

9.2.2

Lesson 2

Introduction

In this lesson, students will continue to develop their close reading skills as they work carefully through the short passage of *Oedipus the King* from “My poor children, I know why you have come” through “but what is overlooked escapes” (lines 67–130), in which Creon relays the advice of the god Apollo to Oedipus. Students will engage critically with the key details established thus far in the crime of Laius’s murder as described by Creon, and consider how these details develop the central idea of the role of fate in Oedipus’s guilt.

Students will work in groups to respond to a series of questions that guide their exploration of word choice, figurative language, and the development of theme through key details. At the end of this lesson, students will complete an open ended Quick Write that prompts them to analyze a central idea that emerges from Oedipus’s and Creon’s dialogue.

For homework, students will expand and revise their notes. Additionally, students will continue reading their Accountable Independent Reading (AIR) text through the lens of their focus standard: RL.9-10.6.

Standards

Assessed 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.
Addressed Standard(s)	
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]”).
SL.9-10.1.a, b	<p>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.</p> <p>a. Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.</p> <p>b. Work with peers to set rules for collegial discussions and decision-making (e.g., informal consensus, taking votes on key issues, presentation of alternate views), clear goals and deadlines, and individual roles as needed.</p>
L.9-10.5.a	<p>Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.</p> <p>a. Interpret figures of speech (e.g. euphemism, oxymoron) in context and analyze their role in the text.</p>

Assessment

Assessment(s)
<p>The learning in this lesson will be captured through a Quick Write at the end of the lesson. Students will answer the following prompt based on the close reading (citing text evidence and analyzing key words and phrases) completed in the lesson:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is a central idea that emerges from Oedipus and Creon's dialogue? <p>This question encourages students to explore the complicated relationship of the men to the gods in <i>Oedipus the King</i>. This relationship relates directly to the development of the central idea of fate in the text. Students will have opportunity and support to build on this exploration throughout the unit.</p>
High Performance Response(s)
<p>A High Performance Response may include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student responses should expand upon the analysis of what Oedipus and Creon’s conversation reveals about the relationship between humans and gods that they have conducted throughout this lesson. Students may suggest that the dialogue between Oedipus and Creon develops the central idea of the complex relationship between the power of the gods and the power of men.

The gods know how to cure Thebes's illness, and so humans must ask for their advice: "So I have sent away my brother-in-law, son of Menoeceus, Creon, to Pythian Apollo's shrine, to learn from him what I might do or say to save our city" (lines 81–85). Students may call upon Creon's statement when Laius was killed: "And now the god is clear: those murderers, he tells us, must be punished, whoever they may be" (lines 124–126) to indicate that the gods appear to possess knowledge that men do not have concerning the source and solution of the plague.

Vocabulary

Vocabulary to provide directly (will not include extended instruction)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> yearn (v.) – to have an earnest or strong desire Menoeceus (n.) – the father of Jocasta and Creon Creon (n.) – the brother of Jocasta Pythian (n.) – of or pertaining to Apollo Apollo (n.) – the ancient Greek and Roman god of light, healing, music, poetry, prophecy, and manly beauty shrine (n.) – a place of worship made holy by association with a sacred person or object Phoebus (n.) – Apollo as the sun god, the sun personified Delphi (n.) – an ancient city in central Greece, in Phocis: site of an oracle of Apollo sought (v.) – went in search or quest of kinsman (n.) – a blood relative, especially a male
Vocabulary to teach (may include direct word work and/or questions)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> harboured (v.) – gave shelter to

Lesson Agenda/Overview

Student-Facing Agenda	% of Lesson
Standards & Text <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standards: RL.9-10.2, W.9-10.9.a, SL.9-10.1.a, b, L.9-10.5.a Text: <i>Oedipus the King</i>, lines 67–130 	

Learning Sequence	
1. Introduction to Lesson Agenda	1. 5%
2. Homework Accountability	2. 10%
3. Lesson 1 Summary	3. 10%
4. Masterful Reading	4. 15%
5. Lines 67–130 Reading and Discussion	5. 40%
6. Quick Write	6. 15%
7. Closing	7. 5%

Materials

- Student copies of the Short Response Checklist and Rubric (refer to 9.2.1 Lesson 1)

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 reviewing the agenda and assessed standard for this lesson: RL.9-10.2. Remind students of their work with this standard in 9.2.1. In this lesson, students will read closely and consider the development of central ideas in the unfolding story of *Oedipus the King*.

Although W.9-10.a is not an assessed standard in this lesson, students should be aware that their annotations and evidence-based responses to questions builds toward writing that they will be asked to do in Mid- and End-of-Unit Assessments.

- ▶ Students look at agenda.

Activity 2: Homework Accountability

10%

Instruct students to talk in pairs about how they can apply their focus standard (CCRA.R.6) to their text. Lead a brief discussion of students' texts. 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 (CCRA.R.6) to their AIR text from the previous lesson's homework.

