

### Irony in Oedipus Rex Example

The Greek tragedy of Oedipus Rex has many examples of irony. There is irony throughout the play, that is the tragedy of Oedipus fate. He is tortured by the constant twist of his own fate. The play shows examples of three types of irony, verbal irony, situational irony, and dramatic irony, all of which leads to Oedipus causing his own loss of sight.

Verbal irony is the use of words to mean something different from what they seem to mean and it is shown in Oedipus's words and Iocaste's speeches. There is irony in Oedipus saying he ran away from his parents to avoid the prophecy that he will kill his father and marry his mother. He does not know that he is adopted and his parents are Laius and Iocaste. He also mocks Tiresias for being blind but Oedipus is also blind to the truth of his own doings. Iocaste says to Oedipus "Have no fear of sleeping with your mother when it was told that Oedipus's adopted father has passed away and Iocaste believes that Oedipus would have been committing incest with his mother but she is also his wife. Iocaste is determined the death of Oedipus's father is good news and says "Yet this news of your father's death is wonderful. She now believes that she is not in any danger of upsetting the gods and her husband is not her son but to her that he is in fact her husband. It's ironic that Iocaste thinks it's wonderful that Oedipus's father passed away but it is her husband that passed away due to Oedipus.

Situational irony, the difference between what you expect to happen and what actually happens, also plays a part in the story. Oedipus mocks Tiresias for not having any sight, yet Tiresias is a prophet. He has insight while Oedipus lacks the ability to have insight. The greatest example of situational irony in the play is Oedipus trying to avoid the prophecy that he will kill his father and marry his mother. In his attempt to avoid the prophecy leads to him killing his father and marrying his mother.

There are many examples of dramatic (tragic) irony in the play as well. This is when there is a surprise that will hurt the character and the reader or another character knows about it. Examples include Oedipus not knowing that he killed his own father and not knowing he marries his own mother and has four children with her.

# Irony In Oedipus Rex Essay

**Lauren Gardner**



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