

# Old Western Culture

*A Christian Approach to the Great Books*

## Year 1: The Greeks

### Unit 1

# The Epics

*The Poems of Homer*



A ROMAN ROADS MEDIA *Video Course*

## Exam B Answer Key

*Please Note: This exam may be periodically updated, expanded, or revised.  
Download the latest revision at [www.RomanRoadsMedia.com](http://www.RomanRoadsMedia.com).*

## NOTES FOR PARENT OR TEACHER

### GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS:

- Have the student answer all questions in full sentences.
- Exam should take 45 to 90 minutes. Do not allow more than 2 hours.
- Feel free to allow the student more paper, or to type the answers on a computer.
- This is a closed-book exam. If typing the answers, no Internet access allowed.

### POINT SYSTEM

This exam consists of ten questions, valued at 8–12 points each, for a total of 100 points. Two two extra credit questions are worth 5 points each. If a student answers correctly to all questions, as well as the bonus questions then he or she will have scored 110%. Partial credit (e.g., 5/10 points) may be given if the student correctly answers part of the question, but misses some important elements. Points lost on the main exam can be recouped by answering the bonus questions correctly.

### HOW TO GRADE

Because the exam consists of essay questions, it will be both harder to answer and harder to grade compared to multiple choice exams. However, it allows the student to think through what he has learned in a deeper and more meaningful way and aids in long-term retention and more useful application. For example, you will find that a student who is required to answer essay questions will more easily integrate what he has learned into his general knowledge and able to use it in informal conversation.

Since these are not multiple choice, *answers will vary*. This answer key provides sample correct responses for each question, but it is possible that a varying answer may still be correct. If you have followed along with the video and interacted with your student throughout the term, you should be able to determine if a certain variation on the answer is a correct one. If you are truly not sure, sit down with your student and figure out the correct answer together. You can also submit questions via “Ask Mr. C” by sending an email to [AskMrC@romanroadsmedia.com](mailto:AskMrC@romanroadsmedia.com). We may respond by email or by a public video response if we feel this is a question many students would benefit in hearing more about.

Also, we purposefully created short and concise answers in this answer key. We expect most student answers to be longer, though this is not a requirement. Many of these questions could be an entire paper topic, and we would encourage students display as much of their knowledge as they can in their answer. This is also why we encourage parents or teacher to allow the student to type out the answers.





## HOW TO STUDY FOR THE TEST

Have your student read through his or her notes from throughout the term as general preparation, as well as study the answers from the daily worksheets. These questions will be familiar to the student who has worked through all questions in their workbook.

## THE A AND B EXAMS

This course includes two exams, designated A and B. Although there is some overlap, most of the questions will be different, but equivalent. These tests may be used in a couple of ways. One way is to use exam A as a practice exam, open or closed book, and exam B as the graded, closed-book exam. Exam B could also be used as a “second chance” exam if exam A didn’t go as well as the student had hoped.

There is flexibility here, and the parent or teacher is free to choose how to use the extra exam.

## “MY STUDENT IS HAVING TROUBLE GETTING 100%!”

This can prove a frustration with essay exams. One thing to watch out for is that there IS variation in correct answers. Read the “How to Grade” note on the previous page for more information on this.

Another issue is that we have culturally grown accustomed to 100% being the norm for a “good student” and believe that less than 100% indicates a crucial deficiency. But 100% in the classical Latin system is “SCL” (*Summa Cum Laude*), which means “with highest praise.” In the Latin system of grading, SCL is reserved for the student who goes beyond the call of duty, and often even teaches the teacher something. In a system where “good” is 100%, going beyond the call of duty is not incentivized, and good students do not progress. So do not worry if your student gets an 85% —in the Latin system that’s a CH, or *Cum Honore*, with honor — and should be received as such.

## QUESTIONS?

If you have any questions, feel free to email us at [questions@romanroadsmedia.com](mailto:questions@romanroadsmedia.com). We love to hear from our parents and teachers, and look forward to serving you in any way possible!





