

The paper should be 4 double-spaced pages, or 1,000-1,200 words, with a standard font and 1" margins. You should **not do any outside research**; your goal in the paper is to develop an original interpretation of the plays. To demonstrate your close reading skills, you must cite the plays to support your argument. For clarity and consistency, be sure to use the translations in the Greek Plays edition only.

To cite the plays, use the line numbers printed to the right of the text in Greek Plays. If you have already specified which play you are discussing, the citation should include only the line numbers. If you are comparing two different plays, then indicate the title in the citation as well.

Citation examples: From the beginning of the Persians, the chorus fears bad news will arrive when a messenger comes (8-14). Tiresias echoes Darius when he warns that “authority and rhetoric may come from pride, but only wise men help their city” (Bacchae 270-1).

Interpretation vs. Summary

A summary simply provides a condensed narration of the plot. Your goal in this paper is to develop an interpretation that makes an explicit argument about the meaning or significance of specific elements in the play. You should assume that your audience is familiar with the play and therefore not include any summary except where pointing out close details contributes to your argument.

The paper needs to focus on one of the topics and address the issues raised, but you may choose to focus on one part of the prompt or formulate your own question.

Prompt:

Identify two examples of prophetic dreams in the plays by Aeschylus. Which characters have these dreams? Why do the dreams prompt such strong reactions in these characters, and what does it lead them to do? Finally, how do the dreams in Aeschylus contribute to the thematic coherence of his plays?

Paper Content The introduction of your paper should succinctly explain:

- the central question(s) you plan to address;

- which plays you will use to answer these questions (author and title);
- your answer to the question(s) in one clear sentence (a thesis statement);
- a brief summary of what parts of the plays you will use to support your thesis (a roadmap).

Your thesis should be specific and can be modest in scope. Consider your paper a small contribution to the study of one narrow question and explain your position as clearly as possible.

Keep in mind that there are no right answers to the interpretive issues raised in the prompts.

The body of your paper should then follow your roadmap and explain how the examples you've selected support your thesis. Your conclusion should briefly restate your main point and then connect your specific points to broader questions about the tragedy, Greek culture, or literary interpretation. Be sure not to equivocate or suggest that someone else's view might be better in the conclusion.