

9.2.2

Lesson 6

Introduction

In this lesson, students will continue their exploration of Oedipus’s confrontation with the blind prophet Teiresias in *Oedipus the King*. Students will read from “Is this something Creon has devised” through “I do not care, if I have saved the city” (lines 454–535).

Students will work through a series of questions in order to make meaning of the figurative language of Teiresias’s riddle, as they continue to explore how the steady revelation of key details develops the central idea of the role of fate in Oedipus’s guilt. Students will engage in a collaborative discussion with their peers in response to a prompt that asks them to explore how Sophocles uses the details of Teiresias’s riddle to further shape the central idea of the text. To assess their understanding in this lesson, students will respond to a Quick Write prompt.

Students review and continue to practice initiating and participating in collaborative discussions in diverse pairs (as introduced in 9.2.1). Students will briefly self-assess their mastery of these skills in writing.

For homework, students will revise and expand their class notes.

Standards

Assessed Standard(s)	
RL.9-10.5	Analyze how an author’s choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within it (e.g., parallel plots), and manipulate time (e.g., pacing, flashbacks) create such effects as mystery, tension, or surprise.
SL.9-10.1	Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on <i>grades 9–10 topics, texts, and issues</i> , building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
Addressed Standard(s)	

RL.9-10.2	Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.
RL.9-10.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language evokes a sense of time and place; how it sets a formal or informal tone).
W.9-10.9.a	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. a. Apply <i>grades 9–10 Reading standards</i> to literature (e.g., “Analyze how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work [e.g., how Shakespeare treats a theme or topic from Ovid or the Bible or how a later author draws on a play by Shakespeare]”).

Assessment

Assessment(s)
<p>The learning in this lesson will be captured through a full class discussion and a Quick Write at the end of the lesson. Students will answer the following prompt based on the reading (citing text evidence and analyzing key words and phrases) completed in the lesson. Students will be held accountable for generating a written response to the prompt and handing it in, as well as participating during the full class discussion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze how Sophocles revisits Oedipus's past experience with the Sphinx to create mystery and tension about Oedipus's future. <p>Additionally, at the close of the lesson students will briefly self-assess their mastery of speaking and listening skills using the Speaking and Listening Rubric and Checklist.</p>
High Performance Response(s)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student responses should indicate an understanding that in this passage Sophocles uses the prophet Teiresias to criticize Oedipus’s past actions; according to Teiresias, Oedipus’s method of seeking out the truth (the same method that Oedipus used in his approach to the Sphinx) will ultimately lead to Oedipus’s downfall—“that quality of yours now ruins you” (line 534). Teiresias’s prophecy connects Oedipus’s future downfall with a major event that occurred in his past. Some students may assert that Teiresias’s claim that an event in Oedipus’s past is intimately connected to his future misfortune suggests that everything that has happened in Oedipus’s life so far is part of a

larger inevitable destiny.

Vocabulary

Vocabulary to provide directly (will not include extended instruction)

- accursed (adj.) – doomed, ill-fated
- bogus (adj.) – not genuine
- quack (n.) – a person who publically pretends to have a skill they do not have
- render (v.) – to cause someone or something to be in a specified condition
- cryptic (adj.) – mysterious, puzzling
- mock (v.) – to attack or ridicule by mimicry of action or speech

Vocabulary to teach (may include direct word work and/or questions)

- devised (v.) – planned or invented

Lesson Agenda/Overview

Student-Facing Agenda	% of Lesson
Standards & Text: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Standards: RL.9-10.5, SL.9-10.1, RL.9-10.2, RL.9-10.4, W.9-10.9.a• Text: <i>Oedipus the King</i>, lines 454–535	
Learning Sequence:	
1. Introduction to Lesson Agenda	1. 5%
2. Homework Accountability	2. 10%
3. Masterful Reading	3. 5%
4. Lines 454–535 Reading and Discussion	4. 55%
5. Quick Write	5. 10%
6. Self-Assessment of Speaking and Listening	6. 10%
7. Closing	7. 5%

Materials

- Student copies of the Short Response Rubric and Checklist (from 9.2.1 Lesson 1)
- Student copies of the Speaking and Listening Rubric and Checklist (from 9.2.2 Lesson 5)

Learning Sequence

How to Use the Learning Sequence	
Symbol	Type of Text & Interpretation of the Symbol
10%	Percentage indicates the percentage of lesson time each activity should take.
	Plain text (no symbol) indicates teacher action.
	Bold text (no symbol) indicates questions for the teacher to ask students.
	<i>Italicized text (no symbol) indicates a vocabulary word.</i>
▶	Indicates student action(s).
☞	Indicates possible student response(s) to teacher questions.
ⓘ	Indicates instructional notes for the teacher.

