Dramatic Vision- The Odyssey

Julette Grusell

Introduction

Imagine coming from a new country for the first time to the United States, and speaking no English or speaking very limited English. You enroll in high school and you are placed in a ninth grade regular English Language Arts class. You have to read an epic poem like *The Odyssey.* It is your first exposure to this type of text. The length and the poetic form, appears overwhelming and frustrating to you. What would it take to change your perception about reading literature? What accommodations would I need to create to assist you to take on an active role in your learning? While I am writing this unit to address the needs of my English Language Learners (ELLs), this curriculum unit can be used with all ninth or tenth grade students in regular English Language Arts (ELA) class.

In 2013- 2014 Christiana High School ELLs Program was changed from a self-contained ESL English course to an inclusion model. ELL students attending high school in the Christina School District are now enrolled in a mainstream inclusion ELA class at all grade levels. I am the only English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher at Christiana High School and I have been teaching the school's ELL population since 2005. Today, I travel with the ELLs to their regular English classes and I provide the one-on-one support that the students need. My ELL students are usually students from different countries all over the world who speak another language other than English. All of my ELL students come to school with different educational backgrounds. Some of them come with a solid academic foundation, while others have interrupted schooling, or have never attended school in their home country. As a result, they are at different reading levels ranging from grade one to nine. The support I render on a daily basis is not enough. I have to find a way to develop and create learning plans in advance to support and meet my students' educational needs. In addition, the teachers at my school from the other disciplines contact me via- e-mail or in person for teaching strategies, ideas, and extra support. I use my professional development opportunities to gather ideas and create units that I can use with my students. During my specific reading class time with my ELLs, I teach them English, specific reading skills, and I also present the regular English Language Arts content. I teach vocabulary in context, build background knowledge while providing the support requested by the other content teachers, and I stay after school to help my students.

Although I am no performer by profession, the techniques and presentations from Professor Reidel's Seminar "Stories in Performance: Drama, Fable, Story and the Oral Tradition", including Aristotle's dramatic structure, Delsarte's energy centers, and Joseph Campbell's myth of a hero are fundamental concepts I find useful to create my unit for teaching *The Odyssey* in a way that my ELLs will be able to understand and enjoy this epic poem. I enjoyed these contents and I want to incorporate them in my unit.

Objectives

I want my students not only to learn to communicate in English, but I also want them to experience other cultures that continue to impact us to this day through reading classic literature like *The Odyssey*. For this unit, there are several enduring understandings that I want my students to learn. First, I want my students to understand and know Greeks history, traditions, and values of their culture that were passed on from one generation to the next by performers called barbs or rhapsodies who narrated or sang them orally on a stage to the people. Next, I want my students to know that the barbs use similes, epithets, and allusions to express themselves indirectly and to help them remember these long poems. I also want my students to know that Homer who was a blind Greek poet is credited with writing the two most famous epics of all times: the Iliad and the Odyssey around 850 B.C. Furthermore, I want my students to understand that the Ancient Greek's heroism was not only revealed on the battlefield, but also through other heroic deeds they performed during their lifetime and that these experiences provide us with metaphors of life which is applicable to any generation. Additionally, I want my students to understand that the American social structure is fundamentally different than Ancient Greece society; however, the main protagonist's actions of *The Odyssey* reveal characteristics of our heroes today. Moreover, I want my students to realize that the Ancient Greek's belief of the divine is basically different than modern society beliefs, but that *The Odyssey* also reveals unchanged human practices. Also, I want my students to understand that a hero endures many struggles which shape their lives. Similarly, the struggles and challenges we all encounter as we go through our life experiences are what help us to develop our character and personality. In addition, I want my students to understand that we tend to overlook some of our heroes today because of our ideas of a hero. Also I want my students to make individual connection to *The Odyssey* and understand that this epic poem is applicable to our lives because it reveals the essential truth about humanity and culture. At the end of this unit, my students should be able to know, identify, synthesize, and evaluate the characteristics of epic poems, epic heroes and their roots in oral tradition. Finally, I also want them to know, identify, and apply the epic hero

characteristics and cycle pattern of events and elements to themselves, humans and life's drama - even in our world today.

Rationale

I chose *The Odyssey* because it is an excellent epic poem that provides us with a variety of teachable concepts. *The Odyssey* is one example of poetry that has endured time and will continue to live on because it is about an epic hero and is also part of the ninth grade English language curriculum in Delaware. Even though this epic poem is over two thousand years old, the literary characteristics and lessons are still appropriate to our lives and our instructions in school. I believe that if I can get my students to read *The Odyssey* I can begin to create awareness and bring about change in their perception of reading long stories which, in turn, can influence their language learning. The premise of my unit is that if I can provide my students with an enjoyable experience of *The Odyssey* their perception of literature will change and they will become more open-minded about other texts they have to read in their Language Arts classes. Therefore it is important to find a way to build my ELL reading confidence and self-esteem. I constantly, have to prove to them that "yes, you can, if you try". By providing an oral exposure to reading stories, I am hoping that they will enjoy the experience so they can become empowered and responsible for their learning. This curriculum unit is one approach I can use to provide language and cultural learning for my ELL students. For example, my students will be able to learn several English Language Arts academic and literary vocabulary, and at the same time develop or connect the enduring understanding of the role of literature to their lives and other people. I see my unit as the catalyst and the bridge to assist my students to begin to develop a love for reading.

Dramatic Vision

For me, "Dramatic Vision" involves physical demonstrations, visualizing and creating replays of the literature we read. It also means engaging my ELL students in reading the different books of *The Odyssey* aloud, in small groups and as a whole class using minimal props such as a mask, and their energy centers. I see my students being creative through art, role play and writing. That is, I envision using differentiated tasks so as to provide all my students with equal opportunities to demonstrate and express their understanding of the story. For example, students can choose a book and present it to the class by re-enacting it live or on a video or putting on a puppet show using simple puppets which they will create.

