

RECITATIONS

“Speak, memory”

ACTIVITY: In antiquity there was a group of traveling rhapsodes called the *Homeridae*, or “children of Homer,” (pictured right), who specialized in performing Homeric poems. In order to gain deeper appreciation of the rhythm and construction of Homeric verse (as well as experience Homer as it was intended—out-loud), we will become latter-day *Homeridae* and participate in the tradition of the recitation of Homer by memorizing and reciting several short passages from Homer’s *Iliad* and one from the *Odyssey*. I will provide the ῥάβδος, the Μοῦσαι the inspiration, and you the φωνή.



DUE DATE: various (see details below)

RECITATIONS:

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| 1) Proem to the <i>Iliad</i>: (vv. 1-9a). We will begin practicing this proem on the first day of class, and will continue practicing in our meetings during the week. By Monday, January 29 st , you should be able to recite the proem from memory as part of a group recitation together with your peers. Recordings of the proem are available on the “Digital Resources” page of the course website. | JANUARY 29 |
| Solo recitation: Solo recitations the proem to the <i>Iliad</i> . I am happy to help you practice your passages during my office hours. | FEBRUARY 2 |
| 2) Proem of the <i>Odyssey</i> (vv. 1-11): by this date, be prepared to recite the proem to the <i>Odyssey</i> from memory as part of a group recitation together with your peers. | FEBRUARY 12 |
| Individual recitation: Solo recitations the proem to the <i>Odyssey</i> . | FEBRUARY 16 |
| 3) Passage of your choice: during one of the class sessions where you serve as ἄναξ, you may be asked to recite a short section of the prepared reading (less than 10 lines). | VARIOUS |
| 4) Solo recitation: as part of your commentary project , you will memorize your passage. At the end of the semester, ἐπεὶ πόσιος καὶ ἐδητύος ἐξ ἔρον ἔντο, you will perform your last rhapsodic duty of the semester and recite it. You are also encouraged to recite your passage at OraliTea '07 (Oral Recitation of Ancient Languages; date TBA). | ~MAY 4 |

MEMORIZING HELP: You have already memorized vast swaths of Greek vocabulary, paradigms, syntactical rules (and common violations to those rules), and so you are probably your own best guide when it comes to learning these passages. Nevertheless a few words of advice: **1) start early:** if, for example, you have a week of learn 8 lines, by learning 2 lines per day you will have time enough to practice and really internalize the passage long before your performance; **2) write out the passage:** many people find writing out the passage themselves to be a great help in learning the passage; you can also write out the passage as a check to see if you have learned it successfully—if you can write out the passage—accents and all—then you obviously know the passage and its pronunciation; **3) practice makes perfect;** **4) HAVE FUN!** Can memorizing be challenging?—yes; but that does not mean that you cannot have a good time doing it. Try working with a partner; set small goals and reward yourself when you reach them; ponder the deeper poetic significance of a simile or enjambed word, whatever it takes to remember that the passages you are learning are beautiful and powerful in their own right and the source of so much of the literature and culture that you love—**THIS IS HOMER GOSH DARN IT, ENJOY IT!**

As always, don’t hesitate to contact me with questions.