

CC 222: Greek Tragedy  
Midterm Exam Preview and Study Guide

The midterm exam (Wednesday, March 7) will have the following parts:

A. *Definitions.*

A list of 12 terms pertaining to the parts, performance, and cultural context of Greek tragedy. Define 9 by answering two questions: *What is it?* and *How does it function within the genre of tragedy?*

B. *Identifications.*

6 passages, one from each of the plays read thus far. The names of the speakers will be removed, and some other obvious details in the passages might be obscured. For each passage identify the play, the author, speaker, and the general context (no more than a sentence or two — avoid excessive plot summary). You must identify every passage.

C. *Short answers.*

Each of the passages in (B) will have a question on the genre of tragedy at large. Answer 3 of the 6 in a full paragraph of 8–10 sentences. The weekly responses to our plays, which ask you to support your ideas with examples, will serve as a guide here.

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Because we've been jumping around a bit, here are the topics authors, plays, and themes we've covered (or will have covered) thus far:

*Topics:*

The origins of tragedy. Dionysus as god of the theater. The spaces and devices of the ideal Greek theater. The ideal structure of a tragedy. Speech poetry and song poetry. Storytelling devices: *agons*, prologues, divine appearances. Actors versus chorus. The great Dionysia: participants and process. Civic and theatrical space in Athens.

*Authors and plays:*

Euripides: *Medea*, *Bacchae*, *Hippolytus*, *Heracles*.  
Sophocles: *Women of Trachis*; *Oedipus*.

*Themes:*

Revenge. Myth-making (tradition versus innovation). Helping friends, harming enemies (*philia*). Modesty (*aidos*). Pollution (*miasma*) and expiation. Divinity versus mortality. Fate. Male versus female agency.