

**Paper # 2: Topic 1**

*The purpose of this assignment is to (a) help you think about our readings with greater depth (b) practice making complicated, nuanced, effective arguments in written form, (c) practice developing such arguments through multiple revisions and rewriting. This assignment in particular is meant to help you work on more effectively structuring the body of the argument.*

The French critic Charles Mére wrote that “The true hero of Anouilh’s *Antigone* is undoubtedly Creon,” arguing that the play was meant as an affirmation of the conservative forces of the Nazi occupation and its French collaborators. However, others have read the play as an act of resistance, a cleverly indirect way of sneaking a rebellious heroine, a clear stand-in for the Resistance, right under the noses of the Occupation’s censors. Still others see the play as essentially apolitical, a statement about the conflict between innocence and experience; a meditation about the existential angst of human life that we confront as we travel between the idealism of childhood and the realism of adulthood.

Using the text of Anouilh’s *Antigone*, with some reference to how Anouilh revises the myth as presented by Sophocles, please write an interpretation of Jean Anouilh’s *Antigone* that either refutes or supports Mére’s argument. Your paper should be about 1300-1500 words, should focus on Anouilh (yet make some significant reference to and use of Sophocles’ text), and should make a thorough, interesting and well-supported claim. Please be specific about your argument, use concrete, specific references to the texts when writing, and present your ideas in an organized manner.

**Paper # 2: Topic 2**

“I don’t know any more what I’m dying for,” says Anouilh’s Antigone (57). Similarly, Sophocles’ heroine also wonders, at a loss, “What ordinance of the gods have I transgressed?/Why should I look to heaven any more/for help” (32.) Is it possible that, for either Anouilh, Sophocles, or both, Antigone is not actually a rebel *par excellence*, the prototypical rebel – but simply a woman with a death-wish; someone who cannot handle the exigencies of everyday life?

Focusing on either Anouilh’s or Sophocles’ *Antigone*, with some reference to the way the problem is explored in the opposing text, please write an interpretation of the play that

explores the potential conflict between Antigone's rebellious character and her morose seriousness. Your paper should be specific about your argument, use concrete, specific references to the texts when writing, and present your ideas in an organized manner; it should be about 1300-1500 words long.

**Paper # 2: Topic 3**

Please come up with your own PROBLEM AND SOLUTION that you see in Sophocles *Antigone* or Anouilh's *Antigone* (or both). Your paper should be specific about your argument, use concrete, specific references to the texts when writing, and present your ideas in an organized manner; it should be about 1300-1500 words long.

*Things to consider as you prepare:*

- *Use your preparation from the debate to collect and analyze the concrete evidence on which you'll base your argument.*
- *Although you need a central argument, you need to make that argument more complex by articulating several ways in which your argument breaks down into sub-parts.*
- *Be sure to avoid a chronological or summative approach (first, Antigone says X, then Creon says Y.....).*
- *Instead, make sure that you have identified several different sub-arguments, and make sure each of your paragraphs relates back to the sub-argument or the main argument.*
- *Work on interpreting your evidence deeply and thoughtfully. That means writing more than a one or two-sentence interpretation of any particular passage that you're analyzing.*
- *You do not need to write all 1500 words at once – we will work on a partial draft that focuses on the body of the paper.*