

ANTIGONE

Pre-Reading Background • Context • Guided Notes



Build understanding before the play begins.

ANTIGONE

Before the Play Begins

House of Thebes • Family Tree • Burial Customs
• Questions for the Prologue

P.S.



ANTIGONE

Before the Play Begins



PRE-READING GUIDED NOTES

House of Thebes • Family Tree • Burial Customs
• Questions for the Prologue

Before you read, you need three pieces of context: Antigone's family history, the civil war, and why Creon's burial order matters.

NAME _____

CLASS / PERIOD _____

P.S.

Plugging Something



A world of family, law, and burial rites

ANTIGONE

Pre-Reading & Context

TEACHER GUIDE

House of Thebes • Oedipus Backstory • Burial Context • Competing Obligations

What this lesson is for

This lesson gives students the story-specific background they need before opening *Antigone*: the House of Thebes, the essential Oedipus backstory, the brothers' civil war, Creon's decree, and the obligations already in conduct when the Prologue begins. The goal is to make the opening scene easier to understand without turning pre-reading into a mythology lecture.

BEST USE

Immediately before reading *Antigone*

TIME

One 45-50 minute class; longer if discussion expands

MAIN STUDENT TASK

Use the family tree and timeline, rank competing obligations, then enter the Prologue with a reading lens.

What's included

- 18 slide presentation • PDF
- 7-page student guided notes packet • PDF
- Matching teacher key
- Teacher Guide with pacing, differentiation, and extension options
- Teacher Source Notes explaining the source and wording choices

History Submissions • Originals • Teacher Guide



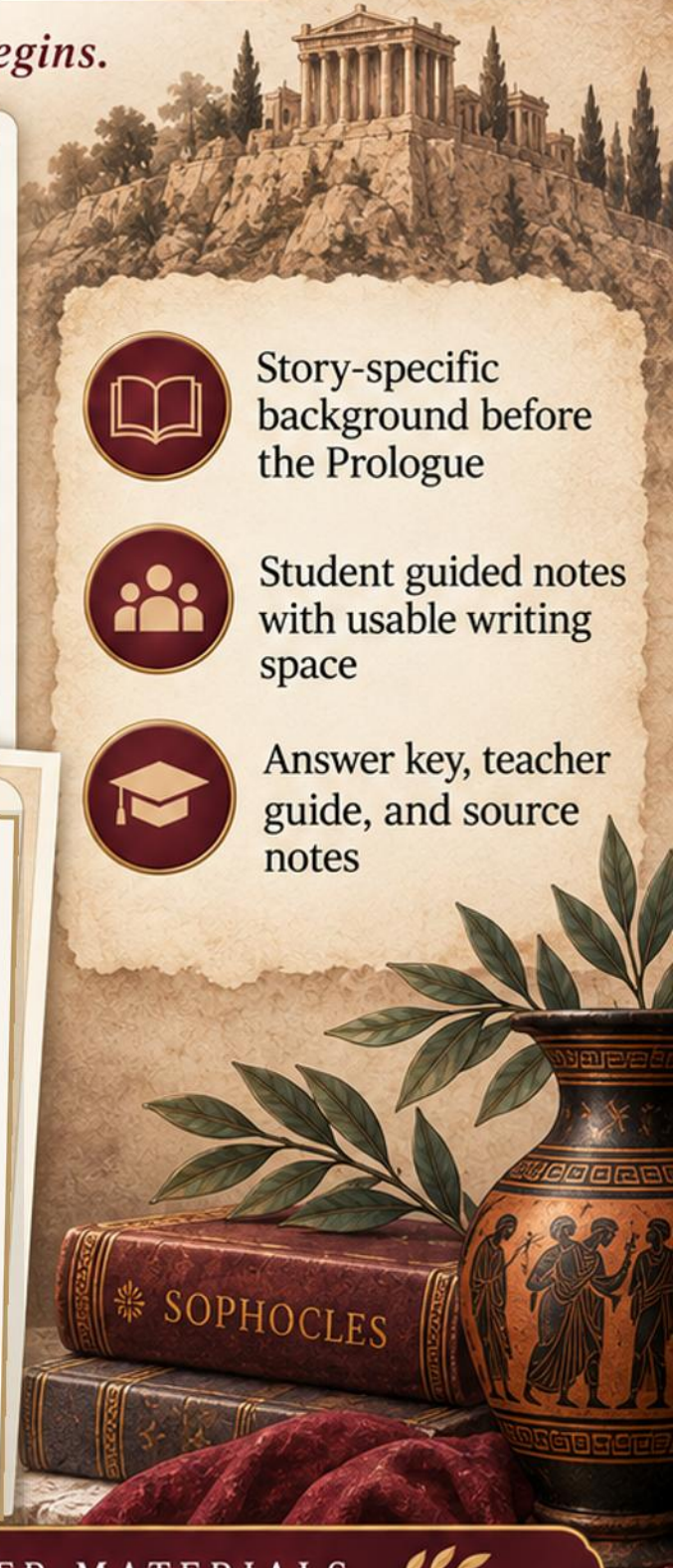
Story-specific background before the Prologue



Student guided notes with usable writing space



Answer key, teacher guide, and source notes



PRESENTATION + GUIDED NOTES + TEACHER MATERIALS

TEACHING PRESENTATION

18 slides that build context without turning it into a mythology lecture

Meet the House of Thebes

A family tree — and the relationships that matter once the play begins.

