Elizabeth Hale, "Entry on: Cyclops by Gilly Cameron Cooper ", peer-reviewed by Daniel A. Nkemleke and Lisa Maurice. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2020). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/1016. Entry version as of November 04, 2026.

Gilly Cameron Cooper

Cyclops

United Kingdom (2007)

TAGS: Apollo Calypso Charybdis Circe Corsica Cyclops / Cyclopes Ismarus Lotus Eaters / Lotophagoi Odysseus / Ulysses Odyssey Penelope Polyphemus Poseidon Telemachus Trojan War Troy Zeus





We are still trying to obtain permission for posting the original cover.

General information	
Title of the work	Cyclops
Country of the First Edition	United Kingdom
Country/countries of popularity	United Kingdom
Original Language	English
First Edition Date	2007
First Edition Details	Gilly Cameron Cooper, *Ancient Greek Myths: Cyclops*. Tunbridge Wells: Ticktock Media Ltd, 2007, 48 pp.
ISBN	9781846960680
Genre	Nonfiction comics
Target Audience	Children (age 10–14)
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This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

Creators



Gilly Cameron Cooper (Author)

Gilly Cameron Cooper is a British freelance editor and writer, who has written several children's books on figures from ancient mythology for the TickTock Media group, and for Southwater Publishing, including *Theseus and the Minotaur* (2007), *Pandora's Box* (2007), *The Trojan Horse* (2007), and *Creation Myths: How the World Began, in 15 Origin Legends* (2006). She has also written books about hiking, including *Beatrix Potter's Lake District* (2007), and *Walking London's Docks, Rivers and Canals* (2005). With her husband, she ran a walking-holidays tour company in Greece, until 2018, and has recently published *Walking on the Greek Islands* (2020).

Sources:

Official website (accessed: April 16, 2020).

Bio prepared by Elizabeth Hale, University of New England, ehale@une.edu.au

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Additional information

Summary

An educational comic that retells elements from the Odyssey, focusing on the Cyclops. It begins with informational pages about The Greeks, the Gods and Myths (pp. 4–5), then provides maps for Setting the Scene (pp. 6–7), before retelling the myth in 7 short chapters:

- A Long Way from Home,
- A Promising Land,
- The Cyclops Comes Home,
- Outwitting the Cyclops,
- Blind Man's Bluff,
- Partin Shot,
- Poseidon's Revenge.

A Glossary and Index complete the book.
In The Greeks, Their Gods and Myths, a short explanation is provided about the nature of the gods, their relations with one another and with humans, and their purpose in providing a framework for understanding the world: "it was a world of chance and luck, of magic and superstition, in which the endless myths made sense of a dangerous and unpredictable life." (p. 4). A family tree is provided, showing the links between Theseus and the gods. Setting the Scene shows a map of Odysseus's journey through the Mediterranean.
A Long Way from Home sets the scene for the events of the Odyssey. It shows Odysseus eager to return home, with his men looting the island of Ismarus, then "wisely" sparing Maro, the priest of Apollo, and his family (p. 10). He fails to persuade his men to leave the island immediately, and while the men sleep, the people from Ismarus attack them, killing several of the men. En route from Ismarus, Zeus sends a storm to toss the boat about. They land on the island of the Lotus Eaters, where the men eat the fruit, but Odysseus drags them back to the boat. In A Promising Land, the boats are surrounded by fog, and they land on a beautiful island with many goats on it. The men kill some goats and eat them. While they are eating, they see smoke coming from a nearby cave, and investigate. Inside the cave, they find cheese, milk, and sheep in pens, and they wait, cooking some lamb. The owner of the cave, a Cyclops, returns. He is thinking "I'm so tired of eating nothing but goats and sheep." (p. 19). Odysseus says to his men, "Oh no… it's a Cyclops, they hate humans." (p. 19). The Cyclops, Polyphemus, closes off the cave using a huge slab of stone. Despite Odysseus explaining their predicament, Polyphemus grabs two of the

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men and eats them. He sleeps, then for breakfast eats two more, before going out and closing the cave. Trapped, the men ponder what to do. They sharpen a tree trunk, and prepare a trap. In Outwitting the Cyclops, Odysseus tells Polyphemus his name is "Odeia"*, meaning "nobody", and gets him drunk, then blinds the sleeping giant with the sharpened tree. When other nearby Cyclopes hear Polyphemus roaring, and ask him what has hurt him, Polyphemus cries "Odeia". "He's lost his mind. I'm going back to bed", say the other Cyclopes (p. 29). Polyphemus opens the cave, and in Blind Man's Bluff, the second part of the plan is put into action, the men carried out underneath the animals. Safely out, Odysseus unties the men. Zeus, looking on, mutters: "you have been lucky this time. There are still many other dangers I can put in your way." (p. 34). In Parting Shot, returning to the ship, they set sail, evading the rocks that Polyphemus hurls at them, and Odysseus lets Polyphemus know who has tricked him. In Poseidon's Revenge, Poseidon, angry that Odysseus has blinded his son, plots his revenge. A brief summary of key elements of Odysseus's adventures follows – fighting the cannibals on Corsica, encountering Circe, Scylla and Charybdis, and facing further storms. Eventually Odysseus alone returns to Ithaca, to find his son Telemachus grown and Penelope still waiting for him.

* Instead of Homeric οὖτις (*oũtis*) *Od.* 9. 366–460.

Analysis

While the main focus of this brisk retelling of the Odysseys is on the encounter with Polyphemus, it covers the main elements of the story, using a comic-book format, with brightly coloured images in the comics-book hero style. Odysseus and his men are muscle-bound, wearing only short kilts. The emphasis on the gods' role in the story is interesting: shown through inset images of the gods commenting on the action, demonstrating their vengeful and meddling qualities, and the book's introduction highlights the power and influence of the gods. The cover of the book emphasizes the fearsome monstrosity of Cyclops (also musclebound), perhaps in an attempt to appeal to "reluctant readers", who are typically characterised as male, and interested in action. The combination of a comics-style graphic (musclebound heroes, semi-realistic visuals) with informational elements is unusual, and suggests that it is designed to appeal to

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	"reluctant" readers (usually thought of as boys).
Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	Apollo Calypso Charybdis Circe Corsica Cyclops / Cyclopes Ismarus Lotus Eaters / Lotophagoi Odysseus / Ulysses Odyssey Penelope Polyphemus Poseidon Telemachus Trojan War Troy Zeus
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Adventure Family Heroism
Addenda	It is unclear who illustrated this book, or if the author was also the illustrator. TickTock Media closed down in 2010, following a litigation from the US, and its holdings were acquired by Octopus Books. Nick Saunders (writer of Ancient Greek Myths: Medusa), is listed as a consultant on this retelling.

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