1. **Read the poem through and say:**

- who is speaking and to whom: Ulysses is speaking to silent readers who are non defined;

- how old he is: it is not said how old he is but he is old

- where he is: he is in Ithaca.

* what he is setting out on: he is setting out on his necessity of travel to know new things.

**2)** Now read the text again, this time paying attention to the development of the argument. Summarize what Ulysses says and feels following the guidelines on the left. For each point consider also Tennyson's vocabulary indicating which words and phrases, in particular, reveal in the hero's traits and attitudes. The first point has been written for you.

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| Life on Ithaca (lines 2-5) | It is uncivilised and... Negative adjectives such as idol, aged convey Ulysses’s total dissatisfaction with life on Ithaca  |
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| His past life | During his travel Ulysses has both suffered and joyed with people who loved them and this make him a hero because he discovered life essence . During his travel he has met men, manners, climates, councils, governments and himself because people know through the relationship with others. Vocabulary: “I have enjoyed”, “Greatly, have suffered greatly”, “I am become a name”, “Much have I seen and known”, “Myself not least”. |
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| View of present and future (19-32) | Ulysses believes that a life without travel is boring and not lived at all. Travel is important to follow knowledge associated to a sinking star. Indeed he use expressions such as “ untravelled world”, “How dull it is to pause, to make an end”, “To rust unfurnished, not to shine in use”, “to follow knowledge like a sinking star”. |
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| Attitude to Telemachus (33-44) | Telemachus is Ulysses’ son to whom he left his scepter and the isle. He asked to his son to make temperate rugged people and subdue them to what is useful and right . However Telemachus is focused on the common duties. |
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| Address to his mariners (45-70) | Ulysses considers his mariners great workers who have wrought, thought, joyed and suffered with him. They are all old but fighters against Gods an always ready to discover new worlds, to strive, to seek and not to be submitted. Expressions: “My mariners, souls that have toiled, and wrought, and thought with me”, “you and I are old”, “men that strove against Gods”, “it is not too late to seek a newer world.”  |
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**3a)** How is Ulysses portrayed in the poem?

* To answer the question, consider:
* His present situation
* The contrast with Telemachus
* What he can be taken to be symbolic of
* Whether he differs from the picture we usually associate with the hero of the Odyssey

**ANSWER**: Ulysses, an old man, is a king who have to mete and dole unequal laws to a savage crowd who don’t know him. He is not happy of his conditions because he believes a life without travel is not a life lived at all. In his opinion travel is important to follow knowledge and to know yourself and what you meet contribute to create your identity.

Ulysses reiterates to be old and to need to live to the fullest the remaining time, making some work of noble note, searching for a new world and discovering something new.

Even if both Ulysses and Telemachus are leader (Telemachus will be the king when Ulysses dies), Ulysses wants not to spend a boring life, he is discovery’s hunger while is son Telemachus is a common leader, who follows his duties and acts for his people.

Therefore it is clear the symbol of poem is “travel”.

Ulysses is a leader unhappy to be at home, in Itaca with his wife because he needs to travel. It is the clearest difference from the Odyssey’s Ulysses who is nostalgic of his islands Itaca, the place where he would stay with his wife Penelope.

**3b)** What is the poet’s attitude to Ulysses and Telemachus? With whom does it side (parteggia)?

**ANSWER**: the poet sides with Ulysses, indeed he always focuses the attention on his life style.

**4)** The poem was composed when Tennyson was still suffering for the death of his dearest friend, A. Hallam, in 1883. Does the poem reflect a sense of loss?

**ANSWER**: the poem reflect a sense of loss since Ulysses is nostalgic about his past life as Tennyson is of his dearest friend Hallam.

**5)** As you will have realized the hero’s feelings are communicated through a careful choice of words.

What observations can you make about the meter and the music of the poem and the relationship with its meaning?

**ANSWER:** Tennyson used a iambic pentameter mainly and to create a sort of “music” he adopted assonance, alliteration and internal rhyme. They all contributes to create a dramatic and melancholic rhythm to underline the sense of loss.