Laius

Jocasta

Creon

Eurydice

Oedipus

Haemon

Antigone

Ismene

Eteocles

Polynices

siblings

Oedipus unknowingly marries
Jocasta, his mother

brothers whose deaths create the opening crisis

dashed line = Antigone is betrothed to Haemon

Before the Play Begins

Students get the context that actually matters before reading:

House of Thebes

Competing obligations

Questions for the Prologue

Which Obligation Comes First?

Before you read, decide which of these responsibilities would matter most to you.

Family

Religious / moral duty

Civil law

Protection of the city

Personal safety

Quick write: Which obligation should come first when these values collide? What makes that choice difficult?

Before the Play Begins

STUDENT MATERIALS

Guided notes that are attractive, readable, and easy for students to use

Start Here

The play opens with obligations already in conflict.

Antigone opens after a long _____ and _____ chain of _____.

The opening conflict is already urgent before the first line is spoken.

Four responsibilities shape the opening conflict

FAMILY

What do we owe the people closest to us?

LAW

What do we owe the state and its laws?

CONSCIENCE

What do we owe our own sense of right and wrong?

SURVIVAL

What do we owe ourselves when our safety is at risk?

Quick question

When might obeying a law conflict with another responsibility?

At first glance, which of the four pressures would be hardest for you to ignore? Why?



Plotting Something • Antigone

The Decree — and Why Burial Matters

Creon's order is political, but for Antigone it reaches much further.

THE DECREE

ETEOCLES

POLYNICES

WHY BURIAL MATTERS

HUMAN DIGNITY

RELIGIOUS DUTY

FAMILY OBLIGATION

PUBLIC SHAME

So what? Why would Antigone see Creon's decree as more than a political rule?



Plotting Something • Antigone

Carry These Questions into the Prologue

For a phrase, detail, or first impression, as Antigone and Ismene speak.

What does Antigone believe she owes her brother?

NOTES FROM THE SCENE

What reasons does Ismene give for caution and obedience?

NOTES FROM THE SCENE

What does Creon's decree reveal about power after civil war?

NOTES FROM THE SCENE

Where do family duty and civic duty collide?

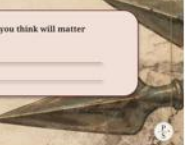
NOTES FROM THE SCENE

Which sister sounds more reasonable at first — and why?

NOTES FROM THE SCENE

EXIT TICKET

What is one piece of background information you think will matter most as we begin Antigone? Explain why.



Plotting Something • Antigone

Writing space

Text-based questions

Exit ticket

WHAT'S INCLUDED

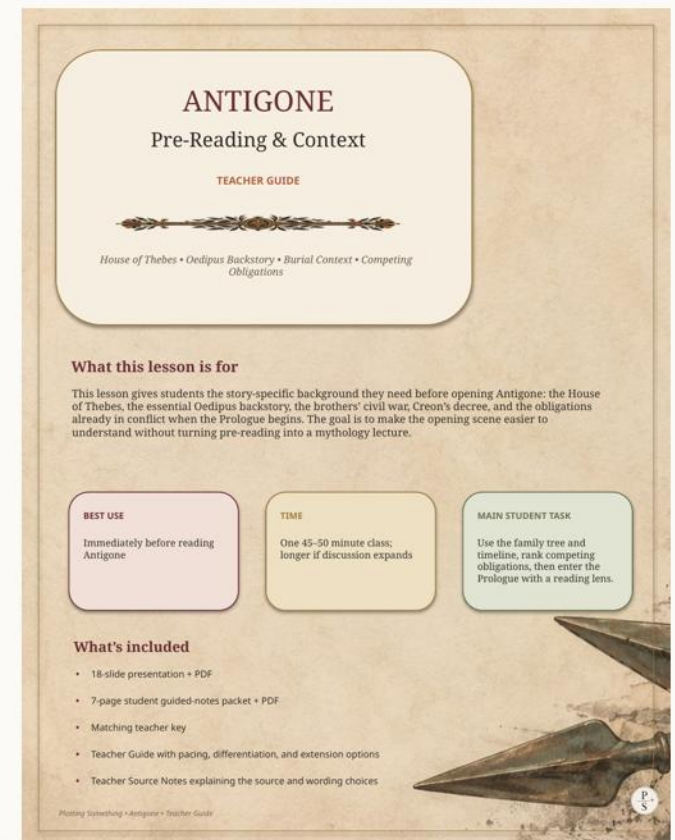
Everything is included as PowerPoint and PDF

