

English 10

Antigone – Activity 4.12 (“Conflicting Motivations – Third 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 third ode, comes at the end of Activity 4.12 – “Conflicting Motivations.” Pay attention to figurative language – how it is used and to what effect. Figurative language is the vehicle to share the main point of the ode.

- **Step 1: Read this analysis to aid yourself in the understanding of the Third Ode:**
 - This Third Ode is more pessimistic than the previous odes. The First Ode recounted the backstory of the play but ended with the people of Thebes hoping to put it all behind them. The Second Ode looked at the nature of man and all the possibilities and talents of man. It ended with a gentle warning though.
 - Just as the conflict in the play intensifies and we are seeing worse parts of the characters, this Third Ode is also darker as it focuses on the relationship between the gods and humanity and how little control people really have over their own lives. The gods control people and can create harm for generations, without people having any control to stop it – like a storm that does not seem to have a reason or source but still will not stop. Zeus has all the power, so the actions of people are meaningless. Man is not as powerful as we think (as was expressed in 2nd Ode). This is a warning because people can forget about the gods and get lured into traps. They think everything is fine, but really, they are being lured into disaster. Alluding perhaps to Creon and that he thinks he is doing the right thing, but maybe it is a trap and he is making the wrong choices.
- **Step 2:** Read the original text along with summary and figurative language notes on the next page to get an understanding of the text. **IMPORTANT: This week’s figurative language column includes analysis on how figurative language is used and its effect.**
- **Step 3:** Respond to the questions in the margin under “Figurative Language” column on a separate document and submit to Turn It In by 9 a.m. May 4. Be sure your answers are in complete sentences with thoughtful responses.

ORIGINAL TEXT WITH SUMMARY AND FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE NOTES ON NEXT PAGE

Figurative Language

Chorus Lines: Actual Text

Summary

THIRD

ODE

CHORUS—Strophe 1

Strophe 1- extended metaphor: comparing ocean, sands, and cliff to what happens when gods punish whole families. *Reveals how little control people have over their lives as they are part of nature, all controlled by the gods.*

Imagery: “surging ocean, dark trench churning deep black sand.” *Creates vivid and scary picture. Reader feels the strength of the ocean and connects to own experiences when the ocean/waves were overpowering.*

Personification: human characteristic to cliffs as screaming

Antistrophe 1

680

QUESTION #1: Identify two examples of figurative language in Antistrophe 1. Write the text evidence and label what type of figurative language it is.

Strophe 2

690

Personification: Sleep is described as a person, a fisherman of sorts, who captures everything in his net. *This comparison between Zeus and the personified Sleep reveals just how unavoidable Zeus' wrath is.*

Antistrophe 2

700

QUESTION #2: For the underlined passage, analyze the effect of the personification of Hope. **HOW?!** you ask. Well, think about what Sophocles is trying to say about hope with the human characteristics he gives it.

Those who live without tasting evil have happy lives—for when the gods shake a house to its foundations, then **inevitable** disasters strike, falling upon whole families, just as a surging ocean swell running before cruel Thracian winds across the dark trench of the sea churns up the deep black sand and crashes headlong on the cliffs, which scream in pain against the wind.

I see this house's age-old sorrows, the house of Labdakos' children, sorrows falling on the sorrows of the dead, one generation bringing no relief to generations after it—some god strikes at them—on and on without an end. For now the light which has been shining over the last roots of Oedipus' house is being cut down with a bloody knife belonging to the gods below—for foolish talk and frenzy in the soul.

Oh Zeus, what human trespasses can check your power? Even Sleep, who casts his nets on everything, cannot master that—nor can the months, the tireless months the gods control. A **sovereign** who cannot grow old, you hold Olympus as your own, in all its glittering magnificence. From now on into all future time, as in the past, your law holds firm. It never enters lives of human beings in its full force without disaster.

Hope ranging far and wide brings comfort to many men—but then hope can deceive, delusions born of volatile desire. It comes upon the man who's ignorant until his foot is seared in burning fire. Someone's wisdom has revealed to us this famous saying—sometimes the gods lure a man's mind forward to disaster, and he thinks evil's something good. But then he lives only the briefest time free of catastrophe.

People who are not evil have happy lives, but, once the gods curse a family, disasters will follow and then generations of the whole family are doomed. Just like the ocean creates a storm when the cruel Thracian winds are present, stirring up the ocean floor and waves and storm attacking the cliffs and shore, which scream in great pain against the wind.

These problems in Antigone's family are generations old, going back to Laius and Oedipus. Their bad choices befall their descendants. No relief is given to the next generation, some god is still angry and refuses to stop punishing them. The last good thing in Oedipus' house is being killed by power of the gods below because of her foolish talk and frenzied soul.

Oh Zeus, what can humans do to stop your power? Nothing, not even Sleep or Time stop you. Zeus, you are a king who never dies or ages, you hold all the power of Olympus, in all its magnificence. Your law, has always, and will always be the same and be strong. When unleashed, it brings disaster to humans.

Hope is everywhere and brings comfort to many people, but hope can deceive men too. It can make them delusional because the disaster is disguised, and they will be dumb to what is happening until they are burned, and it is too late. Some wise person has shown us that the gods will trick a man into disaster by making him think that something evil is good. But then, he only lives for a short time without disaster striking him.

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