**ODEIPUS QUESTIONS**

**Scene 1**

1. Who was Cadmus and why is he mentioned so early in the play?

2. What opinion do you get of Oedipus from what he says and does in this scene?

3. Describe in your own words the disaster which has struck the city.

4. The priest says that although Oedipus is an excellent man he is not equal to a god. Explain why he adds that Oedipus is not equal to a god.

5. Give two reasons why the priest wants Oedipus to help the people.

6. What has Oedipus done about the situation so far?

7. Explain what Creon says is the reason for this disaster.

8. Why had the people not held a public inquiry into Laius’ death at the time?

**First Choral Ode**

1. What are the main feelings of the Chorus when they begin?

2. To which gods do they appeal particularly and why?

3. The chorus says it is like a battle. What are the two sides?

**Scene 2**

1. What will happen to the killer of Laius if he confesses quickly?

2. What will happen to him, or anyone shielding him, if he does not come forward of his own accord?

3. Give an example of dramatic irony from this scene, explaining why it is dramatic irony.

4. Who do the Chorus advise Oedipus to consult and why?

5. On the arrival of Tiresias, would you describe Oedipus’ tone as:

(a) flattering (b) rude (c) indifferent?

Give a reason for your answer.

6. Why does Oedipus’ tone towards the prophet change in the course of their conversation?

7. Of what does Oedipus accuse Tiresias?

8. How does Tiresias react to this accusation?

9. Does Oedipus seem to you to behave in the way any ordinary person would in his situation? Give reasons for your answer.

10. Oedipus’ suspicion now spreads. Who does he accuse next and what motive does he think this person has for trying to say that he (Oedipus) is the murderer?

**Second Choral Ode**

Here, as elsewhere, the Chorus is part of the action of the play but they stand back as if they are commenting about events. Write down two lists of:

(a) what the Chorus does as actors in the play (b) what the Chorus does as observers.

**Scene Three**

1. How does Creon feel about Oedipus’ angry accusation?

2. Do you think Oedipus gives Creon a fair chance to put his case? Explain why you think as you do?

3. Why do you think Oedipus abruptly asks Creon how long ago it was since Laius disappeared?

4. Say briefly what Creon says about having no motive and what he feels Oedipus is doing to their friendship by acting on suspicion. Does this speech convince you? Give reasons for your answer.

**Third Choral Ode**

If you were one of the audience listening to this Choral Ode to what extent would you agree with what the Chorus say here and how much of it makes you think of the events of the preceding scene?

**Scene Four**

1. Explain in your own words the message brought from Corinth about Polybus.

2. How do Oedipus and Jocasta react to the news? Do you think this reaction shows **hubris**?

Explain and use the text in your answer.

3. The messenger fills in some unknown details about his family and tells him that a Theban shepherd gave him to him as a baby. What effect will this news have on Jocasta and why?

4. In what way does this scene show us

(a) that the exposure of children was accepted by the Greeks?

(b) that the Greeks were worried about social class?

**Forth Choral Ode**

In what way does the Chorus in this short episode act differently from other scenes? Suggest a reason for this?

**Scene Five**

1. What impression do you have of Oedipus by the way he speaks to the shepherd? Refer to the scene in your answer.

2. What final two details does the shepherd tell Oedipus?

3. Why does Oedipus refer to light at the end of this scene? To what earlier theme does this return?

**Fifth Choral Ode**

The Chorus here act both as characters in the play and observers, pointing out what we can learn

from the events of the play. Give examples from the Ode of what they do as actors and observers.

**Scene Six**

1. Describe the death of Jocasta.

2. What did Oedipus do when he found her body?

3. How do people feel towards Oedipus in this scene? Use the text in your answer.

4. Why doesn’t Oedipus kill himself?

5. Why does the Chorus back away from Oedipus on a couple of occasions?

6. Why doesn't Creon allow Oedipus to leave at once?

7. How does Creon behave towards Oedipus? How is his behavior in this scene different from Oedipus’ behavior in scene 3?

8. What reasons does Oedipus give for going to Cithaeron?

9. Explain the final message/moral of the play.