

DramaWorks Teacher's Guide
for
Oedipus the King
the play by Sophocles

Guide by
Marion B. Hoffman
William L. Hoffman

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Authors' Dedication

This guide is gratefully dedicated
to all the classroom teachers
without whom we would not be
the lifelong students we are today.

We thank you.

--Marion & Bill

Publisher's Dedication

Marion Hoffman was my teacher and friend
who had a passion for learning and teaching
and a tremendous love of literature and life.

Her spirited enthusiasm for teaching
and her classroom experience combined with
Bill's equally passionate love for and experience
with the world of theater combined to make
these DramaWorks guides invaluable resources.

I dedicate these updated editions to
Marion and Bill.

--Mary Collins, Founder of Teacher's Pet Publications

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Introduction to the DramaWorks Guide

What DramaWorks Is

DramaWorks has been created to meet the needs of classroom teachers. We have found that many teachers want resource materials directly related to presenting dramatic literature in their classrooms. They want information for themselves about specific plays, help in teaching the plays in the classroom, a large selection of in- and out-of-class activities geared to students working at different learning levels, and some practical guidance in putting all of that material together as quickly and as effortlessly as possible for applied use.

In response to those needs, we have created DramaWorks. It is designed, in a single guide, to give teachers a working understanding of a play, in this instance *Oedipus the King*, a high level of comfort in making an interesting and informative presentation of the play to their students, and numerous activities of varying kinds that can be done in class or at home. All activities come with information for the teacher as well as directions for the students. The directions are so flexible that the teacher can copy them and hand them out to the students, can give them out orally, or can adapt them to a variety of different purposes.

The activities include vocabulary exercises that focus on application of the words; classroom presentations; close examination of specially chosen parts of the text; acting exercises; writing assignments for the personal, interview, and research paper; and improvisations. There are, in addition, many suggested extra activities that allow students to practice skills in gathering and thinking about information, presenting information verbally, working with various media, and writing information in a variety of forms. Students also are encouraged to try to learn new skills such as the elements of acting.

Accompanying those materials are very practical suggestions for ways to allot classroom time for direct teaching, interactive discussions, and assigned activities, as well as ways to use out-of-class activities to the best advantage in furthering students' understanding and enjoyment of the play. Everything is presented in ways that conserve the teacher's time and at the same time capitalize on every opportunity to make the classroom interesting and dynamic. Many opportunities are given to actually "act out" parts of the play in class.

What is unique about DramaWorks is that it places emphasis on classroom teaching, discussion, and activity. We hope it gives teachers the confidence to create a dynamic, interactive classroom environment. We know it will help them to introduce *Oedipus the King* to their students with minimal preparation but maximal results.

Because DramaWorks actually teaches users about the play while coaching them in teaching their students, it requires relatively little additional preparation time. There is no need to put hours and hours into creating lengthy lesson plans from scratch. Teachers can simply pick and choose from among many pre-designed activities without having to create new ones or devise lengthy instructions for their students.

Who The DramaWorks Guide Is For

DramaWorks can be used by any busy teacher who wants to introduce drama into the classroom. The most obvious users are probably teaching English, although they might be in another of the humanities or in some area of language arts. Our teachers enjoy teaching and being with young people. They are likely to be relatively new teachers looking for some support while they gain experience, although they could easily be ten- or fifteen-year veterans looking for help in preparing to teach a new play or one they haven't taught for a while.

What we know for sure is that this guide will be used by teachers who believe it will enhance their teaching of *Oedipus the King* while saving them some much-needed time in preparation.

We hope our teachers see great value in teaching drama dramatically. Though they probably are teaching drama as part of an overall curriculum, we hope they want to go beyond acquainting students with the play in the same way that they would "read" a novel, poem, or short story. Good teachers know through experience that the only true way to understand drama is to see at least some of it acted out before our eyes. They know that hearing actors' voices, watching characters move, seeing costumes, and looking at sets--even in the imagination--will make more of an impression on students than a million words on a page.