Delsarte/ Energy Centers

Delsarte (Francois Delsarte, 1811-1871) is a nineteen century French singing teacher who was like a scientist. He was a keen observer who noted that people had three distinct energy centers in their bodies. His work is based on observing human behavior across a

range of settings. According to him, these energy centers included the cognitive, emotional, and vital centers. People constantly shift into any of the three centers very quickly. The cognitive energy center is mental and is displayed through your head, fingers, elbows, toes, or nose. The emotional center is your feeling energy center and is displayed from your heart area, the palm of your hands, the soft tissue in your arms and legs and from the bottom of your feet (heart and soul). The vital center is your survival energy centered and is displayed through your pelvis, vital organs, back of your hand, outer tissue in arms and legs outside of feet. That is, in your stomach and your lower part of your body.[1]

   Delsarte's energy centers are very useful for reading aloud stories with bodily expressions. His energy centers help us express our emotions, attitudes and personalities using our dynamic body postures and gestures. Along with the awareness of dynamic body energies, and the use of masks even though they have fixed facial expressions, when students have been exposed to Delsarte's energy centers they can alter their posture and gesture to manipulate the audience impression of the emotional/attitudinal state of their character and override the emotion expressed by the mask.[2]

   "A voice which does not breathe becomes dull, collapses on itself and becomes sad."[3] This quotation by Jacques Copeau sums up the powerful role of energy centers. You need your energy centers to move and speak. Your energy center affects your voice and your posture. Shifting from one energy center to another will help the reader to develop more confidence in their oral reading. It is also an effective way to capture the listener's attention.   Your body's energy centers can be used to portray a variety of attitudes. When a reader is able to switch easily into the different energy centers they can improve their oral performance and impact the audience experience positively.   For example, if you slouch, you are able to express depression, sadness, exhaustion, or boredom. However, if you breathe from your abdomen you can express empathy, excitement, or happiness in your voice. As you change from one energy center to another, your voice changes.   In oral presentations, your energy center reveals personality and feelings. As shared by professor Reidel in his seminar, the reader who uses energy centers can bring their characters to life when reading aloud. One's energy center can enhance a character's image and it is a dynamic way to provide visual signals with which the audience can make connections. Any speaker can use their body's energy centers with or without props and still get the audience to experience and feel the story's character. Having students practice using their different energy centers can help student readers to captivate their listeners and provide a deeper understanding. Therefore, it is necessary to engage students in activities that will help them use their energy centers to talk more expressively.[4]

   I will have my students practice using their energy centers by role-playing one or two lines of shorter stories.   At first they will only incorporate their energy centers for delivering their lines orally. As my students gain confidence using their energy centers, I

will add longer scripts or more lines and the use of one prop (mask). By the time they begin to read *The Odyssey* they will already know to use their energy centers in oral reading activities.

Dramatic Structure

The model of dramatic structure that I want my students to understand is not Freytag's Pyramid[5] which portrays the climax as the highest point (in the middle) like a witch's hat. According to Professor Reidel's explanation, the dramatic structure presented in great plays from any historical period has to do with the basic premise that drama is the beginning, middle and end of a conflict. He explained that this conflict is powerful and oppositional. He provides the following examples, "black versus white, good versus evil, love versus hate, and he said if you want to describe it alphabetically, the conflict would be expressed as "A and "Z" not "A" and "D." It's "To be or not to be," rather than "To be or to have a ham sandwich." He goes on to say that dramatic structure is the way conflict develops as people or characters interact with one another[6]. Understanding dramatic structure this way is necessary when analyzing stories and epic poems.

The Greek philosopher Aristotle in the book entitled *The Poetics of Aristotle* supports Professor Reidel's dramatic structure. According to this book, Aristotle put forth the idea that stories are created with a beginning, middle and an end. As shared by Professor Reidel, the common element in any story is the introduction which is usually an introduction of a conflict, of which Shakespeare and Homer created the best introductions using ghosts, witches, and fight scenes.[7] He goes on to say that this is followed by an inciting incident which is the conflict in action known as the rising action. Professor Reidel said, "This is usually most of a play or a story. In other words, rising action refers to the complications and surprises that keep happening throughout the play or the story. It is what is going to happen next?" He reminds us that, "The conflict must be action *and* rising. Action without rising is boring. Rising without action is just noise." He continues by saying, "Crisis occurs when it can't rise any more like the boiling point or 'critical temperature'. It's the moment before the climax. The climax is the moment we've been waiting for and building towards. Last but not least is the resolution." This is the fulfillment of the journey that the play or story has taken us on. Professor Reidel says, "It is like the resolving chord in music. The crisis, climax and resolution are a tight package towards the end of the dramatic journey." Professor Reidel explains it this way, "If the play were one hundred minutes, the introduction would be ten to fifteen minutes the most. The rising action would be about seventy minutes and the crisis/climax/resolution would be the rest."[8]

Freytag's Pyramid model has taken this three parts dramatic structure and further divided them into five main parts, known as the exposition, rising action, climax, falling action and resolution. However, you can extract these five parts from Aristotle's

Dramatic Structure. For example, the beginning could be described as containing the exposition and rising action which introduces the characters, the setting, and includes a provoking incident that begins to build suspense in the story. The characters make decisions in response to the conflict. The middle section includes the rising action conflicts which builds and builds until it can go no more. In this part, the characters or the situations change positively or negatively. The beginning incident becomes more complicated, and the luck of the protagonist reverses. The end includes the climax, falling action and resolution which includes a final moment of suspense, or a happy ending, and ties-up any secondary plots.[9]

Aristotle alluded that dramatic structure exist in our lives on a daily basis, and these experiences affect our emotions giving rise to our ups and down moments. However, this dramatic structure is played out differently depending on one's culture. For example, in Western drama the most important thing is a hero who badly wants something he cannot get. In the world of Greek mythology, it is the call to a long adventurous journey which the protagonist (main character) undertakes. In Western drama there are no supernatural powers or beings intervening, but in Greek drama there are divine beings that assist or interfere with the protagonist that cause the twist and the ups and downs of the hero. Similar to Western television Drama that goes on for weeks and months, Greek drama are the end result of a very long journey over many years. Greek dramas are told in one performance, but include a lengthy period of time during which the hero undergoes a variety of unbelievable trials which helps to transform him or her so that upon return to his or her community the main character is able to celebrate triumphs. Similarly, today's television drama is an ongoing mixture of ups and downs that the main characters experience; however, the hero does not have any divine interventions. From my research, the heroic model presented by Joseph Campbell incorporates dramatic structure.[10] Unlike the television drama that ends with the protagonist final triumph in getting what he or she wants, Greek's drama reveals the protagonist weaknesses, flaws, frustrations, that leads the hero and the audience to connect to a more universal truth about life, like "True fulfillment comes from thinking beyond yourself."[11]

.

