

Antigone Study Guide Answers

Antigone - Study Guide - Answer the questions on your own paper. This is due the day of your Unit Test over Antigone and Greek Drama (TBA).

Prologue:

1. What contrasts between Antigone and Ismene appear in the first dozen lines of the play? How do differences between them show up even in their speaking styles? Give an example of verbal irony in this exchange.
2. Does Sophocles seem to side with one sister over the other? Do you? Explain.
3. Give your own examples for each of the following dilemmas: a choice between laws and conscience, between law and religious beliefs, and between law and loyalty to friends or family.
4. In the chant of the Chorus, beginning on pg. 818 which words and phrases in these lines extend the metaphor of Polyneices as a fierce, warlike, wild eagle? How does Sophocles personify the spears of Polyneices' forces? Whose "jaws" are likewise described as hungry for the blood of the people of Thebes? What fierce beast is the city of Thebes itself compared to?
5. Lines 27-31 on page 818 are examples of exposition. Rephrase these poetic words to state exactly what happened.
6. Antistrophe 2 (the last time the Chorus speaks) serves to remind the audience of the time of day and the physical and emotional setting. How?

Scene 1:

7. What is Creon referring to as the "ship of state"? What are the recent storms that are threatened by it?
8. How does the end of this speech by Creon differ in tone from the beginning?
9. How does the Chorus feel about Creon's command? How do you know how he feels?
10. On page 820 lines 59-62, spoken by Creon, what does this comment reveal about Creon's attitudes or mind-set?
11. How does the arrival of the Sentry defuse the tension of the scene?
12. Beginning at line 80, the action shifts from speeches to a real physical conflict: someone has directly violated Creon's decree. What does the Sentry seem to find mysterious about the semi burial?
13. Page 822, beginning with line 118, what qualities in Creon might Sophocles' audience have found most godlike? What might the audience have considered to be Creon's "human defects"?
14. According to the last stanza of Ode 1, p.825 why do you think the Chorus supports Creon?
15. Describe the dramatic irony in Creon's lines about Polyneices' burial pg.822, line 125.
16. In Greek tragedies, the Chorus often points out the themes. In the last stanza of the Chorus, what possible themes are mentioned?
17. What does this Ode convey about human greatness and tragic limitation?

Scene 2:

18. What purpose do the Chorus' lines serve at the beginning of this scene?
19. How does the Sentry's speech create sympathy for Antigone?
20. In your opinion, who are the protagonist and the antagonist of this play?
21. What law does Antigone recognize as the supreme one? What is her attitude toward each?
22. Explain the dramatic irony in the comments made by the Chorus and Creon. How does the irony in this scene add to the tragedy?
23. Describe Ismene, Antigone, and Creon as they are presented at this point in the play.
24. What does Antigone assume about the attitude of the chorus? Do you think she is right?
25. p.829 -- "Those tears...at my throne!" Identify and explain the metaphors and personification in this passage. How does this figurative language help readers to understand the motivations of the characters?
26. Lines 147-151, p. 829: Why does Ismene now want to accept equal blame for the crime of burying her brother?
27. Continuing through line 160: What do you think of Antigone's treatment of her sister?
28. How does Ismene's line (line 154) introduce a complication to the plot?
29. How do Creon's words, lines 176-177, reveal his feelings about Haimon's engagement to Antigone?
30. An ode is an exalted, complex lyric that develops as a serious and dignified theme. Odes appeal to both the imagination and the intellect. What is the theme of Ode 2?
31. Can the line, "Man's little pleasure is the spring of sorrow" be applied to Creon? Why or why not?

Antigone study guide answers can be invaluable for students and readers seeking a deeper understanding of Sophocles' classic tragedy. This play, which explores themes of loyalty, justice, and the struggle between individual morals versus state laws, remains a relevant and poignant text in literature courses around the world. This study guide will provide answers to key questions about the characters, plot, and themes in "Antigone," along with insights that can enhance your comprehension and appreciation of the work.

Overview of Antigone

"Antigone" is part of a trilogy that includes "Oedipus Rex" and "Oedipus at Colonus." Written by the ancient Greek playwright Sophocles, this tragedy follows the story of Antigone, the daughter of Oedipus, as she defies the edict of King Creon to honor her

deceased brother, Polynices, with a proper burial. The conflict between Antigone and Creon sets the stage for a powerful exploration of moral obligation versus civic duty.

Key Characters

Understanding the characters in "Antigone" is crucial for grasping the play's complexities. Here are the main characters:

- **Antigone:** The protagonist who prioritizes familial loyalty and divine law over state law.
- **Creon:** The King of Thebes, representing the state and its laws, who believes in order and authority.
- **Ismene:** Antigone's sister, who is more cautious and compliant with Creon's edict.
- **Haemon:** Creon's son and Antigone's fiancé, who struggles between his loyalty to his father and his love for Antigone.
- **Tiresias:** A blind prophet who warns Creon of the consequences of his actions.
- **Eurydice:** Creon's wife, who faces tragedy as a result of her husband's decisions.

Plot Summary

The plot of "Antigone" revolves around a central conflict: Antigone's determination to bury her brother, Polynices, despite Creon's decree forbidding it. Here's a brief outline of the key events:

1. **Prologue:** Antigone and Ismene discuss the consequences of burying their brother Polynices.
2. **Creon's Edict:** Creon declares that Polynices, deemed a traitor, shall not be buried, while Eteocles, who fought for Thebes, will receive honors.
3. **Antigone's Defiance:** Antigone decides to bury Polynices, believing it is her moral duty.
4. **Capture and Confrontation:** Antigone is caught burying her brother and is brought before Creon.
5. **Debate:** Antigone argues for her actions based on divine law, while Creon insists on the importance of law and order.

