

Sophocles, *Antigone*: Essay Questions Arts One, Authority and Resistance, 2018

1. How would Plato evaluate the state of Kreon's soul, the nature of his rule, and the legitimacy of his claims to authority? (i.e. use Plato's own typology)
2. What does Teiresias's appearance in *Antigone* suggest about the authority of prophecy in shaping the course of human affairs?
3. What is the relationship between language and power in *Antigone*?
4. Where does Kreon think his authority comes from, and why does he think it has no limits?
5. Does Kreon understand, or even recognize, a distinction between power and authority?
6. The German philosopher Hegel regards *Antigone* as a tragic stalemate between two equally justifiable views. Suggest why this is, or is not, a persuasive reading.
7. What is the relationship between death and burial in *Antigone*? Why is this relationship significant?
8. What does the chorus in *Antigone* add to the overall meaning and impact of the play?
9. Why does Kreon tell Haemon that it is worse to give way to a woman than a man? What does the play as a whole suggest about the place of women?
10. Explore the relationship between Antigone and Polyneices and its connection to her attitude to married life.
11. "I come as a stranger always to the home hearth/ of humans and spirits both, / an alien only, among the living and the dead" (Sophocles 54). In what way(s) does it make sense to think of Antigone as a stranger, an alien?
12. A tyrannical ruler can be described as a person exercising power or control in a cruel, unreasonable, or arbitrary way. Explain why Kreon is, or is not, a tyrant.
13. The language of "love" and "hate" pervade this play. Explore notions of love and/or hate in the play via an examination of particular relationships. Is there a consistent theme here? or do "love" and "hate" mean different things to different characters?