

Name:

Period:

The Odyssey Unit: PIE Paragraph #3 (Book 10, Circe)

Instructions: Read the following two selections – excerpts from Book 10 of the Odyssey and the poem “Circe’s Power” by Louise Gluck – and answer the following question using the PIE method:



*Is Circe a villain or a hero? Explain your answer and support it with evidence from **both** selections.*

Selection #1 – Book 10 of the Odyssey:

“In the wild wood they found an open glade,
around a smooth stone house – the hall of Circe –
and wolves and mountain lions lay there, mild
in her soft spell, fed on her drug of evil.
None would attack – oh, it was strange, I tell you –
but switching their long tails they faced our men
like hounds, who look up when their master comes
with tidbits for them – as he will – from table.
Humbly those wolves and lions with mighty paws
fawned on our men – who met their yellow eyes
and feared them.

In the entrance way they stayed
to listen there: inside her quiet house
they heard the goddess Circe.

Low she sang
in her beguiling voice, while on her loom

she wove ambrosial fabric sheer and bright,
by that craft known to the goddesses of heaven.
No one would speak, until Polites – most
faithful and likeable of my officers, said:

‘Dear friends, no need for stealth: here’s a young
weaver
singing a pretty song to set the air
a-tingle on these lawns and paven courts.
Goddess she is, or lady. Shall we greet her?’

So reassured, they all cried out together,
and she came swiftly to the shining doors
to call them in. All but Eurylochus –
who feared a snare – the innocents went after her.
On thrones she seated them, and lounging chairs,
while she prepared a meal of cheese and barley
and amber honey mixed with Pramnian wine,

adding her own vile pinch, to make them lose
desire or thought of our dear father land.
Scarce had they drunk when she flew after them
With her long stick and shut them in a pigsty –
bodies, voices, heads, and bristles, all
swinish now, though minds were still unchanged.
So, squealing, in they went. And Circe tossed them
acorns, mast, and cornel berries – fodder
for hogs who rut and slumber on the earth.

Down to the ship Eurylochus came running
to cry alarm, foul magic doomed his men!
But working with dry lips to speak a word
he could not, being so shaken; blinding tears
welled in his eyes; foreboding filled his heart.
When we were frantic questioning him, at last
we heard the tale: our friends were gone...”
(1224-5)

Selection #2 – “Circe’s Power” by Louise Gluck:

I never turned anyone into a pig.
Some people are pigs; I make them
Look like pigs.

I’m sick of your world
That lets the outside disguise the inside. Your men weren’t bad men;
Undisciplined life
Did that to them. As pigs,

Under the care of
Me and my ladies, they
Sweetened right up.

Then I reversed the spell, showing you my goodness
As well as my power. I saw

We could be happy here,
As men and women are
When their needs are simple. In the same breath,

I foresaw your departure,
Your men with my help braving
The crying and pounding sea. You think

A few tears upset me? My friend,
Every sorceress is
A pragmatist at heart; nobody sees essence who can’t
Face limitation. If I wanted only to hold you

I could hold you prisoner.



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Highlight or underline (preferably highlight) your point, illustrations, and explanations in different colors. Fill out the following color key:

= Point

= Illustration

= Explanation