Activity 3: Lesson 1 Summary

10%

Instruct students to talk in groups and solidify the understanding they have built in Lesson 1 by rereading from the Priest's "These children and myself" through "or learning from some other human being" (lines 35–50) and revisiting the following question:

Why have the suppliant citizens and the Priest come to Oedipus' palace?

- ▶ Students discuss in groups.
- 💬 Student responses should draw upon an understanding of *suppliants/supplicant* and their understanding of *pestilence* to indicate an understanding that the citizens have come to Oedipus for help with the problem of the disease that is killing people in the city.

Lead student groups in a share out of observations.

- ① The goal of this recap is to ensure that all students share a solid understanding of the events of the play thus far before continuing their analysis.

Activity 4: Masterful Reading

15%

Introduce the Quick Write assessment (What is a central idea that emerges from Oedipus and Creon's dialogue?). 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 for students to see.

Have students listen to a masterful reading of the text from “My poor children, I know why you have come” through “but what is overlooked escapes” (lines 67–130).

- ▶ Students listen to a masterful reading, and follow along in their texts.

Instruct students to reread the passage and annotate according to the protocols established in 9.1.1. To refine their annotations, instruct students to write CI in the margin to indicate where they see a central idea emerging. Focus student annotation with the following prompt:

Annotate your text for any commands or advice given to Oedipus by the god Apollo.

① It may be helpful to briefly offer students the necessary context to understand that Apollo is a Greek god, the god of the sun, as well as light, healing, music, poetry, prophecy, and manly beauty. Consider clarifying for students that Apollo’s messages are being delivered by Creon.

- ▶ Students reread the passage and annotate to the focusing prompt.

🗨 Student annotations may include:

- “Lord Phoebus clearly orders us to drive away the polluting stain this land has harboured” (lines 113–114)
- “Laius was killed. And now the god is clear: those murderers, he tells us, must be punished, whoever they may be” (lines 124–126)
- “Here in Thebes, so said the god. What is sought is found, but what is overlooked escapes” (lines 129–130)

Instruct students to briefly share their observations in pairs. Circulate the room to informally assess understanding.

Remind students that as they annotate for central idea, they are beginning to identify textual evidence to be used in the lesson assessment as well as the Mid- and End-of-Unit assessments, which address the development of central ideas in the text. This focused annotation supports students’ engagement with W.9-10.9.a, as they draw evidence from the text to use in their writing.

Activity 5: Lines 67–130 Reading and Discussion

40%

Group students into pre-established small, heterogeneous groups for the purpose of discussing the text in more depth and recording insights. During discussions allow time for each group to share their collaborative work with the class. This group work will enable students to build the skills necessary to navigate and derive meaning from Sophocles’s language.

Instruct students to note their responses to group discussions in preparation for a full class share out.

- ① Create student groups ahead of time, to ensure they are diverse and the transition to group work is brief. Assign, or have students assume, a role within the group, such as Facilitator, Reader, and Recorder. However, remind students that they should individually record their responses to all questions in their class notes in preparation for sharing out with the class.

Explain to students that in this lesson, they will continue the work of collaborative discussion outlined in SL.9-10.1.a and b, to which students were previously introduced. Remind students that these sub-standards deal specifically with preparing for and collaborating in discussions. Also explain to students that these discussion skills scaffold toward a series of discussions in Unit 2, as well as the discussion-based End-of-Unit Assessment in Unit 3.

Read aloud from “My poor children, I know why you have come” through “and for the city, and for you—all together” (lines 67–75). Pose the following questions for students to discuss in their groups:

How does Oedipus refer to the citizens of Thebes? What might this suggest about how he understands his responsibilities as a king?

- 💬 Oedipus refers to the citizens of Thebes as “my poor children” (line 67). Student responses should infer that this suggests that he feels a fatherly duty to care for his sick people, just as parents feel responsible for the well-being of their children.

Why are the citizens of Thebes “sick”? How do you know? Hint: Review your reading from Lesson 1.

- 💬 Student responses should recall the “deadly pestilence” (line 32) that plagues Thebes as the source of the illness.

What is the source of Oedipus’s own “illness” (line 71)? How is this related to the “illness” that plagues Thebes?

- Students should identify that Oedipus is not literally sick with the “pestilence” like his “poor children” (lines 32 and 67). Oedipus’s “illness” is from bearing the suffering of all the people who are literally sick; his sickness is in his “soul” not his body (line 74).

① Consider drawing students’ attention to the use of “illness” as figurative language, and remind students of their work with L.9-10.5.a in Unit 1.

What role does Oedipus take on in healing the suffering of Thebes?

- Students should demonstrate an understanding that Oedipus feels that it is his unique responsibility as king to heal the suffering of all of his people, just like a father would for his children. Oedipus feels that he must carry the burden of the suffering of all of the people of Thebes. As King of Thebes, Oedipus claims that “there is not one of you [citizens] whose illness equals mine,” because Oedipus must carry the burden of all of the city’s sorrow, rather than the average Thebean whose “agony...is a special pain for him and no one else” (lines 70–73).
- While the nuances of this question are not yet available to students, this idea will be a rich point to return to later in the unit, after students have engaged with more details of Oedipus’s past and his role in the plague has been revealed. At this point the answer has more to do with Oedipus’s responsibility to his subjects, but later it will be revealed that he had a role to play in causing the plague.

