**The Iliad – Book 6**

**Read lines 1-72**

Reread the last sentence in Book 5 and then the first line of this book. How does this line set the tone for this book?

How does Homer make Ajax’s slaying of Akamas vivid and realistic?

Homer often uses the a-b-c construction when talking about minor cameo characters, as follows:

**a – b – c**

c) ‘context’ i.e. what they are doing now

b) ‘basic information’ i.e. who are we talking about

a) ‘anecdote’ i.e. a story about them

Fill in the details for this construction for the characters below:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **A** | **B** | **C** |
|  | Axylos, son of Teuthras |  |
|  | Aisepos and Pedasos |  |

What does Adrestos offer Menelaus if he spares his life? Why would Menelaus be tempted by this?

How does Agamemnon persuade Menelaus to reject the offer?

What is unusual about Nestor’s instructions? What does this show about the battle at this time?

**Read lines 73-118**

In the previous book it was Sarpedon that had to convince Hector to act. Now Hector’s brother, the prophet Helenus does the same thing. What does this show us about Hector?

What is Helenus so concerned about?

How is Hector shown as a convincing leader?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Quote: | This demonstrates… |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

What impression do we get of Hector’s shield?



An artifact depicting a Mycenaean tower shield

**Read lines 119-236**

What is ironic about Diomedes questioning whether Glaucus is a god and stating that he would not want to fight an immortal?

Can you identify the ‘ring composition’ in Diomedes’ speech?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **A** | Threatens that all who fight him die from his spear. |
| **B** |  |
| **C** |  |
| **D** |  |
| **D** |  |
| **C** |  |
| **B** |  |
| **A** |  |

What effect does Glaucus’ initial Homeric simile have on the audience?

Annotate the flow diagram with additional details from the passage:

Create Glaucus’ family tree, starting with Aiolos and including the fate of Bellerophon’s children:

What do we learn about Greek heroics from the advice of Glaucus’ father, Hippolochos?

What do we learn about *xenia* from Diomedes’ response and suggestion?

Do you think Homer was right to add a judgement at the end of this encounter?

**Read lines 237-311**

Complete the following:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Hecabe (Hector’s mother) | How does she offer comfort/help? | Hector’s response: | How does she act? |
|  |  |  |

**Read lines 312-368**

On each side of the picture, list the ways Paris is contrasted with Hector and the other Trojan warriors.

A painting of a person and a group of people

Description automatically generated

**Paris Hector and the Trojans**

Complete the following:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Helen | How does she offer comfort/help? | Hector’s response: |
|  |  |

**Read lines 369-502**

How does Hector appear concerned for his wife and son in his search for him?

What impression do we get of Andromache from the words of her maid?

How do the two names for Hector’s sons show the difference in the way he is viewed? How do we know Hector cares for him?

Complete the following:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Andromache | How does she advise Hector? | Hector’s response: |
|  |  |

How does this passage show Hector’s affection for Andromache?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Quote: | Explanation: |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

**Read lines 503-529**

How is the depiction of Paris transformed in this passage?

How many examples of Heroes being rebuked and then praised can you think of?



**Appendix: The Story of Bellerophon**

Context

* An ancient commentator named Aristarchus insists that this story appeared elsewhere in other texts of the Iliad. Perhaps it had nothing to do with Glaucus.
* The tale is vague at times and seems pointless in the context of Book 6

Plot

1. Bellerophon is exiled from Argos after being falsely accused of attempted rape by the king’s wife (Anteia)
2. He is sent to Lycia, where Anteia’s father rules.
3. He is sent on ordeals designed to kill him.
4. He kills the chimera, fights the Solymi and kills Amazons.
5. He survives an ambush and is given the king’s daughter to marry.
6. He had three children but for some reason wanders off.
7. A son and daughter are killed by the gods.

Omissions

Strangely, Glaucus omits, or is unaware of, the more famous parts of the Bellerophon myth:

1. He is the son of Poseidon.
2. He murders Bellerus of Corinth and flees to Argos for purification.
3. He uses the winged horse Pegasus to kill the chimera.
4. He tries to fly to Olympus on Pegasus but Zeus sends gadflies to sting it and Bellerophon falls to earth and is injured.

Hypothesis

Perhaps these omissions are intentional (Homer does frequently avoid bizarre aspects of myth). Is there any reason why this story helps aid the themes of Book 6? Think about how it relates to Glaucus.