

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.*