

LEARNING STRATEGIES:
Marking the Text, Visualizing,
Graphic Organizer,
Summarizing

Literary Terms

A **dynamic character** in literature is one who changes in response to the events of a narrative. A **static character** remains the same throughout the narrative.

My Notes

Learning Targets

- Analyze a literary text to examine changes in a dynamic character.
- Write a compare/contrast response to a literary text.

Dynamic and Static Characters

Remember that one of the elements of Greek drama is the use of masks to portray a character's attitude or emotions. Characters who change and show different emotions throughout a narrative are **dynamic characters**. In contrast, **static characters** do not show significant changes in a narrative.

Setting a Purpose for Reading

- As you continue reading *Antigone*, mark the text by highlighting evidence of Creon's attitude or emotions, especially as they change throughout the scene.
- Circle unknown words and phrases. Try to determine the meanings of the words by using context clues, word parts, or a dictionary.

[The palace doors are thrown open and guards appear at the doors]

180 CHORUS LEADER But here comes Creon, new king of our land,
son of Menoikeos. Thanks to the gods,
who've brought about our new good fortune.
What plan of action does he have in mind?
What's made him hold this special meeting,
with elders summoned by a general call?

[Enter Creon from the palace]

190 CREON Men, after much tossing of our ship of state,
the gods have safely set things right again.
Of all the citizens I've summoned you,
because I know how well you showed respect
for the eternal power of the throne,
first with Laius and again with Oedipus,
once he restored our city. When he died,
you stood by his children, firm in loyalty.
Now his sons have perished in a single day,
killing each other with their own two hands,
a double slaughter, stained with brother's blood.
And so I have the throne, all royal power,
for I'm the one most closely linked by blood
to those who have been killed. It's impossible
to really know a man, to know his soul,
his mind and will, before one witnesses
his skill in governing and making laws.
For me, a man who rules the entire state
and does not take the best advice there is,
but through fear keeps his mouth forever shut,
such a man is the very worst of men—
and always will be. And a man who thinks
more highly of a friend than of his country,
well, he means nothing to me. Let Zeus know,
the god who always watches everything,

200

Introducing Creon!

Enter the King

My Notes

hedge: avoid giving a clear response

avert: prevent

[Enter a guard, coming toward the palace]

| | |
|-------|--|
| GUARD | My lord, I can't say I've come out of breath by running here, making my feet move fast. Many times I stopped to think things over—and then I'd turn around, retrace my steps. |
| 260 | My mind was saying many things to me, "You fool, why go to where you know for sure your punishment awaits?"—"And now, poor man, why are you hesitating yet again? If Creon finds this out from someone else, how will you escape being hurt?" Such matters kept my mind preoccupied. And so I went, slowly and reluctantly, and thus made a short road turn into a lengthy one. |
| 270 | But then the view that I should come to you won out. If what I have to say is nothing, I'll say it nonetheless. For I've come here clinging to the hope that I'll not suffer anything that's not part of my destiny. |
| CREON | What's happening that's made you so upset? |
| GUARD | I want to tell you first about myself. I did not do it. And I didn't see the one who did. So it would be unjust if I should come to grief. |
| CREON | You hedge so much. Clearly you have news of something ominous. |
| 280 | GUARD: Yes. Strange things that make me pause a lot. |
| CREON | Why not say it and then go—just leave. |
| GUARD | All right, I'll tell you. It's about the corpse. Someone has buried it and disappeared, after spreading thirsty dust onto the flesh and undertaking all appropriate rites. |
| CREON | What are you saying? What man would dare this? |
| GUARD | I don't know. There was no sign of digging, no marks of any pick axe or a mattock. The ground was dry and hard and very smooth, without a wheel track. Whoever did it left no trace. When the first man on day watch revealed it to us, we were all amazed. The corpse was hidden, but not in a tomb. It was lightly covered up with dirt, as if someone wanted to avert a curse. There was no trace of a wild animal or dogs who'd come to rip the corpse apart. Then the words flew round among us all, with every guard accusing someone else. We were about to fight, to come to blows—no one was there to put a stop to it. Every one of us was responsible, |
| 290 | The Guard's Bad News |
| 300 | |

Enter the King

My Notes

360

still has my respect, then understand this—
I swear to you on oath—unless you find
the one whose hands really buried him,
unless you bring him here before my eyes,
then death for you will never be enough.
No, not before you're hung up still alive
and you confess to this gross, violent act.
That way you'll understand in future days,
when there's a profit to be gained from theft,
you'll learn that it's not good to be in love
with every kind of monetary gain.
You'll know more men are ruined than are saved
when they earn profits from dishonest schemes.

GUARD

Do I have your permission to speak now,
or do I just turn around and go away?

Creon's Pain

CREON
do

But I find your voice so irritating—
n't you realize that?

370

GUARD

Where does it hurt? Is it in your ears or in your mind?

CREON

Why try to question where I feel my pain?

GUARD

The man who did it—he upsets your mind.
I offend your ears.

CREON

My, my, it's clear to see
it's natural for you to chatter on.

GUARD

Perhaps. But I never did this.

CREON

This and more—you sold your life for silver.

GUARD

How strange and sad when the one who sorts this
out gets it all wrong.

380

CREON

Well, enjoy your sophisticated views.
But if you don't reveal to me who did this,
you'll just confirm how much your treasonous gains
have made you suffer.

[Exit Creon back into the palace. The doors close behind him]

GUARD

Well, I hope he's found. That would be best. But
whether caught or not—
and that's something sheer chance will bring about—
you won't see me coming here again.
This time, against all hope and expectation,
I'm still unhurt. I owe the gods great thanks.

[Exit the Guard away from the palace]

SE

COND ODE

CHORUS—**Strophe 1**

390

There are many strange and wonderful things,
but nothing more strangely wonderful than man.
He moves across the white-capped ocean seas
blasted by winter storms, carving his way
under the surging waves engulfing him.

Enter the King

My Notes

3. **Key Ideas and Details:** Review lines 219–239. How does Creon justify treating the brothers so differently after their deaths? Do you think his different treatment of them is justified? Find evidence from the text to support your answer.

4. **Key Ideas and Details:** Reread lines 242–248. Using evidence from the text, discuss how the Chorus’s view of Creon’s control seems to have changed from the beginning of the scene.

5. **Craft and Structure:** Explain the hyperbole in lines 305–306. What emotion does this exaggerated imagery imply?

6. **Key Ideas and Details:** In line 323, why does the Chorus Leader wonder if this act could “not be something from the gods”?

7. **Key Ideas and Details:** Compare and contrast Creon’s attitude toward the Chorus in lines 324–340 to his previous speech at the start of this scene (lines 189–192). How has his tone shifted?