

ANTIGONE EVIDENCE-BASED QUESTIONS

PROLOGUE

1. As the play opens, Antigone tells her sister, Ismene, that an edict has been placed over the city of Thebes. What is this edict, and who has commanded it? What is the punishment for disobeying the edict?

2. What does Antigone ask Ismene to do? Is Ismene willing to do it?

3. In her response to Antigone's request, Ismene alludes to the tragic history of their family. According to Ismene, what happened to the sisters' parents?

4. What point is Ismene trying to make in the statement in the box to the right?

*The law is strong, we must give in to the law
In this thing, and in worse. I beg the dead
To forgive me, but I am helpless: I must yield
To those in authority. And I think it is dangerous business
To be always meddling.*

5. When Ismene refuses to help bury Polynieces, Antigone angrily responds that she will do it herself. According to her reasoning (in the box to the right), why is Antigone willing to die for burying her brother?

*It is the dead,
Not the living, who make the longest demands:
We die forever. . .
You may do as you like,
Since apparently the laws of the gods mean nothing to you.*

ANTIGONE EVIDENCE-BASED QUESTIONS

1. What kind of relationship do the sisters have?

Your answer:	Quote and line # to support your answer:

2. When Antigone is speaking, what does she reveal about her own character or personality?

Your answer:	Quote and line # to support your answer:

3. When Ismene is speaking, what does she reveal about her own character or personality?

Your answer:	Quote and line # to support your answer:

4. In their first scenes together, Antigone and Ismene are foils (characters with opposite qualities). Does Sophocles seem to side with one sister over the other? Do you? Explain.

Your answer:	Quote and line # to support your answer:

5. In verbal irony, what is said is the opposite of what is meant. Where does Antigone use verbal irony in her scene with Ismene (Quote)? How does this make you feel about Antigone (Answer)?

Your answer:	Quote and line # to support your answer:

ANTIGONE EVIDENCE-BASED QUESTIONS

PARADOS

1. What is the purpose of the Parados?

2. What type of character is a member of the Chorus?

3. Which army (Theban or Argive) does the Chorus and Choragus support? Why?

4. The Chorus and Choragus frequently use figurative language (metaphor, simile, personification, etc.) in the Parados. Choose three examples from the text and complete the following table:

Directions	Example 1 of Fig. Lang.	Example 2 of Fig. Lang.	Example 3 of Fig. Lang.
Choose a short quote containing figurative language and provide a citation. Example: "Text text" (Sophocles Parados Line 60).			
Paraphrase the quote in your own words to explain what the text means.			
Identify the type of figurative language.			
Analyze Sophocles' purpose in using that particular instance of figurative language (What effect do you think it would have on his audience?)			

ANTIGONE EVIDENCE-BASED QUESTIONS

SCENE 1

1. What are the reasons Creon gives to explain his edict? Do these reasons seem valid? Explain.
2. Creon uses an extended metaphor to describe his country. What is the metaphor? What role does Creon see himself playing in the metaphor?
3. What news does Sentry bring to Creon?
4. What is the theory Choragus proposes as an explanation for Sentry's discovery?
5. How does Creon respond to Choragus's theory? What does that tell you about Creon?
6. What accusation does Creon make against the guards? Does this seem reasonable? Explain.
7. How does Creon feel about money?
8. According to Creon, what will happen to the guards if they do not find the person who buried Polynieces? Does this decision seem justified?

ANTIGONE EVIDENCE-BASED QUESTIONS

1. How would you characterize Creon's strengths as a ruler?

Your answer:	Quote and citation to support your answer:

2. How would you characterize Creon's weaknesses as a ruler?

Your answer:	Quote and citation to support your answer:

3. How does Creon's stage direction for entering scene 1 create an impression of him as a ruler?

Your answer:	Quote and citation to support your answer:

4. Why is it important that Sentry pauses repeatedly while telling Creon of his discovery?

Your answer:	Quote and citation to support your answer:

5. An *aside* is when a character speaks directly to the audience instead of to characters on stage. At what point does Sentry address the audience, and why?

Your answer:	Quote and citation to support your answer:

6. In *dramatic irony*, the audience knows something that the characters do not. How is it present every time Creon refers to the man who buried Polyneices? What does it reveal about Creon?

Your answer:	Quote and citation to support your answer:

ANTIGONE EVIDENCE-BASED QUESTIONS

ODE 1

1. What overall meaning do the first three stanzas of Ode 1 portray? (Identify a main theme.)

Your Answer	Quote and citation to support your answer:

2. At what point in Ode 1 does the tone or mood seem to shift, suggesting man's possible downfall? What exactly is this downfall?