6. **Consequences:** Haemon tries to mediate between Antigone and Creon, but their stubbornness leads to tragedy.
7. **Climactic Tragedy:** The deaths of Antigone, Haemon, and Eurydice result from Creon's inability to relent.

Themes in Antigone

Several themes are woven intricately throughout "Antigone," which can enhance your analysis and interpretation of the play.

Moral vs. Civil Law

One of the central themes of the play is the conflict between moral law and civil law. Antigone represents the belief that divine law supersedes human laws. In contrast, Creon embodies the idea that laws of the state must be upheld for societal order. This theme raises questions about justice, authority, and individual conscience.

Family Loyalty

Antigone's unwavering commitment to her family is another significant theme. Her determination to honor her brother reflects the importance of familial bonds in ancient Greek culture. This loyalty ultimately leads to her tragic end, illustrating the high stakes of such devotion.

The Role of Women

Antigone challenges traditional gender roles by standing up to a male authority figure. Her actions question the societal expectations of women during Sophocles' time, making her a symbol of female strength and defiance.

Fate vs. Free Will

The struggle between fate and free will is a recurring theme in Greek tragedies. In "Antigone," the characters grapple with their destinies, often shaped by the prophecies and their family history. Antigone's choice to defy Creon's edict can be interpreted as an exercise of free will, even as it leads to her predetermined tragic fate.

Important Quotes and Their Significance

Several quotes from "Antigone" encapsulate its themes and character motivations. Here are a few examples:

- **"I will bury him; and if I must die, I will die."** - This quote highlights Antigone's resolve and the theme of familial loyalty.
- **"The laws of the gods are eternal."** - Antigone emphasizes the importance of divine law over human law, reinforcing the moral vs. civil law theme.
- **"There is no greater evil than the lack of restraint."** - Creon's belief in order reflects his tragic flaw of pride and inflexibility.

Study Questions and Answers

To facilitate deeper understanding, here are some study questions along with their answers:

1. What motivates Antigone to defy Creon's orders?

Antigone is motivated by her sense of duty to her family and the gods. She believes that honoring her brother with a proper burial is a divine obligation that transcends the laws of man.

2. How does Creon's character evolve throughout the play?

Creon starts as a strong leader who prioritizes law and order but becomes increasingly isolated and tragic as he refuses to listen to warnings. His stubbornness ultimately leads to personal loss, showcasing the consequences of inflexibility.

3. What role does fate play in the outcome of the story?

Fate is a powerful force in "Antigone." Characters are often unable to escape their destinies, as seen in Antigone's tragic end, which seems preordained by her family's cursed history.

4. How does Antigone's relationship with Ismene illustrate different responses to authority?

Antigone's boldness contrasts sharply with Ismene's caution. Ismene represents those who comply with authority to avoid conflict, while Antigone embodies resistance and the willingness to face consequences for one's beliefs.

Conclusion

In conclusion, **Antigone study guide answers** can serve as a crucial resource for students and enthusiasts of Greek literature. By understanding the characters, themes, and significant quotes within the play, readers can engage with the text on a deeper level. Whether you are preparing for an exam, writing a paper, or simply seeking to appreciate this classic work, this study guide aims to provide the insights needed to navigate the rich narrative of "Antigone."

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the main conflict in Antigone?

The main conflict in Antigone is between individual morals and state laws, primarily represented by Antigone's decision to bury her brother Polynices against King Creon's edict.

Who are the main characters in Antigone?

The main characters include Antigone, Creon, Ismene, Haemon, and Tiresias, each representing different perspectives on duty, family, and authority.

What is the significance of the Chorus in Antigone?

The Chorus serves as a moral commentator, reflecting the themes of the play, providing background information, and expressing the public's perspective on the events unfolding.

How does Antigone's character challenge gender roles in the play?

Antigone challenges traditional gender roles by demonstrating strength, defiance, and a commitment to her familial duty, positioning herself as a figure of resistance against male authority.

What role does fate play in Antigone?

Fate plays a crucial role in Antigone, as the characters grapple with their destinies, which are influenced by prophecies and the consequences of their choices, ultimately leading to tragedy.

What is Creon's tragic flaw in Antigone?

Creon's tragic flaw is his excessive pride (hubris) and rigidity, which prevent him from listening to reason or considering the consequences of his actions, leading to his downfall.

How does the theme of loyalty manifest in Antigone?

The theme of loyalty is portrayed through Antigone's devotion to her brother, her defiance of Creon, and Ismene's struggle between family loyalty and fear of the law, highlighting the complexities of allegiance.

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Antigone - Wikipedia

Antigone appears in the three 5th century BC tragic plays written by Sophocles, known collectively as the three Theban plays, being the protagonist of the eponymous tragedy Antigone.

Antigone by Sophocles - Greek Mythology

One of Sophocles' earliest surviving plays, Antigone is often thought of a perfect specimen of Ancient Greek tragedy.

Antigone by Sophocles Plot Summary | LitCharts

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A short summary of Jean Anouilh's Antigone. This free synopsis covers all the crucial plot points of Antigone.

ANTIGONE - SOPHOCLES PLAY - ANALYSIS & SUMMARY - GREEK ...

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SOPHOCLES ANTIGONE - The Center for Hellenic Studies

ANTIGONE Say another word and you will earn my hatred. And rightly so. Leave me and my foolish plan 95 To suffer our terrible fate! There is no punishment horrible enough To keep me ...

The Internet Classics Archive | Antigone by Sophocles

No word of friends, Antigone, gladsome or painful, hath come to me, since we two sisters were bereft of brothers twain, killed in one day by twofold blow; and since in this last night the Argive ...

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