



What if?

Focus Critical Thinking

Learning Intention Consider the actions, decisions and repercussions of character actions.

Success Criteria By the end of the lesson students will have engaged in discussions to clarify, test and extend views about a text

Activity Have students consider each of the following questions. This can be done by students working independently or as a whole class activity. Have the students identify quotes or moments in the play where characters have made choices that had significant repercussions on their lives or the lives of others. Students to take notes to join in discussion after this.

- What if Oedipus had never sought to uncover the truth about his origins and parentage?
- What if Tiresias had revealed the prophecy to Oedipus earlier in the play?
- What if Jocasta had been successful in dissuading Oedipus from investigating further into his past?
- What if Oedipus had chosen to ignore the warnings and advice from both Tiresias and Jocasta?
- What if Creon had not been accused by Oedipus of conspiring against him?
- What if Oedipus had accepted responsibility for his actions without trying to shift the blame onto others?
- What if the citizens of Thebes had discovered the truth about Oedipus' identity earlier in the narrative?
- What if Oedipus had chosen to exile himself voluntarily upon learning the truth, rather than waiting for the citizens to cast him out?
- What if the gods had intervened in Oedipus' life to prevent the fulfillment of the prophecy?
- What if Oedipus had been more cautious and hesitant in his pursuit of knowledge, avoiding the tragic revelations that unfolded?

Socratic Seminar

The Socratic seminar is a formal discussion, based on a text, in which the leader asks open-ended questions. Within the context of the discussion, students listen closely to the comments of others, thinking critically for themselves, and articulate their own thoughts and their responses to the thoughts of others. They learn to work cooperatively and to question intelligently and civilly.

Israel, Elfie. "Examining Multiple Perspectives in Literature." In *Inquiry and the Literary Text: Constructing Discussions in the English Classroom*. James Holden and John S. Schmit, eds. Urbana, IL: NCTE, 2002.

Have the students sit in a circle. Have small prizes ready for those willing to start the discussion off. If you need to, give points for starting a discussion, and points for responding and points for adding further information.

Give the students the Socratic Sentence starters. It's helpful to require at least one of each kind of response from each student as an expectation.

Give the students some time to become familiar with the questions and then start the seminar.

Write Select one question and write a one paragraph response about how the play could have ended differently if they had made a different choice?

Socratic Seminar Sentence Starters



Use academic language when you speak. In turn, apply good listening skills during the activity.

Please utilise the following sentence frames while you speak and incorporate strong academic language structures into your natural vocabulary and deepen the level of intellectual discussion in an academic setting. Speaking and hearing the academic language will deepen your ability to use it in your writing.

Affirming to an idea and adding to it:

- My idea is related to _____'s idea _____.
- I really liked _____'s idea about _____.
- I agree with _____. Also, _____.
- Yes, I think you're onto something there. Maybe _____.
- My idea build's on _____'s idea. I _____.

Expressing your opinion:

- I believe that _____.
- In my opinion _____.
- I feel that _____.
- I think that _____ because _____.
- To me, it seems obvious that _____.

Presenting a different angle on a subject:

- While I can see why you believe this, I see this differently. In my opinion _____.
- I understand where you are coming from, but I see it a bit differently. From my perspective, _____.
- That's a valid point, but I feel _____.
- On the other hand, _____.
- I do agree with the part about _____ but _____.

Sentence Frame for changing the subject:

- I think we've exhausted the topic of _____, can we move on to _____?
- Moving on to _____
- Does anyone have any final comments to add about _____ or shall we move on to a new subject?

Sentence Frames for Clarification:

- _____, could you please rephrase that?
- I did not understand _____, could you repeat that, please?
- I did not understand _____, do you mean _____? (here you rephrase what you think the group member said and wait for clarification)
- It's not quite clear. Can you explain what you said about _____?
- Can you say more about that?
- In other words, are you saying _____?
- I have a question about _____. (State your question.)

Adapted from https://www.spartanburg7.org/cms/lib/SC02205954/Centricity/Domain/448/Socratic_Seminar_Sentence_Starters_handout.pdf



Educational resources for *Oedipus The King* prepared by Brandi Galpin for Smart Artz Theatre Inc. Copyright is held by Smart Artz Theatre Inc.

