

from the Odyssey, Part I by Homer
Vocabulary Warm-up Word Lists

Study these words from the “Odyssey,” Part I. Then, complete the activities that follow.

Word List A

companions [kuhm PAN yuhnz] *n.* friends

Marcy and three companions walked to the park together every day.

compelled [kuhm PELD] *v.* forced

The storm compelled us to turn back.

entreat [in TREET] *v.* plead

I entreat you to give me another chance.

immortal [i MAWR tuhl] *adj.* living or continuing forever

Sometimes, people take great risks, thinking that they are immortal.

penalty [PEN uhl tee] *n.* a loss or punishment resulting from some action

One penalty of fame is the lack of privacy.

plucked [PLUHKT] *v.* pulled something off or out quickly

Marguerite plucked the petals from a daisy.

shepherd [SHEP uhrd] *n.* a person who watches over sheep

The shepherd was worried over the one lost sheep.

urged [ERJD] *v.* strongly recommended or encouraged

The inspector urged the homeowners to repair the roof.

Name _____ Date _____

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Vocabulary Warm-up Exercises

Exercise A *Fill in each blank in the paragraph with an appropriate word from Word List A. Use each word only once.*

“I have [1] _____ the last feather from my last chicken,” declared Otis passionately to his fellow workers in the chicken-packing factory. “I feel [2] _____ to quit this job right now! I am going to get a job as a [3] _____! At least I will be outdoors, getting some fresh air every day.” Otis’s [4] _____ on the factory floor tried to calm him down. They strongly [5] _____ him to reconsider his decision. “I [6] _____ you, Otis, to think twice about this. If you quit now, I am sure the [7] _____ will be that you will not ever be rehired,” said Estelle. “I do not care!” said Otis. “I know I am not [8] _____, and I also know that life is short. I must do what makes me happy.”

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Reading Warm-up A

Read the following passage. Pay special attention to the underlined words. Then, read it again, and complete the activities. Use a separate sheet of paper for your written answers.

A desire to do well often compelled ancient storytellers and poets to begin their work with a call to three Greek goddesses known as the Muses. The Greeks believed that the Muses had the power to inspire people. They also thought that the Muses could prompt the memory. Because no books existed at the time, early storytellers had to rely on their memories, so they would entreat the Muses for their help.

According to legend, the Muses were the daughters of Zeus, the chief god, and Mnemosyne (Memory). Before Hera became Zeus' wife, Zeus took the form of a shepherd. He tended a flock of sheep in the hills where Mnemosyne lived. He stayed with Mnemosyne for nine nights. Mnemosyne later gave birth to nine daughters.

The Muses were supposedly born in this order: Calliope, Clio, Melpomene, Euterpe, Erato, Terpsichore, Urania, Thalia, and Polymnia. Like their father, they were immortal, meaning they could never die. They lived on Mount Olympus, the home of all the gods and goddesses. Here they had many companions, such as the three Charities, goddesses of grace.

Each of the Muses is said to preside over a different branch of the arts or sciences. Calliope is associated with epic poetry, Clio with history, and Melpomene with tragedy. Euterpe is associated with lyric poetry, Erato with love poetry, and Terpsichore with choral dance and song. Urania is associated with astronomy, Thalia with comedy, and Polyhymnia with sacred poetry.

One myth about the Muses involves Hera, queen of the gods. One day, Hera spoke to the Sirens, who had the bodies of birds and the heads of beautiful women. She urged them to compete in a singing contest with the Muses. When the Muses won, they demanded a penalty from the Sirens. They plucked out all of the Sirens' feathers and used them to make crowns for themselves.

Next time you need to be creative, try calling upon the Muses. Perhaps you will hear them singing just to you.

1. Underline the words that tell what compelled storytellers and poets to address the Muses. Tell about something you felt *compelled* to do.
2. Circle the words that explain for what early poets would entreat the Muses. What does *entreat* mean?
3. Underline the words in the next sentence that describe the job of a shepherd. What might be the most important aspect of a *shepherd's* job?
4. Circle the words that tell what immortal means. Use *immortal* in a sentence.
5. Circle the words in the next sentence that name some of the Muses' companions. Name a few of your favorite *companions*.
6. Underline the words that explain what Hera urged the Sirens to do. Describe something that someone *urged* you to do lately.
7. Underline the words that tell who had to pay a penalty. Describe a *penalty* you once had to pay.
8. Circle the words that tell what the Muses plucked out. What else might be *plucked* out?