

Epic

The Epic



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 cunning.

Homeric similes

Homer often develops a simile at great length, so that it goes on for several lines.

Allusion

An allusion is a reference to a famous person, place, or event. To help his audience picture what he described, a poet might have made an allusion to something they already knew. For instance, when Odysseus' son first sees the palace of Menelaus, he says, "This is the way the court of Zeus must be." Every Greek would have understood this allusion to the ruler of the gods.

Epithet

An epithet is a brief descriptive phrase used to characterize a particular person or thing. When a poet needed to fill out a line, he'd add an epithet with the right meter and number of syllables. Odysseus is known by various epithets, including "son of Laertes" and "raider of cities."

Homeric Similes

Book 20:

“His rage

Held hard in leash, submitted to his mind,

While he himself rocked, rolling from side to side,

As a cook turns a sausage, big with blood

And fat, at a scorching blaze, without a pause,

To broil it quick: so he rolled left and right....”

Epithet

Book 1:

“Are you not moved by this, **Lord of Olympus?**

Had you no pleasure from Odysseus’ offerings beside the Argive ships, on Troy’s wide seaboard?

O Zeus, what do you hold against him now?

To this the summoner of cloud replied:

“My child, what strange remarks you let escape you.

Could I forget that kingly man, Odysseus?

There is no mortal half so wise; no mortal

Gave so much to the lords of open sky.”

Allusions

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“This is the way **the court of Zeus** must be.”

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Book 1: “Of these adventures, **Muse**, daughter of Zeus, tell us in our time”

Book 11: “I gave command to my officers to flay those sheep the bronze cut down, and make burnt offerings of flesh to the gods below- to sovereign Death, to pale Persephone.”

**How do the
structures help
you understand
characters and
events?**

Structural Elements of poetry PAT list:

- ▣ Homeric Similes
- ▣ Epithet
- ▣ Allusions

- ▣ Figurative language
- ▣ Alliteration
- ▣ Assonance
- ▣ Imagery
- ▣ consonance