

# Essay # 2 kim pham english

Literature, Play



Essay # 2 Kim Pham English 104-017 Professor James Place October 15, 2012 Pham 1 In the play Oedipus Rex by Sophocles (rpt. in James P. Place, Literature: A reader for Freshman Composition II, 1st ed. [Boston: Pearson, 2011] 122-168), the oracles had prophesied that Oedipus would kill his father and beget children by his mother. Oedipus does not want to do the things that Apollo predicted; he is no puppet, but indeed the controller of his own fate. Oedipus was unwilling to have his fate come true; he was frightened that he would kill his adopted parents.

He believes they were his real parents, therefore he left to Thebes. The decision he made was based on the stories he heard. This led to Oedipus's own downfall. Oedipus is not the puppet of his own fate, but indeed the creator of his own fate. Oedipus creates his own fate because after hearing the oracle, he did not return to his hometown, Corinth, but went to Thebes. He was afraid of making his fate come true, so he did everything possible to avoid the fate.

He did not realize that by avoiding his fate, he was actually heading toward it. In Thebes, he fulfills his fate by killing his father and taking his mother as his bride. Soon, he tries to investigate who killed Laios, but he does not know it was actually himself. None of Oedipus's choice were predetermined, and nor were they accidental. The premise of the play is how Oedipus's decisions unknowingly lead to his fate. Oedipus was free to make his own decisions, and his decisions tied in with his fate.

Oedipus did not know that all his decisions would lead to the killing of his father and the marrying of his mother. Oedipus was a very stubborn and curious person; he forced the servant of Laios and also Teiresias to tell him

the truth about his past, even though neither one wanted him to know the truth. The servant stated, "... if I speak the truth, I am worse than dead" (p. 165). Both warned Oedipus that he did not want to know the secrets of his past. As he finds out the full truth, Pham 2

Oedipus accepts responsibility for his actions. Oedipus believes that was his own destiny, and his decisions and actions fulfilled it. The premise of the play is how freedom harmonizes with fate. Careless decisions and curiosity tie in with fate. Curiosity and the knowledge of the truth, in certain situations should be avoided. Within this play, ignorance is indeed better than knowing the truth. It is obvious that the fate of Oedipus is his own fault. Avoiding his fate, Oedipus makes his own fate occur.