Activity 1: Introduction to Lesson Agenda

5%

Begin by introducing the agenda and the assessed standards for this lesson: RL.9-10.5 and SL.9-10.1. In this lesson students will continue their exploration of Oedipus’s confrontation with the blind prophet Teiresias, as they explore how the steady revelation of key details refines their understanding of the central idea of the text.

Activity 2: Homework Accountability

10%

Instruct students to talk in pairs about how they can apply their focus standard to their text. Lead a brief share out on the previous lesson’s AIR homework assignment. Select several students (or student pairs) to explain how they applied their focus standard to their AIR text.

Students (or student pairs) discuss and share how they applied their focus standard to their AIR text from the previous lesson’s homework.

Activity 3: Masterful Reading

5%

Introduce the Quick Write assessment (Analyze how Sophocles revisits Oedipus's past experience with the Sphinx to create mystery and tension about Oedipus's future.) Explain to students that this is the lesson assessment and the focus for today's reading.

- ▶ Students read the assessment and listen.

① Display the Quick Write assessment prompt for students to see.

Have students listen to a masterful reading from “Is this something Creon has devised” through “I do not care, if I have saved the city” (lines 454–535). The audio version provides several voices in the argument, and if accessible, is recommended. <http://www.chatterboxtheater.org/node/1654>

- ▶ Students follow along, reading silently.

Activity 4: Lines 454–535 Reading and Discussion

55%

Ask students to reference their Speaking and Listening Rubric and Checklist (from 9.2.2 Lesson 5). Explain to students that they will continue the work of collaborative discussion outlined in SL.9-10.1 and that they will self-assess their mastery of the skills outlined in the standard at the end of the lesson. Remind students that these discussion skills scaffold toward further discussions in this unit and to the discussion-based End-of-Unit Assessment in Unit 3.

① If it is necessary for students to review speaking and listening norms and protocols consider the following activity: Display the Speaking and Listening Rubric. Read through the rubric with students, pausing to allow opportunity for students to pose any questions they may have. Students may also read the Speaking and Listening Checklist independently or in groups.

Group students into pre-established heterogeneous pairs. Instruct students to reread independently from “Is this something Creon has devised” through “Creon, once he’s king” (lines 454–480). Pose the following questions for students to discuss with their partner before sharing out with the class:

Of what is Oedipus accusing Teiresias?

- 🗨️ Students should identify that Oedipus is accusing Teiresias of making something up, of telling a lie. Oedipus thinks Teiresias has “secretly conspired to overthrow” him (line 463) and replace Oedipus as king. More specifically, Oedipus believes that Creon “paid off” (line 464) Teiresias to lie to him, and that Teiresias’s reward will be to “stand up there with Creon, once he’s king” (line 480).

How does the re-emergence of the story of the Sphinx support your understanding of how Oedipus feels about prophecy?

- Oedipus tells the story of the Sphinx again to prove that his human “wits” are more valuable than Teiresias’s prophetic wisdom that is “picked up from the gods” (line 475). Oedipus mocks Teiresias’s inaction and inability to solve the Sphinx’s riddle. He states that “the people saw your knowledge was no use” but “Oedipus, who knew nothing” could “finish[] her off” (line 474–477). This challenge of Teiresias’s prophetic ability stands in contrast to Oedipus’s previous awe and respect for the blind prophet “do not withhold from us your prophecies...Save this city and yourself. Rescue me” (lines 367–369).

Lead a full class discussion of the observations students generated in their groups. Consider pausing and reviewing applicable discussion protocols when appropriate to reinforce student understanding of speaking and listening expectations.

Provide a masterful reading from Teiresias’s lines “You may be king” through “will be destroyed more wretchedly than you” (lines 490–517). Instruct students to annotate for repeating words or phrases.

- ▶ Students follow along, reading silently and annotating for repeating words or phrases.
- Students should note the repetition of the word *will*.

Lead a class share out of student annotations. Generate a cumulative list of “will” phrases on the board, then pose the following question for student discussion.

- “will drive you from this land in exile”
- “those eyes of yours...will be dark”
- “what harbour will not echo with your cries”
- “will render you and your own children equals”
- “no one will be destroyed more wretchedly than you”

What is the cumulative impact of the word *will* on the meaning Teiresias’s reply? What is the effect of the repetition of *will*?