Our teachers also want to introduce theatre into the classroom to acquaint their students with great works of drama and help them to understand their plots, language, characters, and ideas. Our teachers want to make their classroom presentations interesting. They want to keep the attention of their students and impress upon them some of the pleasure of learning that brought the teachers into the classroom in the first place. They know there is no better way to capture and keep students' attention than through the natural dynamics of drama.

Our teachers also know that drama is one way to open students' eyes to an understanding of real life. If students understand the motivations of a play's characters, they will be better armed to see the motivations of people they meet in their own lives.

If they see models of both trustworthy and untrustworthy behavior, they will be able to make more informed decisions about how they view the behavior of others and about how they themselves behave. If they understand more about language and other historical periods and have discussed some new ideas, students will perhaps be just a little more prepared to live their lives in ways that will give satisfaction to themselves and others.

What The DramaWorks Guide Contains

The DramaWorks guide contains several sections.

The first section is **About the Playwright and His Art**, which contains a brief write-up on the life and art of Sophocles.

Next is **A Synopsis of *Oedipus the King*** that both teachers and students may use to gain a quick and easy understanding of the overall plot of the play. Although some teachers may object to giving students notes on the plot of the play because doing so seems somehow like “cheating,” we believe that it is very helpful to students to refer to. But, as with all of the parts of the Guide, teachers get to make the decision as to which parts to use and which not.

In the section entitled **Learning and Teaching**, really the heart of the Guide, teachers will learn about *Oedipus the King* at the same time that they gain techniques for teaching the play to their students. There is information on choosing a good text, reading the play for enjoyment and for teaching preparation, considerable information about the play’s characters, plot, thematic ideas, costuming, props, and set, and interesting and informative ways to present those aspects of drama to students. Throughout this section, we talk with teachers and share our thoughts on each part of *Oedipus the King*.

Also included in **Learning and Teaching** are ways to act out parts of the play in the classroom using the sketchiest of props, sets, and costumes or no props, sets, or costumes at all. If teachers want to use the acting portions of the Guide, then the ideas in props, sets, and costumes will be very beneficial.

Throughout the **Learning and Teaching** section, teachers will find many casual suggestions for activities that can be used with students at varying learning levels.

What **Learning and Teaching** really is is a section of coaching for the teacher. As educators with many years of experience in a variety of settings with lots of different students, we try to give teachers as many ideas as possible for ways to learn about the play and to pass that learning along to their students in as dynamic and informative a way as possible. By combining their own ideas and methodology with ours, teachers will create a vast assortment of ideas, approaches, and teaching techniques.

And that brings us to an important note: we don’t propose that our suggestions are the **only** way(s) to teach this or any other play. As teachers approach *Oedipus the King* and other dramas, they will no doubt add notes, thoughts, and activities that will change their teaching over the years. What **Learning and Teaching** represents is a beginning, a variety of ways to approach *Oedipus the King* that we believe will be successful in many classrooms.

Following the **Learning and Teaching** section are a series of more formally presented activities. Some may be done with students at varying learning levels while others require substantially capable and interested students.

Vocabulary Words from the Text is designed to make students more familiar with the meanings of 85 words from the play's text. Each word is quoted as it is used in *Oedipus the King* and is accompanied by a clear dictionary definition. Students apply the words in interesting ways to assist them in understanding and becoming more familiar with them. Some of these activities may be done individually at home and some may be done in pairs and small groups in class.

The part called **Sections of the Text for Close Examination** gives students ways of acquiring better understanding of the play by focusing closely on parts of scenes. By looking closely at small segments of text, students will be better able to understand and assimilate the play's characters, plot, and major ideas. The **Sections of the Text for Close Examination** lend themselves either to individual or group work and should be approached as a fun activity, if at all possible.