Epic Poem

Have you ever dreamed of being a superhero like James Bond, HanSolo, Superman, Bat man, Hulk, or Wonder woman and saving your country from villains? Do you wish you could be the best player in your team, or someone's hero? Do you wish you could always win even when you are outnumbered? These characteristics are what make reading epics so incredible! The heroes or the protagonists usually never lose, even when they are caught in unbelievable situations. These elements of an epic are what capture our interest. We can't help, but root for the hero!

What is an epic poem and what are the characteristics of this genre? An epic poem is a very long narrative poem that includes a variety of plots or dramatic structures - conflicts, revolving around several main characters.[12] That is, epics of the past consisted of Greek

mythological histories that occurred over many years. In the past, before writing existed, barbs developed epic poems so they could remember these stories. They were told orally or sung aloud to the audience. That is, this genre began as oral traditions being passed down from one generation to the next. Epics usually have a sequential order and repetition of the events in the story as it would make it easier to remember. These stories often took days to tell. Then when epic poems were written down, some of them maintained the format of a poem, while others were written in narrative story form.[13]

The epic *genre* of classical poetry originated in Greece.[14] The epic term applies most directly to classical Greek texts like *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey* which is narrated through several books. These books are similar to chapters in a novel. *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey* are examples of two famous epic poems that were composed around 750-725 B.C. by a blind poet called Homer.[15] In the case of *The Odyssey* the battle of Troy is the beginning of the epic with the famous Odysseus warrior of Ithaca as its hero. *The Odyssey* tells of the adventures of this hero – Odysseus.

There are many epics that have been written by different authors from different cultures. From my research I learned that the Roman author Virgil imitated this genre in the *Aeneid*. The Anglo-Saxon poem *Beowulf* is another example of an epic of the Anglo-Saxon culture, Milton's *Paradise Lost* is another epic of Christian culture, *El Cid* is an epic of Spanish culture, *Gilgamesh* is an epic of Babylonian culture, Longfellow's *Hiawatha* is an epic of American culture, and Shakespeare's historical plays have been collectively called an epic of Renaissance Britain culture. Contemporary epics are *The Lord of the Rings*, most Superhero series, *James Bond Series*, *Star Wars*, *Star Trek*, *Battlestar Galactica*, the historical narratives of the *Revolutionary War, The Civil War, World War1, World War II*, and the coverage of the Kennedy family.

Epics are no different than many of the different genres we read today. Like most literature, they follow a pattern. Similar to a play or novel, epics too must have elements that distinguish them from other writing styles. Below is a list of characteristics that can be used to identify this genre:[16]

1. It is a long narrative (story) about a serious or worthy traditional/cultural/historical subject.
2. The words are written in an elevated style. That is, the writing is formal, dignified, objective, and includes many figures of speech such as epic simile, epithet, and metaphor.
3. The narrative focused on an epic hero or demigod who represents the cultural values of a race, nation, or religious group.
4. The hero's success or failure determines the fate of an entire people or nation.
5. The action takes place in a vast setting. The setting is frequently set some time in the distant past.
6. The action contains superhuman feats of strength or military ability.

7. Gods or supernatural beings frequently take part in the action to affect the outcome. This divine intervention often implies two simultaneous plots.
8. The poem begins with the incantation of a muse to inspire the poet. That is, a prayer to an appropriate supernatural being. The speaker asks that this being provide him the suitable emotion, creativity, or diction to finish the poem.
9. Often the poet states a theme or argument for the entire work, such as "loyalty."
10. The narrative starts in medias res. That is, the story begins in the middle of the action- the conflict. Normally, the earlier events that lead to the start of the poem are recounted using flashback through the hero's narratives.
11. The epic contains long catalogs of heroes or important characters, focusing on individuals from the upper class society like kings and great warriors rather than peasants and commoners.
12. The hero goes through many terrifying journeys including a journey to the underworld. For example, a journey into hell or the realms of the dead.
13. The hero achieves his goal. For example, Odysseus returns home and reunites with his family.

The Odyssey

The Odyssey is about Odysseus, an archetype hero's journey whose ordinary world is being the king of Ithaca. He is married to Penelope and they have a new born son Telemachos. He is call to adventure when Queen Helen was taken by a Trojan prince and he is summoned to go to Battle with Troy known as the Trojan War. At first he refuses to go to battle Troy because he does not want to leave his family. He is afraid and does not know when he will be able to return to his home. He knows that it will be a very long trip, and he does not want to leave his new born son. His mentor or divine helper is Athena, who is the god of wisdom, crafts and war. Although Athena has been instructed by Zeus not to help Odysseus, she takes pity on him, guides him, and helps him while the other gods have forsaken him. She constantly saves Odysseus from death and gives him guidance in the form of information. Crossing the threshold or entering another realm takes place after the war. The gods became angry with the Greeks because of their prideful ways. They send a great storm which throws the Greeks off course. Odysseus endures many tests as he tries to go back home to Ithaca. Odysseus tells the king of Phaeacia what has happen to him so far. The king of Phaeacia helps him.

