



TEACHER'S PET PUBLICATIONS

LITPLAN TEACHER PACK™

for

Antigone

based on the play by
Sophocles

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A FEW NOTES ABOUT THE AUTHOR: SOPHOCLES

Sophocles was born in Colonus, a small town outside of Athens, Greece in 495 B.C. He was the son of an armor manufacturer who became schooled in poetry, music, and dancing. He was prized for his exceptional physique and abilities in the arts. When he was fifteen years old, Sophocles earned his reputation as a performer when he was selected to lead a chorus of boys in the paean (a hymn of victory and thanksgiving to the gods) after the battle of Salamis. He went on to become an established playwright in Athens, authoring more than 120 plays.

Sophocles first public recognition as a playwright came when he won first prize at the festival of Dionysus (called the *Dionysia*) in 468 B.C. At these festivals, playwrights were to complete three tragedies and one satyr-play (collectively, this was called a *tetralogy*; “tetra” means “four”). This particular festival’s outcome was significant for his career because the twenty-eight year old Sophocles won the coveted prize over Athens’ established playwright, Aeschylus. As the years continued, Sophocles went on to win first prize a total of twenty-four times (since each tetralogy consisted of four plays, he wrote ninety-six first place award winning plays), and seven second place awards out of the thirty-one competitions he entered. Sadly, out of over one hundred twenty plays written by Sophocles, only seven still exist in their entirety. These are:

<i>Ajax</i>	445 B.C.
<i>Antigone</i>	440 B.C.
<i>Electra</i>	440 B.C.
<i>Oedipus Rex</i>	430 B.C.
<i>The Trachiniae</i>	413 B.C.
<i>Philoctetes</i>	410 B.C.
<i>Oedipus at Colonus</i>	401 B.C. (date of first performance; five years after the death of Sophocles)

Although the Oedipus plays (*Oedipus Rex*, *Oedipus at Colonus*, and *Antigone*) are commonly thought of as a trilogy, they were not written as such (see above dates). Also, since there are inconsistencies in characterizations and events between them, the plays are best studied as individual works rather than part of a trilogy.

Sophocles was also involved in the technical aspect of the Greek theatre as well. He introduced the idea of painted scenery, variations in the types of music sung by the chorus, as well as increasing the size of the cast: the chorus went from twelve members to fifteen, and the number of actors in a production increased from two to three. The elaborate costumes (especially the masks) allowed the actors to portray numerous characters throughout the production. With the addition of a third actor on the stage, plot development and distinguishing between characters became more comprehensive to the audiences.

Although most of Sophocles’ life centered on theatre and writing (he also wrote poetry), he was also involved at a civic level. He served as a general under Pericles in the army and was a key negotiator in the Peloponnesian War. In his role as a priest, Sophocles was concerned with the individual’s need to find his/her own place in the moral and cosmic order of the universe. His

plays contain moral lessons that usually pertain to man's duty to the gods and the avoidance of excessive pride. Late in life, Sophocles acted as a statesman who helped organize the recovery of Athens after it was defeated at Syracuse.

Sophocles was said to have been especially blessed by the gods, and he was highly revered in his society. His physical beauty, strength, sense of fairness, and talent earned him the admiration of those around him, and upon his death in 406 B.C., Athens mourned. A shrine, called *Dexion* (The Entertainer) was established in his honor, and annual sacrifices were offered in his memory.

INTRODUCTION

This LitPlan has been designed to develop students' reading, writing, thinking, and language skills through exercises and activities related to *Antigone*. It includes 19 lessons, supported by extra resource materials.

The **introductory lesson** introduces students to Greek Mythology and the Greek Theatre. Following the introductory activity, students are given a transition to explain how the activity relates to the play they are about to read. Following the transition, students are given the materials they will be using during the unit. At the end of the lesson, students begin the pre-reading work for the first reading assignment.

