

# [An analysis of the plot in oedipus rex, a play by sophocles](https://assignbuster.com/an-analysis-of-the-plot-in-oedipus-rex-a-play-by-sophocles/)

The purpose of this paper is to expound on the plot of " Oedipus rex". The plot of a play contains a rising activity, falling activity, determination, exposition and peak. The rising activity takes after exposition and works towards the greatest part of a play. The falling activity is after the peak and guides the reader towards the determination. The determination is the point at which the issue or question in the play is understood. The exposition clarifies the thought/hypothesis of the story. At long last, the climax comes next and is regularly viewed as the defining moment of the story/play. This paper shows what the play is saying about fate and free will. Tiresias says what is planned by fate to come will come regardless of whether she talks or not, “ Well, it will come what will, though I be mute” (1, 341-347).

The play starts with Oedipus addressing the general population of Thebes and to a priest. This happens at the palace of the Theban King Oedipus. The king is much concerned about the wellbeing of the Thebes people. This is because there has been a lethal torment that has cleared Oedipus' nation and his men of the country have come to Oedipus to ask for assistance. To know the cause of this plague, King Oedipus decides to send his brother in law, Prince Creon to talk to the Oracle of Apollo and know the cause of the plague tormenting the country. Oedipus is caring such that he doesn’t want the people of Thebes to be tormented. The oracle of Apollo tells Prince Creon that the plague is as a result of the killing of king Laius, who was the king of Thebes and whom King Oedipus predeceases. The rising activity of the play arises when a blind prophet is brought before the king. The blind prophet by the name Tiresias is told about the death of king Laius by Oedipus but refuses to tell the truth because the truth she has might bring more complications and more harm than what had happened. At long last, after a much heated debate Tiresias discloses to Oedipus that Oedipus murdered the King Laius. Bewildered and insulted, Oedipus is persuaded that Creon set this up intentionally and blames Creon for attempting to assume control over the honored position. Dismayed by this allegation, Creon requests evidence, however, afore doing anything, Jocasta enters the room with an aim of mediating (Jocasta was the wife to the late king Laius and also sister to Prince Creon and currently the wife to Oedipus).

There is a prophecy which was made when Laius was alive and Oedipus does not know about it. Jocasta opens up everything for him to know about the prophecy. She tells him that a prophet had once said that Laius would be killed by his child. The prophecy continues to say that his own child would take Jocasta, his wife and together they will get children. Jocasta then narrates to Oedipus how king Laius was arrested on the way by unknown men and killed together with his servants. On hearing this, king Oedipus remembers how he met a man on the way, the man threatened him and he killed him together with his servants but one servant escaped. The survivor was a shepherd and he is the only person who could tell who really killed king Laius. As they talk, the shepherd enters the room and says that it is Oedipus who killed the king. He also narrates about a child who was born and left on the road to die by his parents because they feared a prophecy which had been prophesied on them and they did not want the child to fulfil the prophecy. Due to this, they decided to throw him away but was rescued and adopted by the Polybus of Corinth and Merope who nursed him until he became big enough. He ends up plainly humiliated of this discovery notwithstanding all the safety measures that were taken by King Laius and his wife to avoid the prophecy being fulfilled and at last its fulfillment comes true. This shows how fate and free will cannot be escaped no matter how much someone tries, if it was made to happen, it just happens.

On the peak of the play, Oedipus has been believing to be the son of Polybus of Corinth and Merope and not the son of King Laius, this is according to what he told Jocasta. This believe was however cut short one day by a drunkard man who told him that he wasn’t the son of Polybus. Oedipus was disgusted by hearing this and he decided to consult the priest of Apollo who explained to him about the prophecy and who he was. He then decided to move from Corinth and Merope and on the way where the three roads meet, there came a man who offended him. He decided to kill the man and all his servants but one servant who was a shepherd was left. This shepherd is the one who went to give a testimony on what had happened and how King Laius died and who was behind all this. After the incident, Oedipus went to Thebes and became the new king.

The determination and the falling activity are well put together in this play especially in the last part. Jocasta and King Oedipus come to know that the prophecy which they said will never happen has been fulfilled in them, they both become worried and go into a frenzy. Oedipus escaped from Corinth and Merope in fear of killing Polybus who he thought was his father. He later heard that Polybus had died due to an illness. To him this prophecy was from an unskilled prophet who didn’t know what she was saying. Oedipus becomes confused, he goes for a sword but no one could give it to him, he enters his room only to find Jocasta has killed herself. So as to save the Thebes from the plague, he says he be banishes from country until he dies. He tells Creon to take care of the young girls and in conclusion requests that he escort him to the doors where he may meander in darkness until the point when he bites the dust.

Most plays, or stories take after a similar essential plot diagram. In " Oedipus rex", exposition is seen when king Oedipus starts tending to the plague and is anxious waiting for the Creon to return with good news on the cause of the plague tormenting the Thebes nation. Rising activity is seen when Tiresias starts blaming king Oedipus for killing his father and bringing curse to the nation. The peak of the play is seen when Oedipus comes to know that his parents were Laius and Jocasta and that it is his father that he killed. At long last, determination and falling activity manifest themselves when Jocasta kills herself and then Oedipus says he be banished from the nation knowing very well that this is the end goal to spare it from the torment.