Homer starts the Odyssey in medias res. In *medias res* narrative, the story opens with dramatic action rather than exposition which set up the characters and situation. Odysseus' journey continues with the approach stage which occurs when Odysseus makes his way home, but his crew opens the bag given to him as a gift. When the bag opens it blows them far away from Ithaca. His ordeal happens when Odysseus is sent to the underworld seeking information to guide him home. This journey to the underworld brings him to the verge of death. Then he is rewarded. The King of Phaeacia gives him

passage home. The road back comes about when he arrives home and finds out that his home has been overrun by many suitors who want to steal his wife and his palace. His atonement takes place when Odysseus instead of rushing and killing the suitors is patient and wants to learn if his wife is faithful. The return happens when Odysseus dressed as a beggar completes the task and is then restored to his original state- king of Ithaca.

Epic Hero

A hero can be anyone today. People use a variety of descriptive words to define who a hero is, such as courageous, daring, or valiant. Usually a hero is an individual with different thoughts, actions and can be young or old, male or female, shy or outgoing. There is not a specific quality that can be use to describe a modern day hero.

   An epic hero is the main protagonists from history, a myth, or a legend. Epic heroes are usually male figures who are able to overcome or defeat most of their problems that they encounter, but do not possess any "supernatural or divine" powers. Yet, the epic hero is somehow connected to a Greek god, but lives his life among mortals. Epic heroes are smarter, braver, and stronger than an average person, and because he has no special powers, he must rely on his brain to get him out of difficult situations. The divine being, like a Greek god helps guide the epic hero on his journey. However, this god does not do things for the hero rather the god gives him advice that helps the hero do things for himself. The epic hero usually goes on a journey (quest or voyage), where he faces trials and enemies that change him in ways that reflect the morals and values of the society from which he came. The epic hero is usually faithful to his family, his country, and his god. Although he is brave, he often feels fear. He overcomes his fears because he knows he has responsibilities, which are mainly to conquer evil and allow goodness to triumph. An epic hero's journey helps him to discover himself, and he matures to another level when it comes to his emotions, and spirituality. Some examples of epic heroes are Achilles, Perseus, Hercules, Odysseus, and Beowulf.[17]

   When you think about a hero, do you think of someone with unusual physical strength? Or do you think of someone with a rare talent? Or do you think of someone with great courage? I believe a hero is anyone who endures great challenges, sacrifices self, goes above and beyond to help others, and has both weaknesses and strengths. Homer's epic poem "The Odyssey" presents us with a classic hero of Western Cultures. He is Odysseus and he was and continues to be an example of a hero. Contrary to our beliefs of who a hero is, he displays both heroic traits as well as human faults. Odysseus has shaped our ideas about the characteristics of a hero. These traits include extraordinary strength, altruistic, leader, courageous, clever, extremely confident, and

disregard warnings. The hero usually believes and trusts his cultural values and is willing to die for his beliefs. Today our heroes are everyday people who do something extraordinary. Heroes of today are people who touch our lives and make it better.   In tales from ancient Greece like the Odyssey, heroes were people of aristocrats with special abilities placed there between the gods and ordinary human beings. As a hero, Odysseus takes epic journeys, faces many impossible conflicts such as being away from his home for twenty years, sailing pass Scylla (six headed sea serpents), escaping the Cyclops (one eyed giant), battling menacing monsters, and singing sirens that lure sailors to their death, and being shipwrecked alone on an island; yet he is always able to resolve his conflict by using his cleverness and his strength. All of the difficulties he endures help him to develop patience so that in the end he rises as the victor.

A Hero's Journey

Joseph Campbell, in his book "*The Hero with a Thousand Faces,*" outlined three common patterns of a hero's journey that authors still use today in writing dramas, stories, and myths. He suggested that the hero's journey consists of three parts - the departure, the initiation, and the return. However, these stages can be further divided.

The Departure

The hero's journey pattern is set at the beginning in the ordinary world and the hero is introduced as a humble man who cares for his family, but he is drawn to take action because of a problematic event that affects him, his family or his country. Then the hero embarks on an adventurous journey due to a change in his family, community, or country. Usually the hero refuses at first because he fears the unknown or is aware of the dangers that lies ahead, but is compelled to take up the challenge. Next, the hero encounters someone who provides advice that will help him on his journey[18].

The Initiation

Then the hero reaches or enters a new region that does not follow the hero's way of life. Here the hero undergoes many tests and forms friendships to help him fight for his loyalty and commitment to his family, community or country. This is followed by the hero facing his greatest fear or challenge from which he emerges as a new individual. Then he continues his journey with his physical and psychological gains and is able to leave the region.

The Return

The hero engages in one last confrontation in which he undergoes another rebirth at a higher level than the previous one. The change that triggered the hero's journey is resolved and the hero returns home with evidence of his experiences, wisdom and triumphs.

Joseph Campbell tells us that the epic hero is an archetypical character found in works across time and culture. From ancient Greece stories to modern day movie making, the epic hero's journey model is the typical format writers have used to create their stories. However, the Greek poet, Homer, wrote *The Odyssey* without any knowledge of the hero's journey pattern, yet it contains the elements of a hero's journey[19].

Strategies

Determining which epic to focus on is the easy part of planning this unit. The most challenging component is establishing how I will teach all the skills needed to reach each of my ninth grade ELL student. Since my students are English Language learners, the strategies must accommodate their varying needs along with being on grade level for them. Another important factor in deciding which strategies to use is seeking a high level of engagement while incorporating higher order thinking skills. The strategies I have chosen to teach *The Odyssey* will assist in teaching all that I have discussed previously.

