

Name _____

Date _____

Homer

Use the text to answer each question below.

1. Homer's *Iliad* is an epic poem about the Trojan War, an important event in Greek mythology. According to legend, the conflict began when a prince from Troy, an ancient city-state located in modern-day Turkey, kidnapped the wife of the king of Sparta. Greek city-states then joined forces to lay siege to Troy for the next 10 years. The *Iliad* takes place during the final weeks of the war. Agamemnon, commander of the Greek forces, gets into a dispute with Achilles, his most powerful fighter. When Achilles refuses to go back into battle, his best friend, Patroclus, assumes his place, only to be slain by the fierce Trojan warrior Hector. Furious, Achilles vows to avenge his fallen friend. Following a dramatic duel, he kills Hector outside the walls of Troy. The Greeks celebrate for days, only relenting after Hector's father, Priam, pleads with them to give his son a proper burial. Both sides reconcile, and Hector is finally laid to rest. Throughout the story, Greek gods like Zeus and Hermes intervene to assist their favorite fighters on either side and resolve interpersonal conflicts.

Which of these is NOT true of the *Iliad*?

- | | |
|---|---|
| A. It takes place during a major mythological conflict. | B. It features Greek gods intervening in humans' affairs. |
| C. It depicts a real-life war. | D. It centers on a conflict between the Greeks and the Trojans. |
2. ****An excerpt from Book I of the *Iliad*. Achilles speaks to Agamemnon.**** "You insatiable creature, quite shameless. How can any Achaeans obey you willingly—join a raiding party or keep fighting with full force against an enemy? I didn't come to battle over here because of Trojans. I have no fight with them. They never stole my bulls or horses or razed my crops in fertile Phthia, where heroes grow. Many shady mountains and the roaring sea stand there between us. But you, great shameless man, we came with you, to please you, to win honor from the Trojans... When we Achaeans loot some well-built Trojan town, my prizes never match the ones you get. The major share of war's fury rests on me. But when we hand around the battle spoils, you get much larger trophies. Worn out in war, I reach my ships with something fine but small. So I'll return home now to Phthia. It's far better to sail back in my curved ships. I don't fancy staying here unvalued, to pile up riches, treasures just for you."

What is the conflict in this passage?

- | | |
|--|---|
| A. Achilles is frustrated that Agamemnon enjoys all the spoils of war. | B. Achilles does not understand why the Achaeans are at war with the Trojans. |
| C. Achilles misses his homeland of Phthia. | D. Achilles believes the tactics used by the Achaeans against the Trojans are needlessly cruel. |

3. **An excerpt from Book XXIV of the *Iliad*. Priam speaks to Achilles.** “Achilles, like the gods, remember your father, one who is of years like mine, and on the door-sill of sorrowful old age. And they who dwell nearby encompass him and afflict him, nor is there anyone to defend him against the wrath, the destruction. Yet surely he, when he hears of you and that you are still living, is gladdened within his heart and all his days he is hopeful that he will see his beloved son come home... Honor the gods, Achilles, and take pity upon me remembering your father, yet I am still more pitiful; I have gone through what no other mortal on earth has gone through; I put my lips to the hands of the man who has killed my children.” So he spoke, and stirred in the other a passion of grieving for his own father. He took the old man’s hand and pushed him gently away, and the two remembered, as Priam sat huddled at the feet of Achilles and wept close for manslaughtering Hector and Achilles wept now for his own father, now again for Patroclus.

In this excerpt, how does Priam appeal to Achilles’s emotions?

- | | |
|---|--|
| A. By threatening Achilles with the wrath of the gods | B. By speaking highly of Achilles’s late best friend |
| C. By disowning his son, Hector | D. By asking Achilles to think about his own father |