Lead a brief full class discussion of student observations.

Read aloud from Oedipus’s “So I have sent away” through the Priest’s “Creon is approaching” (lines 81–93).

- Students follow along in their texts.

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

Who is “him” in the line “to learn from him what I might do or say” (line 84)? How do you know?

- Student responses should indicate an understanding that “him” is the god Apollo. Creon has been sent to “Pythian Apollo’s shrine” to learn from the god what Oedipus “might do or say.”
- The syntax of this critical sentence is convoluted. If students struggle to reach this understanding, reread the passage and replace *him* with *Apollo* to ensure that students comprehend that Oedipus is turning to the god (not Creon) for advice.

Where has Oedipus chosen to look for answers in his search for a solution to Thebes's problem?

- Student responses should indicate that Oedipus chose to send his brother-in-law (Creon) to “Pythian Apollo’s shrine” to find out from the god what should be done to “save [the] city” from the plague (lines 81–85). Therefore, it appears that Oedipus has chosen to “listen[] to a heavenly voice,” rather than “learn[] from some other human being” (lines 49–50). Some students may recall the Priest’s suggestion from their Lesson 1 reading: “find some help for us, either by listening to a heavenly voice, or learning from some other human being” (lines 49–50).

Lead a brief full class discussion of student observations.

Point out that the analysis students just did is a good example of the complicated relationship of the men to the gods in *Oedipus the King*. This relationship relates directly to the development of the central idea of fate in the text. Instruct students to underline references to the relationship between the men and the gods, and make a note in the margin using the code CI.

Read aloud from “[Enter Creon. Oedipus calls to him as he approaches]” through “... but what is overlooked escapes” (lines 100–130).

- ▶ Students follow along in their texts.

Inform students that they will be slowing down and taking the time to carefully deconstruct the four lines that make up Apollo’s message. Instruct students to reread Creon’s statement from “Then let me report what I heard from the god” through “which will not be healed if we keep nursing it” (lines 112–115).

- ① The four lines that compose Apollo’s message are the catalyst for Oedipus’s investigation into the crime of Laius’s murder. As such, this is a crucial comprehension point for students.

- ▶ Students reread the god’s report.

According to Apollo, what action(s) should be taken to cure Thebes?

- Student responses should call upon the evidence of “Lord Phoebus clearly orders us to drive away” (line 113) and “punish[]” the “murderers” (line 125) to infer that Apollo is ordering the citizens of Thebes to punish those who are guilty of the crime of murdering Laius: “Laius was killed. And now the god is clear: those murderers, he tells us, must be punished” (lines 124–125).

What words or phrases can help you to make meaning of the word *harboured* in this context (line 114)? How can this help you to understand the source of Thebes’s illness?

- Students responses should point to Creon’s assertion that “Lord Phoebus clearly orders us to drive away” to come to the understanding that to *harbour* something means “to shelter something or keep it safe”—the opposite of driving something away. Students may also point to “if we keep nursing it” to connect that *harboured* has a similar meaning to *nursing*, to take care of something. Some students may begin to make tentative connections between the plague and the unpunished “murderers” that Creon speaks of (lines 125).

Based on your understanding of *harboured*, what role is Apollo suggesting the people of Thebes have played in their own suffering?

- Students should indicate that the people are being punished because they have safeguarded Laius’s murderer. This unsolved murder is the “polluting stain” that is the cause of the sickness that plagues the people and the land, and it must be “drive[n] away” if the people are to be “healed” (lines 113–115).
- ① **Differentiation Consideration:** You can direct students back to the passage “Oedipus, ruler of my native land” through with “groans and howls” (lines 16–35). Ask: **How does the Priest’s personification of the plague complicate your understanding of the role of the gods in human suffering?**
- Student responses should indicate an understanding that the role of the gods in human suffering is twofold; they can cause the suffering—“and deadly pestilence, that fiery god swoops down to blast the city” (lines 32–33)—and they can take it away—“I have sent away my brother-in-law, son of Menoeceus, Creon, to Pythian Apollo’s shrine to learn from him what I might do or say to save our city” (lines 81–85).

Activity 6: Quick Write

15%

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

What is a central idea that emerges from Oedipus and Creon’s dialogue?

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 7: Closing

5%

Instruct students that for homework they will revise and expand their notes.

- ① Students can use a different colored writing utensil to differentiate their homework annotation from the annotation written during class. This can be useful for accountability purposes.

Additionally, instruct students to begin or continue to read their Accountable Independent Reading through the lens of their focus standard and prepare for a 3–5 minute discussion of their text based on that standard.

Homework

Expand and revise notes collected in *Oedipus the King* reading in Lessons 1 and 2.

Continue reading your Accountable Independent Reading text through the lens of the assigned focus standard (RL.9–10.6) and prepare for a 3–5 minute discussion of the text based on that standard.