

Sophocles, *Antigone*

• Applicable drama terms:

setting (M 101, 159)
plot (M 93, 156,)
theme (M 18, 104, 132, 163)
protagonist (M100, 159)
antagonist (M 100, 159)
round character
flat character
dynamic character
foil
conflict
tragedy
allusion
dialogue (M 104, 161) diction (M127)
irony: dramatic, situational, verbal
symbol (M 103, 129)
personification
tone (M 127, 187)
resolution climax (M 96, 157)

• Characters:

• Dialogue/diction:

Characters often have discussions that are about more than just what's going on onstage – about bigger themes and ideas. What might Antigone represent? Or Creon? Ismene? Haemon? Tiresias?

Through how they walk, act, and speak, what *ideas* do characters represent?

How do the way characters *speak* tell us things about them? Contrast, say, Antigone, Creon, Ismene, the Sentry, Tiresias, Haemon, Eurydice and the Chorus .

• Imagery:

What verbal images do characters give us in *Antigone*? How can we interpret them? What's these descriptions' purpose, given the limits of the stage action?

● **Structure:**

Does the *action* of the play *climax* at any one point?

How does the *narrative* build up to this point? (What steps create dramatic *tension* up to the end?)

● **Themes** (what the play is *about*, not just what *happens* in it [plot]):

Moral duty and human law in struggle. Who represents which? How does the struggle take place? How does the struggle turn out?

The human ego – the belief that one is absolutely right. Who believes in her/his own rightness without question? What's the result of these beliefs?

Hubris(ὕβρις) – the OED defines this as “Presumption, orig. towards the gods; pride, excessive self-confidence.” What does the play have to say about this kind of arrogance, of humans claiming to know what the gods think? What characters use the gods to support their claims? What's the outcome?

The needs of the state vs. the needs of the individual. Who occupies which part of this struggle? How does the struggle take place? How does the struggle turn out?

Action and thought: how do the two relate? Who thinks first before acting? How does s/he think? What's the result?

What other themes do you see in the play?

● **Irony:**

What *situational irony* occurs in the play?

What *verbal irony* occurs in the play?