

**C. FOCUS QUESTIONS: Answer on separate paper. Use quotes to illustrate each response. (100 points)**

**Prologue: to 198 / to Line 160 when Creon enters**

1. Ismene calls her sister a “firebrand”. What does this mean? Explain why you agree with this statement or not.
2. What is Ismene’s position on the conflict? How does she morally support her stand? Explain why you agree with her or not? Is it ever moral to [stay silent](#) about injustice?

**Episodes One and Two: 198-219 / Lines 160-710 when Haemon enters**

3. Why does Antigone think it is wrong to bury one brother and not the other? Why does Creon think this is right? (Use two quotes. Polyneices’ body is unburied. Eteocles is the honored brother.)
4. Does the rest of Thebes agree with Antigone or Creon? How do you know?
5. Why does Creon think he must punish both Antigone and Ismene?
6. Do you agree with Ismene or Antigone: Should you commit a sin to save your life, or do you follow your religion if it means you will harm not only yourself, but your own family -- or your own country?

**Episode Three: 220-227 / Lines 710 - 910 When Antigone is led to the tomb)**

7. What are the arguments that Creon uses to explain why he must punish Antigone?
8. Name at least two reasons Haemon gives to try to persuade his father to free Antigone.
9. Is there a personal reason why Creon won’t listen to Haemon’s argument? What is it?
10. What is it about his personality that prevents Creon from listening to Haemon? In other words, what is his *hamartia*? (Think about how he misinterprets Haemon’s intentions.)
11. Why does he change his mind about killing Ismene and having Antigone stoned to death? What does he think is better about burying her alive? Do you agree?
12. Is it more noble *to go against* your religion and family, if it will save many people from death and war? Or, is it more noble *to honor your religion*, even if it will cause destruction?

**Episode Four: 228-233 (Lines 910-1100 When Tiresius comes in) [Link to Acheron and Rivers in Hades \(228\)](#) [Link to Niobe of Phrygia Myth \(229\)](#)**

13. Does Antigone think that anyone in Thebes cares about her? Use a quote to illustrate your statements.
14. Does she seem to care that her death will cause Haemon grief? Use a quote to illustrate your statements.
15. Is she convinced that burying her brother was noble? Use a quote to illustrate your statements.
16. Why do you think she decided to die so that her brother would be honorably buried?

**Episode Five and Epilogue: 235-252 (Lines 1100 - End)**

17. What does Tiresius tell Creon about the gods’ reaction to his decision to leave Polyneices unburied? Why doesn’t Creon believe him?
  18. What else does Tiresius tell Creon will happen as a result of his edict? How is Creon’s *hamartia* making him blind to the truth?
  19. Why do you think Antigone hangs herself rather than wait for death to come of starvation?
  20. What tragedies happen at the end of the play? Who caused these tragedies and why?
- Why is it important to have understanding or sympathy for both protagonist and antagonist? Do you think good literature should have a compelling conflict, where there is no easy solution? Why?