Build background knowledge

One of the things I have to do before I teach any concept to my ELLs is to identify what they already know about the topic. Even though my students speak little English they have some content knowledge, only that they cannot express it verbally due to lack of the English vocabulary. So I have to provide opportunities to help them make associations between their experiences and the new content. One way I like to do this is by having students who speak the same language converse in their language and brainstorm what they know about the topic and then I have them share it within their group or with the class. Since some of my ELLs have interrupted or limited schooling, there are times when I have to explicitly explain the concept especially when it comes to history and culture. Another approach I use to build previous knowledge is a picture gallery walk where I take my students on a tour of scenes from the story and we talk about what they know and notice in the picture and we talk about what they think is happening in each picture and how it might relate to the story. Then I present my students with a simple outline of the reading assignment to scaffold comprehension of the text they will read before they begin the new lesson so they know exactly what to focus on as they read a text. Other times, I use power point presentations, movies clips, or mini-videos to explicitly provide background information.

Before I teach *The Odyssey* to my students, I will introduce them to mythology, so they can enjoy this adventurous and epic hero story with Greek gods and mortals. I want

my students to have this background knowledge so they can understand *The Odyssey* because their experience will set the stage for other epics that they will have to read later on in the other grade levels.

I will expose my students to the ways stories were told long ago by story tellers using film and dramatization. I will use read aloud with dramatic expressions so my students will be able to follow this story. I will model first, and then my students will get opportunities to practice next with one sentence oral reading, then paragraphs.

Prior to reading each book, I will provide students with the book summaries. I will also have my students research the interesting customs and beliefs of the ancient Greeks before I have them read the Odyssey. At the beginning of this unit, I will introduce my students to the concepts of epic poetry and epic heroes, as well as to the author and his preceding work, The Iliad.

I will explain to my students that the most famous story from this epic is that of the Trojan horse. I will use film and story board to show my students that Odysseus epic journey began with *The Iliad*-the Trojan War. They will learn that in *The Iliad,* Odysseus and his men built a giant wooden horse. They hid inside the horse, and left it outside the gates of Troy as a peace offering. The Trojans accepted it and rolled it into the city. That night, they sneaked out of the horse and opened the city gates for the entire Greek army. The Greeks won the Trojan War because of this trick.

In providing background information I will also tell my students that when soldiers came to recruit Odysseus to go to war, he tried to escape enlistment by pretending to be crazy. However, he was proven to be sane by throwing his infant son, Telemachos, in front of his plow. Odysseus swerved to miss his son, thereby proving that he was not crazy.

Additionally, I will also have introduce my students to using masks in their oral narration of stories, and they will already know how to use their energy centers prior to this unit so they can use their postures and voice inflections to make their scripts more interesting.

Teach Vocabulary Explicitly

Before I engage my students in any reading, I review the story and I choose both academic and content words that will help my students understand the story we are about to read. Then I explicitly teach these words to my students in advance, when I introduce these words, I do so by providing visuals, the definitions, examples, and sentence usage. Afterwards, I provide my students with engaging activities such as highlighting, using the words in close sentences, dramatizing the words, playing word games, solving word puzzles, drawing pictures or creating stories with the words. That is, I always give my students many opportunities to use and master their vocabulary words. I encourage my

students to use their vocabulary words when they are discussing their texts, or having a conversation outside of class. Any word from the epic poem that may seem difficult, I will introduce through mini vocabulary lessons and I will provide my students with the opportunity to record and translate in their home language.

Graphic organizers

I use graphic organizers on a daily basis to allow my ELLs to record and organize the information and ideas they are learning. I will have my students use many different types such as Top Hat Map, K-W-L charts, story maps, cause-and-effect charts, and time lines. We complete these using the computers, physical copies or self created organizers. Each one of these provides my ELLs with a different way to show what they know. Note taking, drawing, creating graphs, oral interviews, posters, and portfolios are just a few activities that my students will complete to demonstrate their understanding as they develop their reading and writing skills in English.

   I like using graphic organizers because it allows me to provide my students with the opportunity to interact with their peers or work independently and also because graphic organizers explicitly guides my students to focus, chunk and document the new content that they are learning. These visuals help my students understand and remember what they learn. Also, using graphic organizers engage my students in organizing their thoughts, and they get more opportunities to practice talking, writing, and thinking about what they have learned. I also like using graphic organizers to have my students compare and contrast information. I will have my students use a comparison graphic organizer to compare this genre- epic with another genre they have learned like the elements of a fiction. Another way I use a graphic organizer is by providing my students with a graphic organizer so they can create a study guide booklet and I focus their attention on recording the major ideas presented, key vocabulary, summaries, quotations, and questions discussed. I have my students use their graphic organizers to review for their quizzes and exam.

   Using graphic organizers provide my students with learning tools they can always use and they also help to develop my students reading confidence to access and understand difficult content. I usually introduce and model how to complete the graphic organizer with a familiar topic as a whole class first, then in groups, pairs and then they complete one independently.   Using different graphic organizers provide my students with many ways to document their learning. Therefore, I introduce many graphic organizers to my students so they will be able to choose which ones work better for them in their learning.

   Most importantly, having learned these strategies, my students will become equipped to interact with a multitude of academic reading texts throughout the rest of their education. For an example of a graphic organizer, refer to appendix B.

Classroom Activities

The activities created below will be implemented after I have taught the students the three energy centers techniques, mythologies, and the first group of vocabulary words listed in the curriculum unit map. I currently teach eighty-seven minutes class periods. All of these lessons will take approximately one to two days, with the exception of Journey, which will take only one day.