Your Answer	Quote and citation to support your answer:

3. How is the fourth stanza different than the rest? What new concept does it introduce?

Your Answer	Quote and citation to support your answer:

4. Based on what the chorus sings in Ode 1, what is its attitude toward loyalty to the state?

Your Answer	Quote and citation to support your answer:

5. How does Ode 1 support some of Creon's values or beliefs (based on Scene 1)?

Your Answer	Quote and citation to support your answer:

6. How does Ode 1 support some of Antigone's values or beliefs (based on the Prologue)?

Your Answer	Quote and citation to support your answer:

ANTIGONE EVIDENCE-BASED QUESTIONS

1. Describe, in your own words, the setting that Sentry is describing in lines 23-34. Why is this description important?
2. What may have caused the “storm of dust” that “roared up from the earth”? Why do you think that might be significant?
3. What is Antigone’s explanation for why she defied Creon’s law?
4. What is Creon’s rebuttal (response) for why he believes she should not have done so?
5. How does Choragus seem to feel about Ismene? What is Creon’s opinion of her? What does Creon’s opinion here tell us about his personality? (We began to see it in Scene 1.)
6. Why does Ismene say she wants to be condemned to death too?
7. Antigone rejects Ismene’s offer to die with her. What character flaw does this reveal in Antigone? Explain.
8. What does the Choragus seem to think of Creon’s decision to condemn Antigone to death?

ANTIGONE EVIDENCE-BASED QUESTIONS

SCENE 2

1. How has Sentry's attitude toward Creon changed?

Your answer:	Quote and citation to support your answer:

2. What is Sentry's attitude toward Antigone, after he sees her crying over the unburied body?

Your answer:	Quote and citation to support your answer:

3. How does Antigone feel about death?

Your answer:	Quote and citation to support your answer:

4. What is Antigone's belief regarding the Chorus's refusal to defend her and her actions?

Your answer:	Quote and citation to support your answer:

5. How do the metaphors used by Chorus & Creon to describe Ismene conflict with each other?

Your answer:	Quote and citation to support your answer:

6. In *dramatic irony*, the audience realizes something that the characters do not. What is dramatically ironic about Creon accusing Antigone of being "headstrong, deaf to reason"?

Your answer:	Quote and citation to support your answer:
	<i>This quote should show the irony (Don't quote "headstrong, deaf to reason.")</i>

ANTIGONE EVIDENCE-BASED QUESTIONS

ODE 2

1. According to Ode 2, what happens to a person’s family and future generations when that person upsets the gods?

Your answer:	Quote and citation to support your answer:

2. How has the use of the image of the sea and ocean crests (waves) shifted from Ode 1 to Ode 2?

Your answer:	Quote and citation to support your answer:
	<p>Ode 1:</p> <p>Ode 2:</p>

3. What human flaw does the Chorus say is responsible for this “curse of Heaven”?

Your answer:	Quote and citation to support your answer:
<p>So far, which characters have shown themselves to be guilty of this flaw? Explain.</p>	

4. What metaphor does the Chorus use to describe Antigone before and after the burial of her brother? Explain the metaphor. What effect does the metaphor have on the audience?

Your answer:	Quote and citation to support your answer:

5. In lines 13-14, why are the gods angry with Oedipus? What did he do to gain Zeus’s vengeance?

Your answer:	Quote and citation to support your answer:

ANTIGONE EVIDENCE-BASED QUESTIONS

SCENE 3 & ODE 3

1. When Haemon enters the scene, what does Creon say about a son's obedience to his father? (Use your own words.)
2. What is ironic about Creon's advice to Haemon regarding Antigone?
3. What kind of ruler is Creon, and what does Creon reveal about his view on government and leadership?
4. Haemon uses two metaphors to explain to his father that being stubborn is irrational and often harmful. What are these two metaphors (in your own words) and how do they convey stubbornness?
5. What is Haemon's main argument in lines 73-86? (Use your own words.)
6. What does Haemon think is the role of the king? What does Creon think is the role of the king?
7. How has Haemon's attitude towards Creon changed since the beginning of the scene?
8. Consider Creon's edict forbidding Polyneices' burial, along with the method of punishment he has chosen for Antigone. In what basic way does Creon reverse the natural order of things with these two decisions? What does this reveal about Creon's attitude towards the gods?
9. In Ode 3, what is the chorus implying about love?

ANTIGONE EVIDENCE-BASED QUESTIONS

1. How does Haemon approach Creon in discussing Antigone? What is his tone, and how does he try to make his argument without offending his father?

Your answer:	Quote and citation to support your answer:

2. What is Haemon's main argument in lines 51-68?

Your answer:	Quote and citation to support your answer:

3. What is Haemon's main argument in lines 73-86?

Your answer:	Quote and citation to support your answer:

4. Whose side does the Choragus take after Haemon delivers his monologue?

Your answer:	Quote and citation to support your answer:

5. How does Creon interpret Haemon's threat in line 119? How might the audience interpret it?

Your answer:	Quote and citation to support your answer:

6. In Ode 3, the chorus uses personification to describe love. Cite two examples from the ode in which the idea of love is given human characteristics.