- Students should identify that the repetition of *will* emphasizes that the events Teiresias is describing take place in the future—therefore, this retort is a prediction of Oedipus’s future, or a prophecy. The effect of Teiresias’s prophecy is one of foreboding or foreshadowing; it is a mysterious and disturbing warning of future events.

Instruct students to refine their annotations by writing the code SC in the margin to indicate evidence of Sophocles’s structural choice to repeat the word *will*. Remind students that as they annotate for structural choices, they are identifying textual evidence to be used in the lesson assessment. This focused annotation supports students’ engagement with W.9-10.9.a, as they draw evidence from the text to use in their writing.

① At this point in the text, Teiresias’s prophecy remains cryptic. If students have questions concerning Teiresias’s statements encourage them to record them in their class notes. Students will have the opportunity to return to Teiresias’s riddle and their resulting questions later in the unit.

Group students into pre-established heterogeneous groups. Pose the following question for students to discuss in their groups:

How does Teiresias’s prophecy play into the structural distinction between the *plot* of the play (the actions and events that occur on the stage) and *story* (the totality of actions and events both as they are related and as they occur) that you explored in Lesson 3?

- Students should indicate that Teiresias’s prophecy performs a similar function to Creon’s flashbacks—the events he describes do not occur on stage, but they inform our understanding of the series of events that make up the story as a whole.

Lead a full class discussion of the observations students generated in their groups. Consider pausing and reviewing applicable discussion protocols when appropriate to reinforce student understanding of speaking and listening expectations.

Provide a masterful rereading of Oedipus’s and Teiresias’s argument from “Must I tolerate this insolence from him?” through “I do not care, if I have saved the city” (lines 518–535).

① If students are comfortable with reading aloud at this time, invite them to participate.

- ▶ Students follow along, reading silently.

Pose the following questions for students to discuss in their groups:

How does Teiresias’s reference to time shape your understanding of the structure of this drama?

- Student responses should point to Teiresias’s statement “this day will reveal that and destroy you” (line 529) to indicate an understanding that this reference to a single day situates the widespread events of this drama within the context of real time. Though students have been

engaging with past and future events of Oedipus’s story, these details have all been revealed in the plot of the drama through two short conversations that take place on the same day.

Lead a full class discussion of the observations students generated in their groups. Consider pausing and reviewing applicable discussion protocols when appropriate to reinforce student understanding of speaking and listening expectations.

How does Oedipus’s approach to solving the mystery of Laius’s murder compare to how he approached the mystery of the Sphinx?

- Student responses should indicate that Oedipus is approaching the mystery of Laius’s death like he approached the riddle of the Sphinx. This is something he believes he is good at and takes great pride in.

Lead a full class discussion of the observations students generated in their groups. Consider pausing and reviewing the Speaking and Listening Rubric or Checklist when appropriate to reinforce student understanding of speaking and listening expectations.

Activity 5: Quick Write

10%

Instruct students to respond briefly in writing to the following prompt:

Analyze how Sophocles revisits Oedipus's past experience with the Sphinx to create mystery and tension about Oedipus's future.

Remind students to use the Short Response Checklist and Rubric to guide their written responses.

- ① Display the prompt for students to see, or provide the prompt in hard copy.
 - ▶ Students independently answer the prompt using evidence from the text.
- See the High Performance Response at the beginning of this lesson.

Activity 6: Self-Assessment of Speaking and Listening

10%

Instruct students to briefly self-assess their mastery of the speaking and listening norms and expectations that were explored in Lesson 5. Students should use the Speaking and Listening Rubric or Checklist to assess their application of these skills during their paired, group, and full class discussions. Students should also provide a 1–2 sentence explanation of their assessment.

- ▶ Students self-assess their mastery of SL.9-10.1 using the Speaking and Listening Rubric, and write a 1–2 sentence explanation of their assessment.

Collect student written responses for accountability of self-assessment.

Activity 7: Closing

5%

Display and distribute homework assignment. Instruct students that for homework they will revise and expand their class notes. Instruct students to reread the passage they close read in class, selecting new evidence to support observations made in class or strengthening their notes through reorganization.

Instruct students to continue their Accountable Independent Reading through the lens of the focus standard they have chosen and prepare for a 3–5 minute discussion of their text based on that standard.

Homework

Revise and expand your class notes: re-read the passage from today and either select new evidence to support observations made in class or strengthen your notes by reorganizing them.

Continue to read your Accountable Independent Reading text through the lens of a focus standard of your choice and prepare for a 3–5 minute discussion of your text based on that standard.