Lesson One – Journey
What happens on a journey? Which is more important-the journey or the destination? Why?
   This introductory lesson will give students an opportunity to explore different types of journeys so they can learn what is more important about a journey.
Anticipatory Set: Have students brainstorm titles of books, movies or television shows that depict a journey of some sort- whether it's a quest to find a lost family member, a struggle to make it safely back home, or a mission to fulfill an important dream. Write these down on a brainstorming mind map graphic organizer with a phrase of what the journey was. *This will be used later to create a mind map with multiple connectors to show the characteristics of Odysseus' epic journey. It will also be used to prompt them for evaluating a movie and creating video scripts or writing pieces.* Have them share these titles and phrases with the class[20].
Directed Instruction: Model activity using a familiar story that involves a journey (the lord of the rings) The destination is Mount Doom and the goal the destruction of one ring, but the journey teaches lessons about teamwork, courage, selflessness, perseverance...) - Read the Question: Is it the journey or is it the destination? Restate it as: Which is more important the goal itself or the things that you learn as you work towards your goal? Call on volunteers to share their response. Present the 'Top Hat' compare contrast chart and fill in the chart with the students' assistance regarding *The Lord of the Ring* story. Discuss what the metaphor of the journey was.
Activity: Students will be divided into pairs and will be given one vignette with pictures and a scenario of a journey (each pair will have a different one). For example, if attending high school is a journey, then the ultimate destination is graduation. As you strive to cross that finish line, you'll face new experiences, build friendships, and even run into some frustrating road blocks. As you consider this journey, what do you think is more important? Reaching your goal and clutching that diploma in your hand, or taking time to appreciate the many moments (both good and Bad) that will lead up to graduation day? Discuss with your partner.   Students will read and discuss the questions: Which is more important the goal itself or the things that you learn as you work towards your goal? They will complete their 'Top Hat' compare /contrast graphic organizer. Afterwards, each pair will present their scenario and explain what their conclusion was providing evidence to support their conclusion.
Assessment: Students' *Check for Understanding* by confirming that they understand the metaphor of a journey in the vignettes they examined and by having students either pose questions or answer their classmates' questions, or by sharing their reactions to what they learned, or reflecting and responding orally to the essential questions.

Lesson Two –Homer's World
How does Homer's World prepare you for reading the Odyssey? What inferences can you make about Odysseus' character from information in the section The Trojan War? Why have the Iliad and the Odyssey influenced so many writers?

   This lesson focuses on "Homer's World" providing historical and geographical background, an overview of the characters, and images that will help students visualize events and characters, and stimulate their interest in reading *The Odyssey*.

Anticipatory Set: Have students view *The Odyssey* introduction video. *This* video provides many information about Homer. The students can listen and read the information because it comes with narration, pictures, and text.   This video is helpful for my students to understand the content because it uses multiple delivery mediums to portray the information. Students should list facts they learn about Homer in the video – e.g. who he was, what scholars believe, his contributions. Students should share what they learn?

Directed Instruction: Introduce students to the literature circle activity to be completed. Distribute the handouts with Homer's world background information, highlighters, sticky notes, and graphic organizer. Assign students who will work in each group. Explain that each group will be responsible for reading one section only and teaching it to the class. Each group will read their section first and highlight the important points. Then they will take their sticky notes and record these points. They will paste sticky notes on graphic organizer. Then they will use this information afterwards to teach the class.

Activity: Have each group present their information and posting on the wall. Have students fill in their graphic organizer as each group presents.

Assessment: Students' *Check for Understanding* consists of their completed graphic organizer. Does it demonstrate an understanding of the presentation?

Lesson Three – Epic Characteristics
What is an epic poem, and how does it differ from other kinds of poetry or storytelling? Why do people enjoy films, television shows, and stories about heroes who overcome great odds?

    This lesson focuses on the characteristics of epic poems, epic heroes, epic setting, and epic, themes so students can identify and compare stories, movies or characters to see which ones are examples of an epic.

Anticipatory Set: Present the definition of an epic: an epic is more than a good adventure story; an epic has an outcome that affects an entire nation or even the world. Its scale is vast, covering many countries or worlds. The hero may have super-human abilities but still has human flaws. Such flaws make the hero more appealing than a perfect character, because the audience can identify with him. Have students look back at their original brainstorm list of the names of books, movies and television shows that depict journeys. Have an individual student choose three journeys they consider epic. Then have them

move about the room and "Give one to get one" Students say the name and explain why they chose that journey.

Directed Instruction: Introduce the characteristics of an epic with a PowerPoint presentation. Explain that in literature, an epic is a long narrative poem. It recounts the adventures of an epic hero, a larger-than-life figure who undertakes great journeys and performs deeds requiring remarkable strength and archness. As you journey through many episodes from the Odyssey, expect to encounter the following epic elements: An Epic hero possesses superhuman strength, craftiness, and confidence, is helped and harmed by interfering gods, embodies ideals and values that a culture considers admirable and emerges victorious from perilous situations. Archetypes refers to characters, situations, and images that are recognizable in many times and cultures. For examples: sea monster, buried treasure, epic hero, wicked temptress, suitors, contest, and loyal servant. Epic setting includes fantasy or exotic lands and involves more than one nation

Epic themes reflect such universal concerns as courage, a homecoming, the fate of a nation, beauty, life, loyalty, and death. Have students take notes on a graphic organizer. Model how to analyze and prove whether a story is an epic.

Activity: Present a list of stories and movies. Have individual student select one that they know. Then have them drawing a web on a loose sheet and test the story example against the qualities of an epic. Have them follow the model demonstrated for testing their hypothesis.

Assessment: Students' *Check for Understanding* consists of the web graphic organizer and whether they included evidence for each epic characteristic.

Follow up lessons will consist of teaching the epic poem - *The Odyssey* using oral story telling format. I will model several books using oral performance in a simple way by reading with inflection, using my body posture, and a mask which I will create in advance. Also, I will show them that what is said is important, and how they say it is equally important. I will teach the Odyssey in two parts. For the first part, I will have students read books 1, 9, 10, 11, and 12 which talks about the wanderings of Odysseus. Then for the second part I will have my students read Books 16, 17, 21, 22 and 23 which talks about the homecoming of Odysseus. I will also

have my students create a study guide booklet of the Odyssey with the epic characteristics, art (drawing, skit, writing piece). This guide will also include book summaries and the aspect of dramatic structure portrayed in each book read. Additionally, we will work on a series of read aloud presentations in which students will use one prop and their energy centers to present the content of the assigned book from *The Odyssey*. In this manner students will identify the metaphor of the journey in *The Odyssey*. After my students have completed the reading of each book, I will have them create a storyboard to show the major elements of the epic in that particular book. They will include characters, settings, direct quotes, and explanations of each element.

