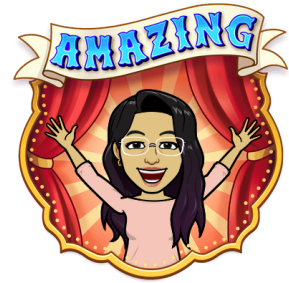


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## The Children's Homer Literary Analysis

"We must not allow other people's ... perceptions to define us," explains the therapist Virginia Satir. One of the characters in *The Children's Homer*, a book originally written by Padriac Colum in 1918, learns that lesson the hard way. Distinctly, the book is set in Ancient Greece along with famous characters such as Odysseus, Telemachus, and Achilles, who is the greatest of the Greek warriors. The book has two plotlines. The first follows the war of Troy, ending halfway through the book, because then it leads into the second plot, when Odysseus is trying to return home. In the first half of the book, the author uses repetition and imagery to emphasize that Achilles is strong and intimidating.

In the book, Colum repeatedly describes Achilles as being very strong. When Telemachus visits Menelaus, who knows Achilles well, he affirms that Achilles "gained in strength and fleetness of foot" (49). Hector also states while about to fight him, "I know thou art a man of might and a stronger man than I" (95). Throughout the story, many people in the story recognize Achilles' might. The author makes it clear. Consequently, Achilles is prideful because he was so powerful.

The author also commonly uses expressive imagery to show that Achilles is intimidating. Menelaus tells Telemachus that Achilles was once "clad in the flashing armor that was the gift of Zeus..." (52). Zeus is the god of lightning, and so Achilles having flashing armor from Zeus demonstrates that he is intimidating. Within the book the author writes about Achilles: "Around his head a flame of fire arose such as was never seen before around the head of a mortal man."

(88) This happened as Achilles prepared to fight Hector. It is particularly interesting to note that in these two examples, the gods directly changed Achilles' appearance, because neither of them could have happened through mortals. Clearly, Achilles is a very striking figure in appearance, who is favored by the gods. Achilles is very frightening.

During the book, Colum ensures the reader is aware that Achilles is strong and intimidating, which leads to his being arrogant and prideful. Thoughtfully, this is illustrated when Agamemnon states his desire that "all may know I am greater than you, Achilles..." (55). As a result, Achilles refuses to help Odysseus and the other warriors besieging Troy because of Agamemnon's words, although Agamemnon eventually apologizes. Unfortunately, Achilles believes the words of Agamemnon. Ultimately, people's opinions define Achilles.