5. **Organization:** Which type of pattern should I use to organize my ideas—chronological? spatial? order of importance? comparison? a combination? Am I a clear, logical thinker, or do my thoughts ramble? Do I have flashbacks? Do I ask myself questions? Do I hold conversations in my head? Do I joke with myself? Do I berate myself?

After Writing:

Read (or submit for reading) your interior monologues to fellow students (who have selected other pairs of characters for their monologues).

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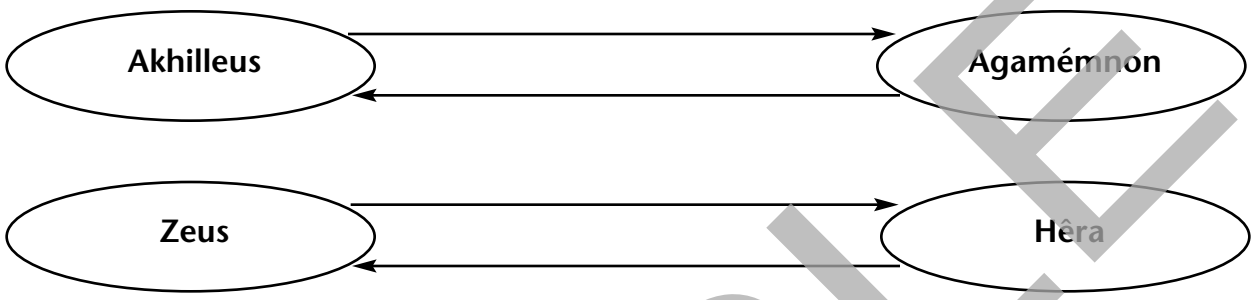
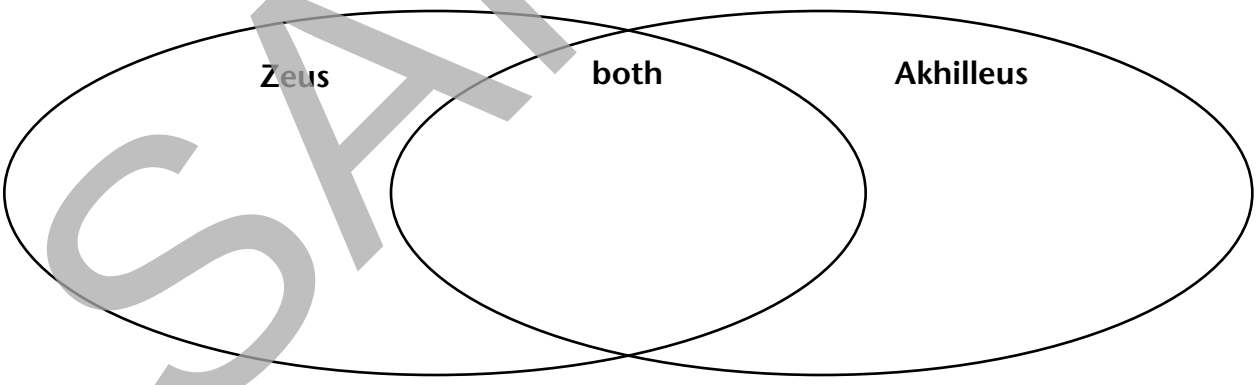
Directions:

A. In a small group, talk about the relationships between the characters below. Label each arrow with a brief description of the relationship.



Next, write an essay analyzing one of the relationships you have discussed. How do the two get along? What is the history of their relationship? What contributes to tensions between these two—jealousy? revenge? pride? Does the nature of the relationship change during the course of the poem?

B. Some critics of the *Iliad* have pointed out similarities between a god, Zeus, and the mortal, Akhilleus. Discuss what Zeus and Akhilleus are like. How are they similar and how are they different—in temperament? in their relations with peers? in how they influence the battle? in their attitudes toward the Trojans? Fill in the Venn diagram below.



Write an essay beginning with the following topic sentence: "Zeus and Akhilleus mirror each other in interesting ways…" Use some of the following phrases to organize your thoughts: *also, likewise, in addition, on the whole, again, similarly, and yet...*

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