



The Odyssey Ancient Greek Hospitality

In ancient Greek culture, **xenia** was a fundamental social custom of hospitality in which generosity and courtesy were bestowed upon visitors, even strangers, who were far from home.

The Odyssey abounds with examples of good hospitality, which represents *xenia*, and bad hospitality. Identify at least four examples of each, including specific details.

Good Hospitality	Bad Hospitality
<p>Nestor welcomes Telemachus warmly before he knows his identity as a prince, providing food and wine. Nestor gives him gifts, a room at the palace, and horses and a chariot. He also hosts an elaborate ceremony and feast in Telemachus's honor. Nestor's daughter bathes and oils Telemachus. Nestor's son accompanies Telemachus to Sparta.</p>	
<p>Text citation:</p> <p>Book 3</p>	<p>Text citation:</p>
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Review your completed chart to determine the key responsibilities of hosts in ancient Greece. Then think about how a modern-day host could fulfill the custom of *xenia*. How would you treat Odysseus if he visited your home right now? On a separate sheet of paper, write a paragraph explaining how you would demonstrate *xenia* toward your guest. Be sure to tie the ideas in your paragraph to the examples you cited from the poem.

Answer Key

Sample Student Response

If Odysseus came to stay at my house today, I would demonstrate *xenia* in many ways. First, to make sure he had everything he needed to be comfortable, like Nestor did when he welcomed Telemachus with food and wine. For example, I would give him the WiFi password so he didn't use up all his data on his phone. Then, like Nestor provided a chariot to Telemachus, I would offer Odysseus rides anywhere he needed to go, and if I was unable to drive him, I would order him a ride on my rideshare account. I also would make sure he understood that he couldn't walk around naked or he could get arrested.

RL.9-10.1 Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RL.9-10.2 Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.

W.9-10.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.