

## English 10

*Antigone* – Activity 4.11 (“Enter the King – Second Ode”)

Choral Odes contain a great deal of **figurative language** – imaginative language not meant to be taken literally, such as similes or metaphors.

**Figurative language:**

- **Imagery** – descriptive language used to create images by appealing to our five senses (example: greasy, stringy cheese on the pizza)
- **Simile** – a comparison of two unlike things or ideas using the words like or as (example: the moon was as white as milk)
- **Metaphor** – a comparison of two unlike things or ideas in which one thing is spoken of as if it were another (example: the moon was a crisp white cracker)
- **Personification** – giving human qualities to an animal, object, or idea (example: the wind howled as the storm approached)

**What now?** The second ode, comes at the end of Activity 4.11 – “Enter the King.” Pay attention to figurative language – particularly imagery and metaphor - how it is figurative. Figurative language is the vehicle to share the main point of the ode.

- **Step 1: Use this summary taken from cliff notes to aid yourself in the understanding of the second ode.**  
**Summary:** The elders chant an ode in praise of man, who is powerful over all things except death. This ode stands as one of the greatest poems written by Sophocles. The breadth of the figurative language — celebrating man's power over animals, birds, and even the earth's fertility — gives a feeling of ever-expanding possibility, cut short suddenly by the somber mention of Death — which is the end for all. In the conclusion, the elders talk of the balance of morality as the justice of the gods will preserve man and society.
- **Step 2:** Read the original text along with summary and figurative language notes to get an understanding of the text.
- **Step 3:** Read the analysis below the original text to further explain the ode's meaning and use of figurative language. If this section does not help you recognize how the ode does what is explained, go back and read the ode again.

**ORIGINAL TEXT WITH SUMMARY AND FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE NOTES ON NEXT PAGE**

SE  
CHORUS—Strophe 1

**Imagery** – conveys the power of nature  
**390 Metaphor** – the ocean and land can represent the hardships man faces in life

**Metaphor** – “harassing her” with her being the earth and land

## Antistrophe 1

**400 Imagery** – emphasizes the dangers man faced and the tools he used to help him survive

## Strophe 2

Which device is being used in the underlined text?  
**410**

## Antistrophe 2

Which device is being used in the underlined text?  
**420**

## COND ODE

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.

With his teams of horses he wears down the unwearied and immortal earth, the oldest of the gods, harassing her, as year by year his ploughs move back and forth.

He snares the light-winged flocks of birds, herds of wild beasts, creatures from deep seas, trapped in the fine mesh of his hunting nets. O resourceful man, whose skill can overcome ferocious beasts roaming mountain heights. He curbs the rough-haired horses with his bit and tames the inexhaustible mountain bulls, setting their savage necks beneath his yoke.

He's taught himself speech and wind-swift thought, trained his feelings for communal civic life, learning to escape the icy shafts of frost, volleys of pelting rain in winter storms, the harsh life lived under the open sky. That's man—so resourceful in all he does. There's no event his skill cannot confront—other than death—that alone he cannot shun, although for many baffling sicknesses he has discovered his own remedies.

The qualities of his inventive skills bring arts beyond his dreams and lead him on, sometimes to evil and sometimes to good. If he treats his country's laws with due respect and honours justice by swearing on the gods, he wins high honours in his city. But when he grows bold and turns to evil, then he has no city. A man like that—let him not share my home or know my mind.

Man is “strangely wonderful” as he navigates the ocean, battling storms and waves. With his horses, man farms the earth year after year.

He catches birds, wild animals, and fish with his net. Resourceful man can kill animals in the mountains. He can tame horses and mountain bulls.

Man taught himself words and to think, he sheltered himself from icy storms and rain. There is nothing he can't overcome except death, which he can't escape.

His cleverness and skills sometimes lead him to evil and sometimes to good. If he respects his laws and honors the gods' justice, he brings honor to his city. But when man turns to evil, he has no city. I don't want nothing to do with a man like that.

Click here for Mr. Cauley's commentary

Answer these on the Google form! Click here for the link.

*Strophe 1:* Pay attention to the imagery around the “white-capped open seas.” Water is often a metaphor for life, consider what type of life/water man is having to encounter here. Then there is an image of not water and the open seas, but of the earth and land that man has to master (“wears down”) in order to survive. So man shows his mastery over the land by utilizing his “team of horses”...“year by year” to plough the land “back and forth.”

*Antistrophe 1:* Continues with the imagery being the vehicle to express the same sentiments as above in Strophe 1. This time animals are used to show man's dominance, not only a physical dominance in not being overcome by animals, but also man's resourcefulness of mind by inventing tools, traps etc. This serves as a great transition into Strophe 2.

*Strophe 2:* Transitions into the power of man's mind. That man has “taught himself speech and wind-swift thought”. Once again consider the use of figurative language of having a mind capable of thought as swift as wind. Man has also become sophisticated in how he deals with fellow man in “communal civic life” and can navigate the “icy shafts of frost” as well as “pelting rain in winter storms.” Man is very successful, yet that awesome feeling is taken away as death is the one thing that inevitably will defeat man. Strophe 2 ends with the issue of mortality.

*Antistrophe 2:* Concludes the ode by shifting from mortality to the elements of morality by stating that man can either do good or do evil. Man has great capabilities because of his “inventive skills” which lead him “to evil and sometimes to good”. Good is defined by a man that respects his people and can show he honors justice by listening to the gods. A man that does not do those things, but instead “grows bold and turns to evil,” that man will have a tragedy on his hands.