

Name _____

Antigone Study Guide ('10 rev)

The numbers in the parentheses refer to the page numbers of your text. Type or legibly write complete and well-developed answers on separate sheets of paper.

1. (191) Where are Antigone and Ismene speaking?
2. (191) What does Antigone mean by the “curse” on the House of Oedipus? What has happened to her family that evidences this curse?
3. (191) What is the *Argive* army?
4. (191) What does Antigone mean when she talks about each brother *dismissing* the other?
5. (192) What is Creon’s interdict? What is the specific punishment for violating his interdict?
6. (192) What does Antigone want Ismene to do?
7. (192-193) What reason does Ismene give for her unwillingness to participate in Antigone’s plan?
8. (194) What does Antigone mean when she refers to herself as the sinner of a *holy sin*?
9. (191-195) How would you describe Antigone? How would you describe Ismene? How would you describe their relationship? Explain with support from text.
10. (196-198) What does the Chorus celebrate in pages 196-198?
11. (198) What does Creon explain in his first speech? Do you agree or disagree with him? Creon ruled about two generations before the Trojan War. Given what you know about how city-states were governed, did Creon have a good reason for his position about Polyneices? What would you do if you were king?
12. (200-202) What is the attitude of the sentry to Creon? What is Creon’s attitude to the sentry?
13. (202) What is the Leader concerned about? What does he say that supports your answer?
14. (203) Who does Creon think are responsible for the ritual “covering” of Polyneices’ body? What accusation does Creon make about his guards? What do Creon’s accusations reveal about his character?

15. (204) What does the sentry, in turn, accuse Creon of?
16. (206) How does the tone / mood of the Choral Ode change from beginning until the end? Support your answer with evidence from the text.
17. (206) What characteristic would cause the chorus to say that an individual will become “citiless and lost”? What do you think the Chorus means by this?
18. (209) What is unusual about Antigone’s arrival at the side of her brother’s corpse? What does her manner of arrival suggest?
19. (209) What does the metaphor of the mother bird help the reader understand?
20. (210) What is Antigone’s response to Creon’s shock that she violated his law? What word would you use to describe Antigone’s attitude toward Creon + why?
21. (211) What does Creon assume about Ismene? How does the audience members’ knowledge of the truth about Ismene affect their opinion of Creon?
22. (212-213) Whose memory does Creon invoke to try to convince Antigone that she is wrong? Is his argument persuasive to you?
23. (214-215) Explain the conflict between Antigone and Ismene. Do you think Antigone is needlessly harsh here to Ismene?
24. (217) What information about Antigone do we learn from Ismene’s line at the top of this page?
25. (218) Who has, in a sense, “pitted himself against Zeus’ power”? Explain.
26. (220) What does Creon mean by *unremitting deference* that every right-minded son should feel? Do you think all parents think this way?
27. (221) To Creon, what quality is characteristic of *the perfect subject*?

28. (221) What attitude does Creon reveal in the last two lines of his speech? Do you think there are those who would agree with this view today? What can you point to as your support?
29. (222) What metaphors does Haemon use to try to persuade his father to be flexible?
30. ((222) What do we learn about the attitude of the citizens of Thebes towards Creon's treatment of Antigone?
31. (225) In Creon's responses to Haemon, what signs can you find of Creon's loss of reason? How have his statements become more desperate?
32. (226) How does Creon change his plans with respect to Ismene and Antigone?
33. (227) Has love turned the wise (Haemon) into a fool, as implied in the first line of Antistrophe 1? Explain your answer.
34. (231-232) What is Antigone saying in the second stanza of her speech? Given her reasons for defying Creon's orders (that she is following duty and the laws of the gods), how can she mean her statements in these lines?
- 34A. Fourth Choral Ode- Note that this choral ode focuses upon other mortals who endured terrible punishments at the hands of Fate. If you were updating this, what modern examples of famous victims of Fate would you include?
35. (235) What do you already know from The Odyssey about Tiresias?
36. (236) What omens or portents have alerted Tiresias to the fact that the gods are displeased with Creon?
37. (237) Of what does Creon accuse Tiresias in the last two lines on this page?
38. (239-240) In anger what else does Tiresias predict to Creon? (Find at least 2 separate predictions.) Who does Tiresias mean when he says "one of your own begotten"?
39. (239) Paraphrase Tiresias' lines:
*You plunged a child of light into the dark;
Entombed the living with the dead; the dead
Dismissed unmourned, denied a grave*

40. (240) What does the leader's first speech reveal about the accuracy of Tiresias' predictions?
41. (240) What is the first sign that Tiresias' words have had an effect on Creon?
42. (240-1) What two things does the leader advise Creon to do?
43. (241) Paraphrase Creon's last three lines
*In the end it is the ancient codes—oh my regrets! —
that one must keep:
To value life then one must value law.*
44. (244) What news does the messenger bring?
45. (244) What character asks the messenger for details?
46. (245) Does Creon give Polyneices a proper funeral?
47. (245) What does Creon find when he goes to the vault where Antigone has been imprisoned?
48. (246) What does Haemon try to do before he kills himself?
49. (249) In addition to his son's death, what new loss does Creon suffer?
50. (250) What did Eurydice charge Creon with?
51. (252) What is the final message of the Chorus?

General questions- Make sure you can explain and have support for your answer.

52. Who is the main character of Antigone?
53. What did Creon learn?
54. What do you think is the main theme/ message of the play?
55. What role does Tiresias play?
56. What do you think Sophocles is saying about the role of fate in people's lives?
57. What do you think Sophocles is saying about women?
58. In the 1940s, both Jean Anouilh and Bertolt Brecht produced adaptations of Antigone that interpreted it as a political play opposing tyranny in general and the Nazis in particular. Do you believe that Sophocles intended a political message in his play?
59. In contrast to the more common plot of "right vs. wrong," Bernard Knox has characterized Antigone as a play of "right vs. right." Do you agree?
(BONUS for careful readers with excellent memories--When have the views of Bernard Knox been considered in this course?)

Journal: What is your favorite quote from Antigone + why?