Bibliography/Resources

http://www.baruch.cuny.edu/library/alumni/online_exhibits/digital/2000/c_n_c/c_01_epic/backgrounds.htm. (Accessed December 8, 2014). An excellent site for teachers to visit to gain background information about Greece, the author and the characters of *The Iliad and the Odyssey*, and synopsis of the books of *The Odyssey*.

http://www.biography.com/people/homer-9342775. (Accessed December 8, 2014). This a one page document providing information about the author of *The Odyssey*. Teachers can use the information to create a PowerPoint presentation about Homer.

http://www.heinemann.com/shared/onlineresources/e00590/chapter6.pdf. (Accessed December 8, 2014). This is a guide that teachers can access online for quick reference to teaching the classics in the classroom such as *The Odyssey*. It offers teachers a variety of graphic organizers that could be used to scaffold and present information about *The Odyssey* in a way that students will understand.

http://www.learner.org/courses/worldlit/odyssey/watch/. (Accessed December 8, 2014). This video introduces the twisting, turning, and eternally tricky hero of the story, Odysseus. The video includes Odysseus many adventures, as well as, his eventual, emotional reunion with his faithful wife, Penelope. Teachers can show this video to their class in sections after reading each book or several books.

http://www.mrdowling.com/701-homer.html. (Accessed December 8, 2014). This web page has a video that provides a good introduction into the Barbs and storytelling of long ago. Teachers could use this video as a prelude to introduce how storytelling occurred in the past.

http://www.mythweb.com/odyssey/background_s.html. (Accessed December 8, 2014). Excellent online condense one paragraph form of each book of the Odyssey. Teachers could use these shorter versions of *The Odyssey* for students who have difficulty reading.

http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/interactives/herosjourney/ (Accessed December 8, 2014). This is an online writing interactive website. Teacher could share with students to help them write about a hero's journey.

http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/interactives/venn_diagrams/ (Accessed December 8, 2014). This is an interactive comparative Venn diagram website. Teachers can share with students and students can use technology to compare information such as heroes from two different eras.

http://www.slideshare.net/misterbrewer/odyssey-introduction-powerpoint. (Accessed December 8, 2014). This site provides a PowerPoint with forty-nine slides and a

transcript of each slide entitled *"The Odyssey".* It is an excellent PowerPoint that teachers can use to introduce the Odyssey to students. However, I recommend that teachers review all the slides before using it.

http://www.webpages.uidaho.edu/engl257/ancient/iliad_and_odyssey.htm. "(Accessed December 8, 2014). This one page document provides historical background about the time period of the Odyssey. Teachers can read to gain insight of that era.

http://www.yesterdaysclassics.com/previews/church_odyssey_preview.pdf. This is an online easy reading version of the *Odyssey* that teachers can use with students who have difficulty reading and understanding a text.

Appendix A

- DE Common Core State Standards ELA - Reading: Literature Grade 9- 10 Standard Two: Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text
- DE Common Core State Standards ELA - Reading: Literature Grade 9- 10 Standard Seven: Analyze the representation of a subject or a key scene in two different artistic mediums, including what is emphasized or absent in each treatment
- DE Common Core State Standards ELA - Reading: Literature Grade 9- 10 Standard Nine: Analyze how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work
- DE Common Core State Standards ELA - Reading: Literature Grade 9- 10 Standard Ten: By the end of grade 9, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 9-10 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

In this unit students will be reading and comprehending a difficult text (ELA #10). They will be analyzing and determining key ideas and details (ELA #2). In each activity they will make connections by integrating their knowledge and ideas through discussions and dramatizations (ELA # 7 and 9).

Appendix B

Strategy: Compare and Contrast

Top Hat Organizer

Character/Subject/Topic Details Area of Contrast: (What is different about the characters/subjects/topics?)	Character/Subject/Topic Details Area of Contrast: (What is different about the characters/subjects/topics?)

Area of Comparison (What is similar about the /characters/subjects/topics?)

Summary:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

This comparative graphic organizer will be use in lesson two. After comparing the Lord of the ring epic journey students will be able to summarize their learning of the metaphor of the journey.

Notes

_____

[1] Notes from Professor Reidel

[2] From one of Professor Reidel class presentation

[3] A quote found in the book "Breath in Action: The Art of Breath in Vocal and Holistic Practice"

[4] Delsarte System of Oratory

[5] Analyzing a story's Plot: Fretag's Pyramid Adapted from http://www.ohio.edu/people/hartleyg/ref/fiction/freytag.html (accessed November 1, 2014)

[6] Notes from Professor Reidel

[7] Notes from Professor Reidel

[8] Notes from Professor Reidel

[9] Notes from Professor Reidel

[10] A PDF about different aspect of English drama http://www2.anglistik.uni-freiburg.de/intranet/englishbasics/PDF/Drama.pdf (accessed November 4, 2014)

[11] A website that provides examples of universal truths. The title of the article is: Life Truths: 17 Universal Truths We All Share http://www.lifehack.org/articles/lifestyle/life-truths-17-universal-truths-all-share.html (accessed November 18, 2014)

[12] Oxford Dictionaries Language matters Webster Online. http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/us/definition/american_english/epic (accessed November 1, 2014)

[13] This is an online video that is entitled Epic poetry, Definition, Heroes and Stories http://education-portal.com/academy/lesson/epic-poetry-definition-heroes-stories.html#lesson (accessed November 3, 2014)

[14] A glossary of literary terms http://virtualsalt.com/litterms2.htm (accessed November 10, 2014)

[15] A glossary of literary terms http://virtualsalt.com/litterms2.htm (accessed November 10, 2014)

[16] Elements, Origin, and Examples of Epics http://www.webpages.uidaho.edu/engl257/General%20lit/six_elements_of_the_epic.htm (accessed November 1, 2014)

[17] Elements, Origin, and Examples of Epics
http://www.webpages.uidaho.edu/engl257/General%20lit/six_elements_of_the_epic.htm
(accessed November 1, 2014)