The **reading assignments** are approximately fifteen to twenty pages each; some are a little shorter while others are a little longer. Students have approximately 15 minutes of pre-reading work to do prior to each reading assignment. This pre-reading work involves reviewing the study questions for the assignment and doing some vocabulary work for 10 vocabulary words they will encounter in their reading.

The **study guide questions** are fact-based questions; students can find the answers to these questions right in the text. These questions come in two formats: short answer or multiple choice. The best use of these materials is probably to use the short answer version of the questions as study guides for students (since answers will be more complete), and to use the multiple choice version for occasional quizzes.

The **vocabulary work** is intended to enrich students' vocabularies as well as to aid in the students' understanding of the play. Prior to each reading assignment, students will complete a two-part worksheet for 10 vocabulary words in the upcoming reading assignment. Part I focuses on students' use of general knowledge and contextual clues by giving the sentence in which the word appears in the text. Students are then to write down what they think the words mean based on the words' usage. Part II nails down the definitions of the words by giving students dictionary definitions of the words and having students match the words to the correct definitions based on the words' contextual usage. Students should then have an understanding of the words when they meet them in the text.

After each reading assignment, students will go back and formulate answers for the study guide questions. Discussion of these questions serves as a **review** of the most important events and ideas presented in the reading assignments.

After students complete reading the work, there is a **vocabulary review** lesson which pulls together all of the fragmented vocabulary lists for the reading assignments and gives students a review of all of the words they have studied.

Following the vocabulary review, a lesson is devoted to the **extra discussion questions/writing assignments**. These questions focus on interpretation, critical analysis and personal response, employing a variety of thinking skills and adding to the students' understanding of the play.

There is a **group writing project** in this unit (this is part of the three writing assignments listed below). Student groups will select a mythological story from a select list, and they will create a Greek Tragedy based on the myth following the format of *Antigone*. This will include composing odes and making masks.

There are three **writing assignments** in this unit, each with the purpose of informing, persuading, or having students express personal opinions.

1. Students will research the life of Sophocles. (He was more than a playwright.)
2. Students will be presented with a moral dilemma and will have to present both sides of the situation and then attempt to persuade the reader of the validity of their position in the dilemma.
3. Students will write their own Greek tragedies (following the format of *Antigone*) based on a Greek myth.

There is a **nonfiction reading assignment**. Students must read nonfiction articles, books, etc. to gather information about the history of Greek Theatre.

The **review lesson** pulls together all of the aspects of the unit. The teacher is given several choices of activities or games to use which all serve the same basic function of reviewing all of the information presented in the unit.

The **unit test** comes in two formats: multiple choice or short answer. As a convenience, two different tests for each format have been included. There is also an advanced short answer unit test for advanced students.

There are additional **support materials** included with this unit. The **Unit Resource Materials** section includes suggestions for an in-class library, crossword and word search puzzles related to the play, and extra worksheets. There is a list of **bulletin board ideas** which gives the teacher suggestions for bulletin boards to go along with this unit. In addition, there is a list of **extra class activities** the teacher could choose from to enhance the unit or as a substitution for an exercise the teacher might feel is inappropriate for his/her class. **Answer keys** are located directly after the **reproducible student materials** throughout the unit. The **Vocabulary Resource Materials** section includes similar worksheets and games to reinforce the vocabulary words.

The **level** of this unit can be varied depending upon the criteria on which the individual assignments are graded, the teacher's expectations of his/her students in class discussions, and the formats chosen for the study guides, quizzes and test. If teachers have other ideas/activities they wish to use, they can usually easily be inserted prior to the review lesson.

