

Ulysses has eighteen episodes - a significant number when we recall the time span James Joyce initially set out to cover:

*"I am now writing a book," said Joyce [to his friend, Frank Budgen], "based on the wanderings of Ulysses. The Odyssey, that is to say, serves me as a ground plan. Only my time is recent time and all my hero's wanderings take no more than eighteen hours."*

"Eighteen hours" is interesting in light of something else Joyce once said:

*The demand that I make of my reader is that he should devote his whole life to reading my works.*

Although that statement may have been tongue-in-cheek, Joyce scholars spend much of their careers pulling apart the strands of Joyce's genius. Casual readers, meanwhile, often struggle just to get through *Ulysses*.

In this scene - a clip from "Ten Great Writers of the Modern World - James Joyce's *Ulysses*" - we see Stephen Dedalus walking the beach after his Mum has died:

- What goes through the mind of a young man, here a young poet, after such a loss?
- Does he mourn his Mother?
- Or - is he actually thinking about his work or course of study?

Unless we are able to listen-in to Stephen's inner monologue, that part of his life remains completely private. We may see him on the beach, but we have *no idea* what's going on in his *mind*. How is it possible to ever know what he is really thinking?

In the clip - and in the book - we do learn what he is thinking. What's more, we can observe what Joyce was like, at that age, since the character of Dedalus (originally created in *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*) is an autobiographical rendering of Joyce himself.

**See, also:**

[James Joyce - Intro to \*Ulysses\*](#)

[James Joyce - Meet Leopold Bloom](#)

[James Joyce - Obsessed with Dublin](#)

Credits:

From the British television series, "[The Modern World: Ten Great Writers.](#)"

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See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/James-Joyce-Meet-Stephen-Dedalus>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

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