[18] A website with detailed explanation about epic, epic hero and reasons for reading epics entitled *Epic: The Genre, Its Characteristics*
http://firstyear.barnard.edu/legacy/virgil/toohey#10 (accessed November 4, 2014)

[19] Notes from professor Reidel

[20] A website with brainstorming graphic organizers
http://www.eslflow.com/Brainstorming_Movies.pdf (accessed November 15, 2014)

Curriculum Unit Title	*Dramatic Vision-The Odyssey*	**Author**	Julette Grusell

- *The Odyssey* is a famous, timeless epic classic, with themes of hospitality, loyalty, perseverance, and vengeance present throughout Odysseus' journey. The Western world is constantly publishing and adopting these themes in their books and movies even today.
- Drama is part of everyone's life.
- Oral storytelling can be simple yet complex.
- What is said is important, but how it is said is equally important.
- Good stories can be told, using minimal props.
- An odyssey now refers to any long wandering and eventful journey.

Epics have six main characteristics:
- the hero is outstanding. ... the setting is large. ... the action is made of deeds of great valor or requiring superhuman courage.
- supernatural forces—gods, angels, demons—insert themselves in the action. It is written in a very special style. The poet tries to remain objective.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION(S) for the UNIT

What is it about *The Odyssey* that continues to appeal to people? Why do you think writers, artists, and film directors are drawn to *The Odyssey*? How does *The Odyssey* apply to our lives?

CONCEPT A

The elements of an epic poem

CONCEPT B

The characteristics of an epic hero

CONCEPT C

The Archetype character in you

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS A

What is an epic hero? How has Odysseus shaped our ideas about what traits a hero should have? What problems does Odysseus face while traveling by sea?

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS B

Books 9 through 12 of the story depict the trials and tribulations Odysseus faces as he tries to make his way home after the Trojan War. What do these encounters and events tell us about Odysseus's character? What do the tests teach Odysseus, and how do his experiences make him wiser and better prepared to return to his role as king?

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS C

The Odyssey features more than a dozen characters that fit an archetype, the basic model of a universal human personality. In the list of paired characters and archetypes below, whom do you most closely identify with, and why? Explain why your parents or friends would or would not recognize this archetype in you.

Antinous: Bad Boy / Bully; Athena: Mentor; Circe: Femme Fatale; Eumaeus: Loyal Companion; Eurycleia: Nurse / Caretaker, Eurymachus: Charmer; Hermes: Messenger; Laertes: Father / Patriarch; Odysseus: Hero; Penelope: Faithful Partner; Poseidon: Saboteur / Envious Other; The Sirens: Temptresses; Telemachus: Good Son

VOCABULARY A

Books 1- 7: mentor, nectar, ambrosia, valor, affliction, baleful, din, glutton, rapine, eligible, eligible, havoc, lavish, virtuous, lucid, prudence, libation, interrogate, precedence, harangue, insidious, pauper, scion, desolation, maleficent, infallible, bestial, feign, promontory, ruffian, chastise, versatile, malignant, derelict, succumb, remiss, buffet, averse, deference, auspicious, provender

VOCABULARY B

Books 8- 13: nymph , cuckold, cudgel, conveyance, inept, munificence, peerless, paramount, blithely, immersion, citadel, decorum, suppliant, congenial, squall, teeming, appalled, avowal, rueful, converge, limpid, foreboding, assuage, ignoble, bereft, impalpable, unwitting, indomitable, largesse, clangor, bastion, calamitous, perilous, pandemonium, eddy, felicity, reprisal, unearthly, meager, dissimulation, hinterland, cache, colloquy

VOCABULARY C

Books 14- 18: Mourn, sojourn, inveigle, ominous, benevolent, fury, imperious, sequester, enlighten, patron, minion, respite, vagabond, renowned, berth, courier, candor, quandary, rancor, incredulity, squelch, righteous, patrimony, ravage, surmise, forsake, portent, mendicant, goad, qualm, alms, rummage, famished, squander, farce, wily, waif, indignity, hind, minx, cajole
Distinguished, loamed

VOCABULARY D

Books19- 21: chattel, brazen, equity, stripling, bounty, wry, odium, impervious, anguish, chide, vigil, reign, adversity, loiter, tether, hector, humiliation, reproach, commandeer, plunder, postpone, prospect, gaffer, contempt, glower, gird, superficial, scruples, throes, vanquish, pell-mell, abyss, prophesy, replenish, venerable, squalor, bewail, swoon, query, yield, arbiter

VOCABULARY E

Academic vocabulary: audience, characterization, connotation, conventions, denotations, dialogue, direct quotation, antecedents, editing, epic, epithets, figurative language, epic simile, allusion, flashback, imagery, narration, plot, omniscient point of view, revision, setting, tone, conflict, onomatopoeia, personification, assonance, alliteration, prose, poetry

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION/MATERIAL/TEXT/FILM/RESOURCES

Summary: The Odyssey begins ten years after the fall of Troy. Odysseus has been roaming the seas for a very long time without getting back home to Ithaca, where his wife and son are trying to fend off a mob of disrespectful suitors. As the epic poem begins, Odysseus is imprisoned by the goddess Calypso who refuses to let him go and forces him to do things he probably enjoys. Zeus the head of all the Greek Gods, sends his servant Hermes to convince Calypso to release Odysseus. Odysseus washes up on the island of Phaecia where he tells King Alcinous about his adventures of pillaging, fornication, séances, gluttony, boasting, slaying monsters, and slaughtering of sacred cattle. After hearing Odysseus' story, the Phaecian king helped him to get back home to Ithaca where he finds his house overrun by many suitors living off his land and fighting for his wife's hand in marriage. With the help of Athena, goddess of war and wisdom, Odysseus creates a plan, in which his son Thelamacus participates in the merciless slaying of the treacherous suitors and disloyal servants. Then Odysseus reunites with his wife.