

While Odysseus and Penelope are similar in their strategic intelligence, cunning and wit, they are different in their levels of emotional restraint, which proves Penelope's patient and quiet endurance makes her the more heroic figure.

BODY PARAGRAPH 1: Odysseus – Using Deception

Assertion: Both characters might live in different worlds, but they both share the Greek trait of "Metis," which is basically being sneaky and using lies to get the upper hand on people.

Evidence & Analysis:

Quote 1: While he is stuck in the cave with the Cyclops, Odysseus hides who he really is by saying: "Nobody—that's my name. Nobody—so my mother and father call me, all my friends" (9.410-411).

Analysis: This shows how smart Odysseus is because he realizes that being strong isn't enough to win. By giving a fake name, he tricks the other giants into not helping their friend, which proves that a hero uses his head to get out of trouble.

Quote 2: To make sure he gets past the Sirens safely, he tells his crew to "lash me bound in the straits... twisted cords to bind me fast to the mast" (12.174-179).

Analysis: This shows he is a good planner. He wants to hear the song but makes sure he is tied up so he can't do anything dangerous, which is a perfect example of his cleverness.

BODY PARAGRAPH 2: Penelope – Using Deception

Assertion: Penelope has that same cleverness, but she uses it inside her house to trick the suitors and keep her family safe.

Evidence & Analysis:

Quote 1: The suitor named Antinous explains how she fooled them all: "she set up a great loom in the royal halls and she began to weave... 'young men, my suitors... wait until I finish this robe'" (2.102-105).

Analysis: Penelope uses weaving—something most people would think is just a hobby—as a way to stall for time. By ripping out her work every night, she tricks over a hundred men for years, showing she is just as tactical as any soldier.

Quote 2: She tests Odysseus after he returns by saying: "move the sturdy bedstead out of our bridal chamber... the great spearman built himself" (23.197-199).

Analysis: This is her smartest trick. Since their bed is built into a tree, she knows it can't be moved. Only the real Odysseus would know that, so it's her way of making sure she isn't being lied to.

Comparison Analysis: Both of them survive by being great liars. Odysseus specifically uses it to find his way home, and Penelope uses it to protect that home. They are equals in brainpower, but Penelope's trick is harder because she has to keep it going every single day.

BODY PARAGRAPH 3: Odysseus – Lack of Self-Control

Assertion: The biggest problem with Odysseus is that he gets too proud and loses his self-control, which usually leads to a lot of trouble for him and his men.

Evidence & Analysis:

Quote 1: When he is sailing away from the Cyclops, he can't keep his mouth shut and yells: "Cyclops—if any man... should ask who blinded you, say it was Odysseus" (9.558-560).

Analysis: This is a huge mistake. His ego (or hubris) makes him tell the giant his name, which lets the giant ask Poseidon to curse him. This shows his lack of control is his main weakness.

Quote 2: His curiosity also gets him in trouble when he stays in the cave: "I would not give way... not till I might see him, see what gifts he'd give" (9.256-258).

Analysis: This shows Odysseus can be selfish. He wanted to see a monster just for the experience, and that lack of restraint put his whole crew's lives at risk.

BODY PARAGRAPH 4: Penelope – Emotional Strength

Assertion: Penelope is certainly different because she has total control over her emotions, staying focused even when she is in a lot of pain.

Evidence & Analysis:

Quote 1: She tells the "beggar" (who is really Odysseus) how she feels: "I waste away! My heart breaks for Odysseus... but I wind my schemes" (19.148-150).

Analysis: Even though her heart is breaking, she doesn't stop her "schemes." She is actually stronger than Odysseus because she can keep her feelings hidden while her life is falling apart.

Quote 2: Even when she sees Odysseus, she keeps her guard up, with a heart that was "iron," while she was "sitting in silence... wondering... scanning his face" (23.190-194).

Analysis: She doesn't let her happiness take over until she knows for sure it's him.

Having a "heart of iron" is a special kind of strength that Odysseus doesn't always have.

Comparison Analysis: Odysseus's ego and pride only gets his men killed and makes his trip take twenty years. Penelope's self-control saves her home and her son. Because she is more disciplined, she ends up being the better hero.

CONCLUSION

Thesis Connection: Penelope and Odysseus are both smart, but Penelope's emotional discipline makes her stand out.

Main Points: Odysseus is a hero of action who lets his pride mess things up. Penelope is a hero of patience who never lets her emotions get in the way of her goals of her life.

The Big Picture: This shows that being a hero isn't just about fighting; it's about staying strong on the inside. Penelope is the more heroic figure because she won her battle by never losing her self-control.