

# 17 Great Epics

Let us read about some great epics :

**Mahabharata** is one of the major epic poems which has survived the passage of time. It not only describes the Kurukshetra war, but also contains philosophical and devotional material. Traditionally, its authorship is attributed to Sage Vyasa. It is the longest Sanskrit epic. It is roughly ten times the length of the Iliad and Odyssey combined.



**Iliad**, Greek poem date back to 850 BC and tells the story of final years of the war between the Greeks and the Trojans. It describes the great battle and the interference of the Gods and their quarrels about the action on the battlefield below them. This epic poem is traditionally attributed to Homer.

The **Odyssey** is one of the major ancient Greek epic poems which is also attributed to Homer. Odysseus was the hero of this epic and it revolves around him. It describes Odysseus' journey to home from the Trojan War.



**Rubaiyat** an epic poem written by Omar Khayyam. He was a Persian writer, astronomer and mathematician who lived in the 11th and early 12th centuries. It was introduced to the rest of the world in 1859, when it was translated by Edward Fitzgerald.



**Beowulf** is an epic poem of almost 3200 lines written in old English which is also known as Anglo Saxon language. The main theme of this epic poem is the struggle of its hero with the water monster Grendel.



**Ramayana** is an ancient Sanskrit epic. It is attributed to the Hindu sage Valmiki. It depicts the duties of relationships, portraying ideal characters like the ideal father, servant, brother, wife and king.

### Think Fast

Tick (3) the correct alternative :

- Which of the following was the great warrior of all times in Homer's Iliad?  
 (a) Achilles ☐ (b) Paris ☐ (c) Agamemnon ☐ (d) Odysseus ☐
- Which among the following is considered India's first poet?  
 (a) Vyas ☐ (b) Kalidasa ☐ (c) Tulsidas ☐ (d) Valmiki ☐
- Which among the following is the longest epic poem?  
 (a) Mahabharata ☐ (b) Ramayana ☐ (c) Odyssey ☐ (d) Iliad ☐
- For how many days did the war of Kurukshetra last?  
 (a) 15 ☐ (b) 18 ☐ (c) 19 ☐ (d) 20 ☐
- Bhagavad Gita is a part of which of the following epics?  
 (a) Mahabharata ☐ (b) Ramayana ☐ (c) Beowulf ☐ (d) Odyssey ☐

### BOOST UP



The Divine Comedy is an Italian Long narrative poem by Dante Alighieri, begun in c. 1308 and completed in 1320, a year before his death in 1321. It is widely considered to be the most prominent work in Italian literature and one of the greatest works of world literature. It is divided into three parts : Inferno, Purgatorio and Paradiso. The narrative describes Dante's travels through Hell, Purgatory and Paradise or Heaven, while allegorically the poem represents the soul's journey towards God.