

Oedipus Rex Characters

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Major Characters:

Oedipus: Tragic hero (protagonist), King of Thebes, determined, curious, intelligent, proud, caring towards his people, confident, emotional, suffers from hubris, blind to his fate, solves the riddle of the Sphinx, chasing the truth endlessly, faces a prophecy of killing his father and marrying his mother, unknowingly fulfills the prophecy, tragic flaw leads to downfall, feels self-blame and guilt, accepts responsibility for his actions, experiences intense suffering, ends up blind and exiled, had four children with Jocasta (Sons: Eteocles, Polyneices; Daughters: Antigone, Ismene).

Laius: Former King of Thebes, father of Oedipus, victim of prophecy, tries to escape fate, orders infant Oedipus to be killed, killed by Oedipus unknowingly, symbol of fate and human error, catalyst of the tragic events, his murder causes the plague in Thebes, represents guilt and hidden sin.

Jocasta: Queen of Thebes, wife and mother of Oedipus, strong-willed, protective of Oedipus, less believing in prophecies, tries to prevent Oedipus from discovering the truth, ignorant of Oedipus' identity, experiences a tragic fate, commits suicide after the truth is revealed, symbolizes dramatic irony and tragedy.

Teiresias/Tiresias (both spellings are right): Blind prophet, experienced gender transformation (male to female and back), knows Oedipus' fate, advisor to Oedipus, unwilling to reveal the full truth, clashes with Oedipus, represents truth and foresight, symbolizes irony and fate.

Creon: Brother of Jocasta, uncle of Oedipus, becomes King of Thebes, authoritarian, stubborn, focused on political stability, prideful, has a strong sense of duty, believes in loyalty to the state.

Minor Characters

Merope: Queen of Corinth, wife of Polybus, adoptive mother of Oedipus, caring, concerned for Oedipus' well-being.

Polybus: King of Corinth, husband of Merope, adoptive father of Oedipus, loving and protective, raises Oedipus as his own, and fosters a strong bond with him.

Polynices: Son of Oedipus, brother of Antigone, exiled from Thebes, rebels against Eteocles, seeks revenge, and embodies conflict.

Antigone: Daughter of Oedipus, sister of Polynices, defies Creon's order, buries Polynices, values family over the law, symbolizes loyalty and morality.

Theseus: King of Athens, wise and just, friend to Oedipus, offers refuge, shows empathy, and provides moral support.

The Chorus: A Group of Theban elders acts as the collective voice, offers commentary, reflects society's views, provides context and moral guidance, and expresses emotions through odes between scenes.