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UNIT OBJECTIVES - *Antigone*

1. Through reading Sophocles' *Antigone*, students will learn about the history of Greek Theatre and the structure of a Greek Tragedy, as well as about the life of the playwright, Sophocles.
2. Students will complete a project in a cooperative group.
3. Students will demonstrate their understanding of the text on four levels: factual, interpretive, critical and personal.
4. Students will explore the themes of love, devotion to one's god as opposed to the subservience of the law, compassion, and making choices.
5. Students will be given the opportunity to practice reading both aloud and silently to improve their skills in each area.
6. Students will answer questions to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the main events and characters in *Antigone* as they relate to the playwright's theme development.
7. Students will enrich their vocabularies and improve their understanding of the play through the vocabulary lessons prepared for use in conjunction with the play.
8. The writing assignments in this unit are designed for several purposes:
 - a. To have students demonstrate their abilities to inform, to persuade, or to express their own personal ideas
Note: Students will demonstrate the ability to write effectively to inform by developing and organizing facts to convey information. Students will demonstrate the ability to write effectively to persuade by selecting and organizing relevant information, establishing an argumentative purpose, and by designing an appropriate strategy for an identified audience. Students will demonstrate the ability to write effectively to express personal ideas by selecting a form and its appropriate elements.
 - b. To check the students' reading comprehension
 - c. To make students think about the ideas presented by the play
 - d. To encourage logical thinking
 - e. To provide an opportunity to practice good grammar and improve students' use of the English language.
9. Students will read aloud, report, and participate in large and small group discussions to improve their public speaking and personal interaction skills.

READING ASSIGNMENT SHEET - *Antigone*

Date Assigned	Scenes Assigned	Date Completed
	Prologue and Parodos	
	Scene 1 and Ode 1	
	Scene 2 and Ode 2	
	Scene 3 and Ode 3	
	Scene 4 and Ode 4	
	Scene 5	
	Paeon and Exodos	

UNIT OUTLINE – *Antigone*

1 Greek Mythology Background: assign interpretive writing project Intro to Greek Theatre	2 PVR Prologue and Parodos Oedipus background Media center visit: non-fiction assignment	3 Study ?s Prologue and Parodos Read aloud/perform Prologue-Ode 1 PVR Scene1/Ode 1	4 Study ?s Scene 1 and Ode 1 Quiz: Prologue-Ode 1 Peer Edit PVR Scene2/Ode 2	5 Study ?s Scene 2 and Ode 2. Read aloud/perform Scene 2-Ode 3 Mask Making PVR Scene3/Ode 3
6 Study ?s Scene 3 and Ode 3 Quiz: Scene/Odes 2 and 3 Characterization posters PVR Scene4/Ode 4	7 Study ?s Scene 4 and Ode 4 Media center visit: Informational Writing Assignment Sophocles PVR Scene 5	8 Study ?s Scene 5 Read aloud/perform Scene 4- Exodos PVR Paeon and Exodos	9 Study ?s Paeon and Exodos Power of persuasion Quiz Scene 4 - Exodos.	10 <u>Odes</u> - define and read “Ode to a Grecian Urn” - examine Odes 1-4 for figurative language - write odes for group tragedies
11 Group Work: completing the tragedies	12 Vocabulary Work	13 Group Work: Extra Discussion Questions	14 In-Class Writing: Persuasion Piece Moral Dilemma	15 Peer Editing: Persuasion Piece Moral Dilemma
16 Presentations of Tragedies Day 1	17 Presentation of Tragedies Day 2	18 Review Materials	19 Unit Test	20

Key: P = Preview Study Questions V = Vocabulary Work R= Read

LESSON ONE

Objectives

- Students will become familiar with several Greek myths and be introduced to the elements of tragedy (from Aristotle's *Poetics*).
- Students will be briefly introduced to Sophocles' role as a playwright. (Other roles in his society will be part of a research project later on.)
- Students will be introduced to Sophocles' tragedy, *Antigone*, and the structure of a Greek Tragedy

Activity #1

Ask students to brainstorm what the term "tragedy" means, and try to come up with what elements of any plot could be considered as "tragic." Students share ideas aloud and write them on the chalk board. Ask students to brainstorm examples of tragedies from both literature and real life. List them on the board and discuss what makes each of these stories tragic. What do they all seem to have in common? Lead into discussion of the elements of a tragedy (see below).