The Written Word is included for teachers who are most comfortable with evaluating students through traditional writing assignments. There are multiple suggestions for writing based on personal experience, writing that evolves from investigation and research, and writing based on interviews. The writing itself is an individualized activity done by students either in or outside of the classroom, but in the interest of time, we assume that most of the writing will be completed at home.

The Exercises are of three types. Some ask for investigation followed by a classroom presentation. And because we are learning about drama, other exercises involve creating theatrical improvisations and presenting them in class while still others give students the opportunity to act out parts of the play in class with or without costumes, props, and sets. Some of the exercises can be done individually while some are group activities. The section was created to give teachers a wide choice of each type of activity.

The Exercises is a section that can be used in its entirety, in part, or not at all. Although we hope that teachers will use some of the activities in the section, it is entirely possible to teach *Oedipus the King* interestingly and successfully without doing the exercises at all. Regardless of how they are used, it is unlikely that any classroom teacher will have the luxury of enough class periods to use the entire **Exercises** section.

One of the last sections is called **More and More Activities**, which includes a list of extra activities that teachers might want to consider. There are fifty activities listed. Many of them have multiple parts. All told, there probably are more than seventy-five activities in the section.

We conclude with **The Epilogue** and a note on the text.

Every activity section contains **Suggestions For The Teacher** which—depending on the type of activity--gives teachers ideas about how to work with the activities, information about why we chose the particular activity, what we hope it will accomplish with students, and things for teachers to think about as they assign the work. Although we make practical suggestions on ways to teach the activities, we always leave all final decisions to teachers because they know their particular students, classrooms, and schools better than anyone else can.

For every series of activities and most individual activities, we offer **Directions For The Students**, which gives guidance about how to complete the activity, how to approach it, and what we hope will be learned from it. We have tried to assure that the directions are very informative but always supportive of teachers. Our desire is that our directions never encroach upon teachers' freedom to use the activities in any way that they please.

As teachers give directions for an activity, they will give students whatever information they think is needed. If they think in some cases that just giving students our directions and letting them get started on the activity is appropriate, that is fine. Students often will be able to do the work by just referring to Directions for Students. When teachers want additional information in making assignments, they will find the basis for it in the Suggestions for the Teacher sections.

How To Use The DramaWorks Guide

We want teachers to feel free to use the DramaWorks Guide however they choose. But we also understand that teachers are busy people who don't always have time to wade through pages of information and then make hundreds of choices about how to present the material to their students.

We suggest, then, that teachers spend as much time as possible reading the play and the Guide. Then, if they want some practical applications of the material, they will find those under **Teaching Organizers**. In that section are a variety of ways to organize the actual teaching of *Oedipus the King*. In the **Organizers**, we break the teaching of the play into relevant parts and suggest pedagogical methods.

All five methods require that the teacher start by giving an overview of what will be taught during the whole unit and how the teaching will be done. Generally, too, teachers will want to be sure that students understand their expectations. We suggest that copies of the synopsis of *Oedipus the King* be given to students prior to the first class.

Our pedagogical methods are all based on fifteen class periods of approximately 50 minutes each. If teachers have more or fewer than fifteen class periods to devote to the play, they will necessarily need to adapt the **Organizers** to their own purposes.

Teachers may find these **Organizers** helpful time savers, especially if they are preparing to teach *Oedipus the King* for the first time. Some users of the Guide may even be teaching their first play ever. But if teachers know ways that help them to present the material more effectively, then they should do it in whatever way seems best to them. The **Organizers** are presented as a way to save the teachers time. They are meant to help teachers, not dictate to them.

What is special about the DramaWorks Guide is that it has been created to be used by a variety of teachers in a variety of ways. We assume that all teachers and all classes and all classrooms are different. We invite teachers to use all or parts of the Guide exactly as we present them. But we also urge teachers to modify the Guide in any way that they please whenever they see the need.

Every step we have taken in creating the DramaWorks Guide was chosen to make teachers' professional and personal lives easier. It's not, after all, as though teachers can't present dramatic literature without our help. But if we do some of the work for them, they will have more time to think about presenting information to their students, working with them in groups and individually, and seeing that the classroom experience is as valuable as possible for everyone.

What The DramaWorks Guide Is Not

We are not trying to give a synopsis of everything that has ever been written about *Oedipus the King*. There is no way that anyone could do that. We are not writing an academic critique of the play. There are lots of journals available if that's what teachers want and need. We aren't trying to compile the latest literary criticism on the play. Again, that information is readily available.

We're not trying to make teachers instant experts on either *Oedipus the King* or Sophocles. If teachers choose to spend a lot of time researching Sophocles and his plays, there is sufficient information for them to choose from.

The DramaWorks Guide is not intended to be the final word on any aspect of *Oedipus the King*. It is intended to provide help for teachers and their students. We hope it is viewed as a useful resource supportive of an informative, enjoyable, and enlightened teaching process. We hope that teachers enjoy using it as much as we enjoyed writing it.

The Characters in the Play

[CCSS: RL.9-10.1, RL.9-10.3, RL.9-10.9, SL.9-10.1 | RL.11-12.1, RL.11-12.10, SL.11-12.1

The notes below will help you discuss the characters in *Oedipus the King* with your class. There is a lot of information and there are several suggestions as to ways to get your students to understand the characters through discussions and exercises. Choose the timing and methods you feel are most appropriate for your own students.]

There are many ways to examine the characters in any play. For example, we could listen to their language, think about the circumstances in which they live, see them reflected in the eyes of other characters, examine their behavior throughout the play, notice their growth as characters as the play progresses, and think about them as everyday people such as those we know in our real lives. All of these pieces of evidence together might reveal a whole character.

In the case of characters in ancient Greek tragedies, such as *Oedipus the King*, we have much less in the way of character to go on than we might in a more modern drama. The play takes place on one day, and the characters have little time in which to grow or to change. In our version of *Oedipus the King*, the whole play takes up only thirty-seven pages.

Besides, we know that the events of the play are contrived in order to allow Sophocles to make his points while utilizing the myth. Oedipus the character is of course doomed well before we see him come out of the palace to meet the suppliants.

For the ancient Greeks, the characters in the play were secondary to the plot itself. The plot and the incidents which were portrayed were paramount. The Greeks wouldn't have spent time doing any psychological examination of the characters themselves or their motivations. Oedipus, for example, would have been seen by the early Greeks basically as the character to whom the incidents in the plot happen.

We will look at the characters in a more modern sense than Sophocles would have intended us to do. We will keep in mind that Oedipus is the vehicle in the play, the person to whom the tragic events happen, but we will also examine his and other characters' motivations, enviable characteristics, and less admirable traits. We will try to see the characters in *Oedipus the King* in a way that will make them interesting to us and to students. Just keep in mind that we are coming at the play in a way that might well have mystified Sophocles.

In this modern sense, we immediately get to know Oedipus himself as he nearly struts onto the stage, calling his Theban visitors "My children" and declaring himself, "I, Oedipus, renowned of all." The priest accompanying the suppliants who have come for Oedipus' help calls him "Oedipus, king glorious in all eyes." The priest goes on to proclaim his belief in Oedipus' superior powers:

Text between the previous page and this one has been omitted for the sample.

When watching characters such as Oedipus and Jocasta, we who are in possession of the myth from which they come can afford to be smug about our own knowledge. In a way, we can be like the people in Sophocles' original audience. We see these people flying so close to the flame and unable to recognize their own danger. We hear them flaunt advice that is so well advised and take advice that is foolish.

But so might all of us live our lives better if we knew for sure what was going to follow our actions. It's easy to look back and see what **ought** to have been done. Everyone can develop 20/20 hindsight. Alas, it is the prior information that mortals do not have, and Oedipus and Jocasta are flawed by the limitations of their own mortality.