Your answer:	Quote and citation to support your answer:

ANTIGONE EVIDENCE-BASED QUESTIONS

SCENE 4 & ODE 4: ALLUSIONS

General allusions to Greek mythology in Scene 4 and Ode 4:

Archeron and the Rivers of Hades	Springs of Dirce
Persephone	Ares

Allusions specifically comparing mythological characters to Antigone:

Notes: Legend of Niobe	Quote about Niobe from Scene 4
	How Niobe compares to Antigone

ANTIGONE EVIDENCE-BASED QUESTIONS

Notes: Legend of Danae	Quote about Danae from Ode 4
	How Danae compares to Antigone
Notes: Legend of Dryas's son	Quote about Dryas's son from Ode 4
	How Dryas's son compares to Antigone
Notes: Legend of Phineus's first wife and their sons	Quote about Phineus's first wife from Ode 4
	How wife and/or sons compare to Antigone

ANTIGONE EVIDENCE-BASED QUESTIONS

SCENE 5

1. Why does Creon say, “I admit my debt to you” (line 7)? Why is Creon indebted to the prophet?
2. Identify two omens which tell Teiresias that there is something wrong with Thebes.
3. What do these omens mean, according to Teiresias?
4. Whose side (Creon’s or Antigone’s) were the gods on, after all, according to the prophet?
5. What does Teiresias believe is the “only crime” a man can make? What do we call this in Greek tragedy?
6. What advice does Teiresias give to Creon? (lines 33-40)
7. How does Creon respond to Teiresias’s advice? (lines 44-48) How is this reaction characteristic of Creon?
8. As this scene ends, what is Creon preparing to do? How do you know?

ANTIGONE EVIDENCE-BASED QUESTIONS

1. What accusation does Creon make against Teiresias?

Your answer:	Quote and citation to support your answer:

2. Identify when Creon made a similar accusation against someone in an earlier scene.

Your answer:	Quote and citation to support your answer:
Paraphrase the quote from the earlier scene:	Quote from an earlier scene (not from Scene 5)

3. Paraphrase/quote a line from an ode that echoes what Teiresias identifies as “the only crime.”

Your answer:	Quote and citation to support your answer:
Paraphrase the quote from the ode:	Quote from an ode (not from Scene 5):

4. What prediction does Teiresias make about how Creon will be punished?

Your answer:	Quote and citation to support your answer:

5. At what point in Scene 5 does Creon change his attitude? Why?

Your answer:	Quote and citation to support your answer:

6. What does Creon learn about laws? Quote a line from an ode that echoes this same belief.

Your answer:	Quote and citation to support your answer:
Quote from Scene 5:	Quote from an ode (not from Scene 5)

ANTIGONE EVIDENCE-BASED QUESTIONS

EXODUS

1. What purpose does the messenger serve throughout the play? Why is the messenger a necessary character for ancient Greek dramas in general?
2. What news does the messenger bring to the Chorus at the beginning of the Exodus?
3. What did Haemon do as Creon approached him, and why?
4. The body of Eurydice is rolled out on a wheeled device called an ekkylema. What is the reason for the use of the ekkylema? How does it add to the dramatic ending of the play?
5. According to the messenger, how exactly does Eurydice die?
6. Does Creon confess his guilt for the tragedies which have occurred, or does he remain stubborn and refuse to accept responsibility? What is the significance of his decision?
7. What is the purpose of the chorus's final lines; why would the play end with these lines?

ANTIGONE EVIDENCE-BASED QUESTIONS

1. The messenger delivers news to the Chorus at the beginning of the scene.

Your answer:	Quote and citation to support your answer:
How does the messenger's news fit with Teiresias's prophecy?	Quote Teiresias's prophecy:

2. After Eurydice disappears into the palace, the Chorus makes a comment which can be interpreted as an element of foreshadowing.

Your answer:	Quote and citation to support your answer:
How is this an example of foreshadowing?	Quote the Chorus's comment:

3. Antigone hangs herself with her scarf. Return to the prologue and find where Ismene explains how their mother suffered a similar death.

Your answer:	Quote and citation to support your answer:
Why might Antigone and Jocasta have a similar death?	Quote from Ismene in the prologue:

4. What is Creon's only wish at the end of the play? Who has a similar wish earlier in the play?

Your answer:	Quote and citation to support your answer:
Describe Creon's wish and explain which other character has expressed a similar wish.	Quote the other character from an earlier scene (not Creon):

5. Does Creon confess his guilt for the tragedies which have occurred, or does he remain stubborn and refuse to accept responsibility? What is the significance of his decision?

Your answer:	Quote and citation to support your answer: