

SL.9-10.6. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate

## ***Oedipus the King* Final Seminar**

**Essential Questions:** When and why might a personal strength become a detriment? Can ignorance ever be beneficial, and can knowledge ever be a detriment? How is knowledge related to freedom?

**Texts:** *Oedipus the King* by Sophocles and “Allegory of the Cave” by Plato

### **Seminar Plan**

**Opening Question:** Round Robin – Which of the pre-seminar assignment quotes do you think relates best to both *Oedipus* and “Allegory of the Cave”? Read your quote and explain how it relates to both.

#### **Core Seminar:**

1. Do you think that you have free will about the outcome of your life, or do you believe that there is a plan that is pre-determined?
2. Do bad things happen because of bad choices or bad luck?
3. What were your initial thoughts about the character of *Oedipus*? Did your thoughts about him change as you read the drama?
4. What symbolic implications emerge from *Oedipus* blinding himself? Do you find his action courageous and heroic, or do you interpret it some other way? Explain.
5. Jocasta declares, “Now when we look to him [*Oedipus*] we are all afraid; he’s pilot of our ship and he is frightened” (lines 921-922). Can leaders show fear? Why or why not?
6. Who or what is responsible for this big mess? *Oedipus*? *Jocasta*? The gods? Fate?
7. According to Plato’s “Allegory,” some people find it hard to face reality. How does this concept relate to the character of *Oedipus*?
8. Why would “real light” or “real knowledge” hurt the prisoner? Is Plato trying to say that ignorance hurts? Explain while making a connection to *Oedipus Rex*.
9. What could be the elements that prevent people from seeing the truth, or regarding the “shadow” as the “truth?” What prevented *Oedipus* from seeing the truth in the beginning of the tragedy?
10. Describe other “caves” in which people might be “imprisoned” or feel “imprisoned?”
11. How is knowledge related to freedom?

**Closing:** On a blank sheet of paper, answer the following questions: Did your participation in this seminar improve from the last seminar? Why or why not? What were your strengths today? What were your weaknesses today? How will you improve those weaknesses for the next seminar? What does your class, as a whole, need to work on in order to have better seminars?

**Post-Seminar Assignment:** Think about how the character of *Oedipus* fits into Plato’s “Allegory of the Cave.” Be ready to complete a writing assignment in class tomorrow. Bring all pre-seminar work and even seminar notes to use to complete the assignment.

**Due Date:** Thursday (10/4) by the end of class. **No late assignments will be accepted.**

#### **Grading**

Pre-Seminar: 25 points

Core Seminar: 50 points

Created by Bess Futrell, Wake County Schools

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Post-Seminar: 25 points

Total: 100 points (Reading Techniques Grade – 35%)