You will receive:

- 18-slide Antigone pre-reading presentation
- 7-page student guided-notes packet
- 7-page answer key
- 5-page teacher guide
- 2-page teacher source notes
- PPTX and PDF versions of each file

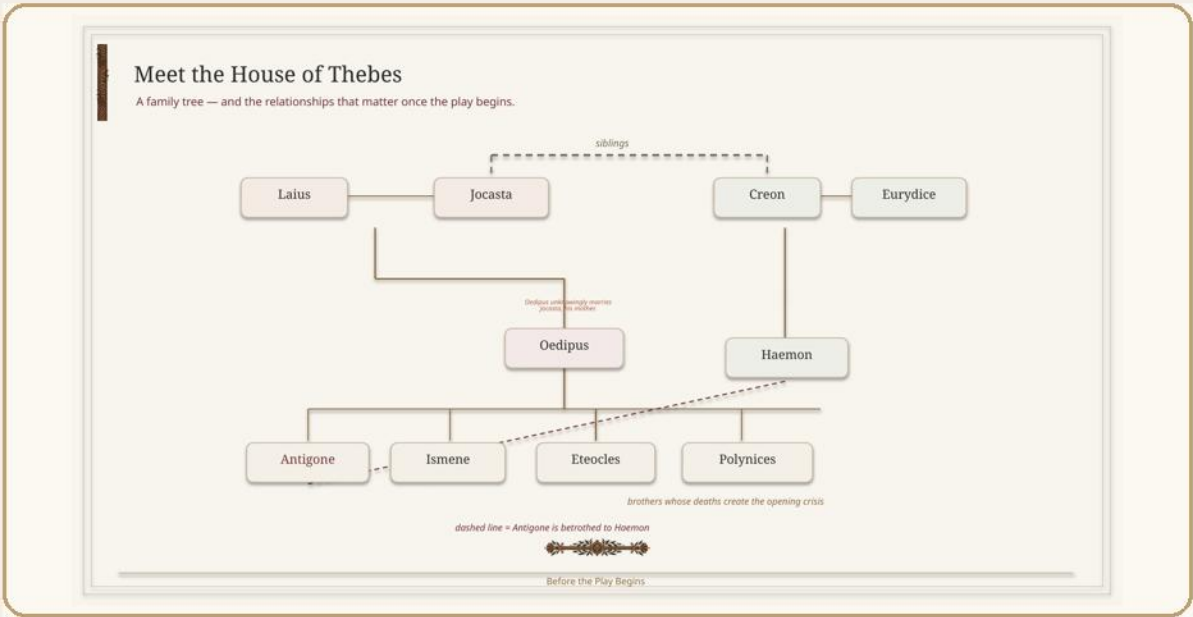
Best for:

- Sophocles' Antigone
- Greek tragedy / drama units
- Grades 9-12
- 1 class period or 2 shorter periods



A CLOSER LOOK

Actual pages from the finished Antigone resource



Start Here
The play opens with obligations already in conflict.

Antigone opens after a long _____ and _____
The opening conflict is already urgent before the first line is spoken.

Four responsibilities shape the opening conflict

FAMILY	LAW	CONSCIENCE	SURVIVAL
What do we owe the people closest to us?	What do we owe the state and its laws?	What do we owe our own sense of right and wrong?	What do we owe ourselves when our safety is at risk?

Quick question
When might obeying a law conflict with another responsibility?

At first glance, which of the four pressures would be hardest for you to ignore? Why?

Which Obligation Comes First?
Before you read, decide which of these responsibilities would matter most to you.

Family	Religious / moral duty	Civil law	Protection of the city	Personal safety
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Quick write: Which obligation should come first when these values collide? What makes that choice difficult?

Before the Play Begins

The Decree — and Why Burial Matters
Creon's order is political, but for Antigone it reaches much further.

THE DECREE

ETEOCLES	POLYNICES
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WHY BURIAL MATTERS

HUMAN DIGNITY	RELIGIOUS DUTY
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FAMILY OBLIGATION	PUBLIC SHAME
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So what? Why would Antigone see Creon's decree as more than a political rule?

Carry These Questions into the Prologue
Antigone opens with a long chain of events.

What does Antigone believe she must do?	How does she feel?
How does Creon's decree give her a choice?	What does she do?
What does Creon's decree reveal about justice and law?	How does she feel?
What do Eteocles and Polynices tell us?	How does she feel?
Which action reveals more responsibility at the end of the play?	How does she feel?
What is one piece of background information you think will matter most in the play? Explain why.	