Move on to examining Creon's life. Is he more moderate than Oedipus is? Point out to students Creon's thoughtfulness in suggesting that Oedipus might want to keep the information about the oracle private. Even when Oedipus attacked him for no reason, Creon was careful to explain himself to Oedipus without becoming too personally vindictive.

Notice how Creon lives in moderation, enjoying being liked and respected by many citizens, but finding the trappings of kingship unnecessary to his own happiness. Even after Oedipus' downfall, Creon demonstrates compassion and consideration for Oedipus and his family. Given a chance to revenge himself on Oedipus for past insults, Creon chooses instead to behave maturely and compassionately.

Ask students to consider whether Oedipus have been safer had he lived as Creon does. Had he not risen so high in the eyes of the gods, would he still have been their target? Is it ironic that Creon tells Oedipus that he has no desire to be king when Oedipus, the king, is so close to his downfall?

Think about Teiresias. How must he feel? He is in possession of knowledge that no one wants to hear. He knows that the outcome will be the same whether the truth is learned from him or from some other means. Can we blame him for not wishing to be the carrier of such bad news for the king?

In myth, it is said that Teiresias, who was a Theban from the town's earliest days, had been changed into a woman for a while after seeing two snakes copulating. Zeus and Hera, the god and goddess, asked him who had more pleasure in sex, men or women. Teiresias said that women do, for which Hera blinded him and Zeus gave him inner sight.

There is irony, of course, in the fact that Oedipus is sighted but cannot see within while Teiresias is blind but is sighted within. Once Oedipus has been brought low by the prophecy of the gods, he blinds himself and then has the ability to see what was invisible to him before. Ask students which is more valuable, inner or outer sight?

If you have time in class, you might want to spend some time discussing the minor characters in *Oedipus the King*. If you want to look at the herdsman (the servant from Thebes) and the messenger (the one from Corinth), it would be interesting to ask students what they would have done in the men's places. The messenger fails to realize the peril that he faces just by his

Some Thematic Ideas for Discussion

CCSS: RL.9-10.1, RL.9-10.2, RL.9-10.3, RL.9-10.10, SL.9-10.1
RL.11-12.1, RL.11-12.2, RL.11-12.5, RL.11-12.10, SL.11-12.1

Inner and Outer Sight

Try to get students to think about how an otherwise intelligent and good person can lack inner sight. What is inner sight? In the case of Teiresias, for example, it is the ability to know what few other mortals know, the ability to “see” within people, to know their innermost secrets. Teiresias, deprived of his outer sight by one god, has the gift of inner vision which was given to him by another god.

For most people, however, the kind of “inner sight” that we talk about is vision that lets them understand what is going on in a common sense sort of way. It’s that gift that allows some people to perceive truth and falsehood, goodness and evil, in others, almost as if by instinct. It is that almost extrasensory power that lets some people see and hear what some other people miss.

Talk with students about people who can “sense” when others are telling the truth and when they are not. See if they or others they know seem to have this special sense. Call it perception. Call it vibes. Some people get a feel about a situation that other people do not.

Similarly, some people are able to see within themselves, to really understand their own motivation, the truth behind their own actions. Others never really question themselves enough to know themselves. Or if they do ask the right questions, they don’t get the right answers.

In the play, *Oedipus the King*, for example, Oedipus is a man of superior intelligence. He has saved his land from disaster by being able to answer the riddle of the Sphinx. He knows how to rule and is a favorite among all of his people. Yet he fails to sense disaster even when it is bearing down on him. He announces his proclamation loudly and publicly, argues with the prophet, believes that the prophet must have been paid off when he speaks the truth, and quarrels violently with his own brother in law.

Oedipus does not believe what Teiresias is telling him. Listen to the warnings from the prophet:

You blame my temper but do not see that to which
you yourself are wedded. No, you find fault with me.

...**You** are the accursed defiler of this land.

I say that you are the slayer of the man whose slayer you seek.

I say that you have been living in unguessed shame with
your nearest kin, and do not see to what woe you have
come.

Vocabulary Words from the Text Activity #4

Directions for Students

For this activity, you are to give your opinion—either real or made-up—of *Oedipus the King*, using any of the vocabulary words numbered 52-68. You must use at least six of the words but may create whatever number of sentences you choose.

Have fun with this activity and try not to worry about your sentences being contrived. The main point is to understand the vocabulary words thoroughly and to use them to better understand the play.

Here is an example of how this activity might be done:

There is great **potency** of emotion in this play about a sometimes **insolent** king who is self-**exiled** from his homeland. The play moved me **despite** my **bent** against enjoying ancient literature. I think that someone should write a **sequel** to this interesting drama.

Vocabulary Words from the Text Activity #5

Directions for Students

Using ten of the remaining vocabulary words--#65-80—write some sentences on any topic or combination of topics of your choice.

Here is an example of how the activity might be done:

He was in **anguish** and was filled with **dread** about the future.

His **raiment** was old, and he has **festering** sores on his legs and arms.

“What, do you **deign** to touch an **impious parricide** like me?” he cried in horror.

Please do not **reproach** me for not being a **fount** of wisdom.

He was given a **respite** from his exertions so that he could **quench** his thirst.

Sections of the Text for Close Examination

Activity #1

CCSS: RL.9-10.1, RL.9-10.2, RL.9-10.4, RL.9-10.10, SL.9-10.1, W.9-10.10
RL.11-12.1, RL.10-11.2, RL.11-12.4, RL.11-12.10, SL.11-12.1, W.11-12.10

Suggestions For the Teacher

We have chosen this section of text for close examination because it is an early glimpse of the pride demonstrated by King Oedipus. Notice how he prides himself on keeping one step ahead of the citizens who have sought his help. He lets them know right away that he has not been caught sleeping, that he has already been applying his superior wisdom to their plight. He knows everything about them, not only shares their suffering but indeed suffers more than they do, and says that he will obey everything that the god says they should do.

It is ironic that Oedipus is proclaiming that he will follow all of the god's directives when in fact he has seemingly forgotten the oracle sent by Apollo when he [Oedipus] was still living in Corinth.

Of course, it is good that Oedipus is compassionate and caring and desirous of helping his people. That is what a good king should do. But notice the little touches that reach almost to arrogance in his speech. Sophocles is showing us the kind of man who might overreach his own humanity and actually aspire to be like the gods.

Try to get the students to read this speech carefully. It is short so that they can practice reading closely and focus their attention on a relatively brief passage.

Sections of the Text for Close Examination

Activity #1

Directions for Students

This relatively short passage from *Oedipus the King* has been chosen for a close reading so that you can focus specifically on King Oedipus' attitudes and his view of himself. Notice how he seems to try to keep one step ahead of the citizens who have come seeking his help. He emphatically says that they have not caught him sleeping, that he has already taken steps to help them.

Pay attention to suggestions of arrogance in Oedipus' speech. This is the good, compassionate king who will suffer an enormous downfall at the end of the play. Notice how what he says now could be taken in a different way by people who know that he will be struck down. For example, when he says that he will do everything that the god instructs, pay attention to the fact that Oedipus seems to have forgotten about the oracle sent by Apollo while Oedipus was living in Corinth.

Read the passage very carefully and slowly. Focus on each individual sentence. Reading very closely will allow you to understand the play, its plot, its themes, and its characters better.

Sections of the Text for Close Examination

Activity #1

[This is King Oedipus' second speech to the suppliants who have visited him at the palace asking for his help in stopping the plague that is destroying Thebes.]

Oh, my piteous children, known, well known to me are the desires wherewith you have come. I know well that you all suffer, yet sufferers as you are, there is not one of you whose suffering is as mine. Your pain comes on each one of you for himself alone and for no other; but my soul mourns at once for the city, and for myself, and for you.

You are not then rousing me as one sunk in sleep; no, be sure that I have wept full many tears, gone many ways in wanderings of thought. And the sole remedy which after much pondering I could find, this I have put into act. I have sent the son of Menoeceus, Creon, my own wife's brother, to the Pythian house of Phoebus, to learn by what deed or word I might deliver this town. Already, when the lapse of days is reckoned, I am troubled by his delay, for he tarries strangely beyond the fitting space. But when he comes, then shall I be no true man if I do not all that the god shows.

Writing from Personal Experience (Directions and Topic Choices)

Directions for Students

To write from personal experience, you must respond to a question or a situation based on your own current knowledge, feelings, and beliefs. You should not have to do any real research for this but should need to give the topic a lot of thought and consideration.

Your teacher may give you additional expectations for this assignment. But, at the very least, your writing should make a clear point, it should be well organized, and it should support its ideas with enough details to convince the reader that your point is valid. Below is a list of possible topics:

Personal Experience Topic #1

Although *Oedipus the King* was written approximately 450 years before the birth of Christ, it contains many issues that continue to be relevant today. One of the important issues relates to what people expect of their leaders. For example, most people would agree that a charismatic leader is more likely to be elected in the United States than a candidate who is seen as being less interesting. People just tend to gravitate toward the person who stands out and is appealing.

In *Oedipus the King*, standing out meant having a strong ego. Certainly King Oedipus stands out. He has a very strong ego and a very high estimation of himself and his abilities. It is possible, however, that this particular strength also made it impossible for him to hear the warnings of downfall that were given to him. Often he seems too wrapped up in himself and his own appealing qualities to focus clearly on what other people are thinking and saying.

Write a paper in which you tell what kind of leader Americans today are looking for. Try, if you can, to use as many details as possible. Whatever qualities you include, try also to write about what might happen if the leader has too much of any of those qualities.

You can write for an audience that you think will need some persuading but whose members you believe have open minds about your topic. Be sure to state your thesis clearly and to support it thoroughly. Remember that even though this paper tells your personal opinions, it is important that you support those opinions fully.

More and More Activities

What follows is basically a resource list of activities for you, the teacher. Some of them are simple, and some are very difficult. Some require no special skills, but some require especially talented and dedicated students. How you wish to use them is absolutely up to you. They are presented in the sincere hope that somewhere in this grab bag of activities there is a project that appeals to every student and every teacher.

Although there are only 50 numbered activities, many of them actually are multiple assignments. There are eleven major characters in *Oedipus the King*. When an activity calls for choosing a character on which to base an assignment, the students actually have eleven different choices. And in the case of some other assignments, there are even more possible combinations.

The suggested activities are presented in no special order and are attached to only the barest of suggestions for their use. They are what they are—more and more activities.

1. Students could keep journals during the time that they are studying *Oedipus the King* and record in them daily their honest thoughts about the play. If you choose this activity, be prepared for the need to make comments back to the students. Be prepared, too, for what could be some pointedly honest comments from them. If you really intend to encourage honesty, tell the students so.
2. For this activity, students would need to separate Oedipus and Jocasta from their mythological boundaries and consider them just as people. Based on their behavior in the play, would students like to have Oedipus and Jocasta as parents prior to the revelation about the oracle? Have students explain in writing why or why not they think Oedipus and Jocasta would make good parents.
3. Ask students to rewrite the part of *Oedipus the King* to change Oedipus and Jocasta's deaths. Have them assume that Oedipus and Jocasta have the revelation about the oracle and then go into the palace to talk. Students could write one scene of description and dialogue to demonstrate what might be said between the two if they had the opportunity to discuss their situation.
4. Students who are especially interested in Greek drama could do some research into Greek comedy. They might write a paper either comparing the two types of drama or contrasting them. It would make a more worthwhile paper if the students read at least one comedy, perhaps something by Aristophanes.
5. Students interested in film and music could devise a brief music video for any one of the major characters in *Oedipus the King*. This activity obviously requires some special skills on the part of the students and would require some special equipment.