# The Epics

## Exam B Answer Key

### ESSAY QUESTIONS.

1. According to C. S. Lewis, why should we read old books? (10 pts.)

In his essay "On the Reading of Old Books," C. S. Lewis says that by reading old books we keep "the clean sea breeze of the centuries blowing through our minds." Old books often challenge the basic assumptions that we inevitably share with our peers and are often unaware that we have. The authors of old books may have serious errors and shortcomings, but probably not the same shortcomings and mistakes that we have.

2. Where did Homer live? What country is this today? (8 pts.)

Homer lived in Ionia, which is in modern day Turkey.

3. How did Eris, the goddess of discord, work her charms at the wedding feast of Peleus and Thetis? Summarize the "Judgment of Paris" episode. How did this set the stage for the Trojan War? (12 pts.)

Eris sows discord at the wedding feast of Peleus and Thetis by tossing a golden apple with the inscription "To the Fairest" on the table before Hera, Athena, and Aphrodite. Zeus refuses to cast a judgment, but just then a shepherd boy (who turns out to be Paris) stumbles out of the woods and agrees to settle the issue. The three goddesses promise him various favors if he will judge in their favor, but Paris awards the apple to Aphrodite, who promises him the most beautiful woman in the world. The only problem is that the most beautiful woman in the world happens to be Helen, who is married to Menelaos. Paris seduces Helen with the intervention of Aphrodite and brings her back to Troy, sparking the conflict of the Trojan War.

4. In one sentence, what is the theme of *The Iliad* according to the opening lines of the poem? (8 pts.)

The theme of the Iliad is the anger of Achilles and its consequences.

5. What is Nestor's idea for Patroklos that ultimately leads to Patroklos' death? (10 pts.)

Zeus is sporadic in keeping his promise because he keeps getting distracted. He is neither omnipotent nor omniscient, so as soon as he turns his attention away from the plains of Troy, other factors come into play.

6. What does Thetis do for Achilles in book eighteen after Patroklos dies? (10 pts.)

Thetis has the smith god Hephaestus (Vulcan) make new armor for Achilles, which includes an especially famous shield.

7. What is the old meaning of a "comedy"? (10 pts.)

A comedy is a story with a happy ending, often culminating in a wedding celebration.

8. The first 7 lines of *The Iliad* told us what the story was about—the anger of Achilles and its devastation. What do the first 10 lines of *The Odyssey* tell us the subject is?? (10 pts.)

In the first ten lines of *The Odyssey*, we learn that the subject will be the journey home of Odysseus, with its many pains and toils as he struggles to save his companions and bring them home.



9. Why is was it a mistake for Odysseus to reveal his true identity to the Cyclops? What is the result? (12 pts.)

By identifying himself by name, Odysseus can be cursed by name. The Cyclops prays to his father Poseidon, who curses Odysseus and gives him toil and hardship as he "wanders many ways" on his journey home.

10. What is the crime of the suitors? (10 pts.)

The suitors are not just "eating Odysseus out of house and home," they are also guilty of treason, and are even willing to murder Telemachos to that end.

11. How does Penelope test Odysseus to verify his identify? (BONUS QUESTION FOR EXTRA CREDIT) (5 pts.)

Penelope tests Odysseus by suggesting that the servants pull the bed out of her bedroom for Odysseus to sleep on, knowing that only the true Odysseus would know that to be impossible since he built their bed himself, using a living tree as one of the posts.

12. What major historical event occurred in 1453 A.D. that prompted a renewal of Greek learning in the Latin West? (BONUS QUESTION FOR EXTRA CREDIT) (5 pts.)

The fall of Constantinople to the Ottoman Empire in 1453 A.D. prompted a renewal of Greek learning in the Latin West as Byzantine Christians from the East began to flood into Europe, bringing Homer, Plato, Aristotle, Herodotus, and other Greek texts with them.