The following list is compiled from Aristotle's *Poetics* and it contains the six main elements of a Tragedy:

- I. **plot** – how the action is arranged
 - A. *tragedy*: a play with a serious theme that usually ends unhappily for the main character set in motion by some tragic flaw in his/her personality (harmartia).
 - B. *hubris*: arrogance demonstrated by a character as a result of his/her pride or passion
 - C. *foreshadowing*: clues as to what will probably happen later in the play
 - D. *climax*: the highest point of emotional tension or the turning point of the plot
 - E. *catharsis*: the purification of a character's emotions and/or the relief of emotional tension
 - F. *denouement*: the resolution of the main conflict (not usually a happy outcome for the main character)
- II. **characters** – the people in the play
- III. **theme** – the main idea or message as the central focus
- IV. **language/diction** – the words spoken or sung by the characters
- V. **music** – the odes sung by the chorus and choragus (in Greek tragedy)
- VI. **spectacle** – the scenes, props, costumes, masks... anything visual

A Greek tragedy is structured as follows:

- I. **Prologue**: Spoken by one or two characters before the chorus appears. The prologue usually gives the background information needed to understand the events of the play.
- II. **Parodos**: the song sung by the chorus as it makes its entrance
- III. **Episodes/Scenes**: the main action of the play
- IV. **Odes**: songs (and often dance) that reflect on the events of the episodes, and weave the plot into a cohesive whole
 - A. *Choragos*: the leader of the chorus who often interacts with the characters in the scenes.
 - B. *Chorus*: the singers/dancers who remark on the action
 1. strophe: the movement of the chorus from right to left across the stage
 2. antistrophe: the reaction to the strophe, which moves across the stage from left to right.

WRITING ASSIGNMENT #1: *Antigone*
Interpretive: writing a tragedy based on a Greek myth

PROMPT:

Sophocles' *Antigone* follows the structure of a Greek tragedy, and contains each of the following:

- I. **Prologue:** Spoken by one or two characters before the chorus appears. The prologue usually gives the background information needed to understand the events of the play.
- II. **Parodos:** the song sung by the chorus as it makes its entrance
- III. **Episodes/Scenes:** the main action of the play
- IV. **Odes:** a song (and often dance) that reflects on the events of the episodes, and puts the plot into some kind of larger mythological framework
 - A. *Choragos:* the leader of the chorus who often interacts with the characters in the scenes.
 - B. *Chorus:* the singers/dancers who remark on the action
 1. strophe: the movement of the chorus from right to left across the stage
 2. antistrophe: the reaction to the strophe, which moves across the stage from left to right.
- V. **Paean:** a prayer of thanksgiving to Dionysos in whose honor the Greek plays were performed
- VI. **Exodos:** sung by the chorus as it makes its final exit, which usually offers words of wisdom related to the actions and outcome of the play

PREWRITING:

Your group has selected one of the following myths and you will re-tell the story in the format of a Greek tragedy.

Cupid and Psyche	Echo
Pandora's box	Callisto and Arcas
Hercules (before his twelve labors)	Atreus
Narcissus	Orpheus

DRAFTING:

Each member of your group will work *individually* on a specific *section* of the tragedy (other than the odes), and you will ALL work on creating the odes. (There are as many odes as there are scenes in the play.) You must have at least two scenes in your tragedy. You will have time to work as a group to brainstorm ideas for what should be included in each of the individual sections, but the actual writing will be done independently. The creation of the odes will be part of a separate lesson. At least four of the vocabulary words from the unit must be incorporated into each portion.

Individual Work Division:

- prologue and parodos
- scene 1
- scene 2
- paean and exodos

PEER CONFERENCE/REVISING

When you finish the draft, ask another student to look at it. You may want to give the student your pre-writing notes and scenario so he/she can double check to see you have included all the information you intended to include. After reading, he/she should tell you what is best about your essay, which parts were difficult to understand or follow, and ways in which your essay could be improved. Reread your essay considering your critic's comments and make the corrections you think are necessary. You will be completing a peer editing form in Lesson 4.

Do a final proofreading of your essay, double-checking your grammar, spelling, organization, and the clarity of your ideas.