

Thucydides and Euripides: The Changing Civic and Moral Values during the Peloponnesian War

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INTRODUCTION

This unit is part of a two-semester course taken by tenth graders in the second half of the school year. The course is team-taught by an art teacher and by a language teacher, with one nine-week semester devoted to art and the other nine-week semester to Greek literature, mythology and history. The school is on an accelerated block schedule and the class meets every day for 90 minutes.

Smaller sections of this unit could be used in the Ancient History part of a World History course or a literature course that included Greek tragedy.

The unit described below is in the literature semester of the course. It has been preceded by a three-week unit on Greek mythology. It will be followed by two weeks spent reading other Greek drama. The approximate length of the unit is four weeks.

DISCUSSION OF THE UNIT

One of the most fascinating periods that can be studied is fifth century B.C. Greece. So much was happening—painting and sculpture were flowering, scientists and philosophers were speculating on the nature of the universe, playwrights vied with one another in the dramatic contests, storytellers and poets were in demand, citizens were actively involved in running many states and historians were grappling with the significance of both ancient and current events. But what happens when a world war envelops this flourishing culture? What changes occur in individuals and in states?

The general aim of this curriculum is to examine the view of late fifth century B.C. Greeks on what is right and what is wrong conduct. This will be done by looking at the conduct and the attitude of Greeks toward captured and defeated people. The literature read will be Euripides' *Hecuba* (425-424 B.C.) and selections from Thucydides' *History of the Peloponnesian War* (c. 404 B.C.). The main focus will be on the situations, events and circumstances which might turn a good and responsible person or state into a bad, immoral or evil individual or state.

A definition and description of a good state will be obtained by reading Pericles' Funeral Oration in Thucydides and selections from Plato's *Republic*. This definition will then be applied to current events, using the actions of a modern country to illustrate either a good or a bad state.

To examine these changes, all of Euripides' *Hecuba* and selections from Thucydides' *History of the Peloponnesian War* will be read. Thucydides' story of the war that involved all of the Hellenic and non-Hellenic Mediterranean world shows the gradual decline of Athenian military and moral preeminence. These changes will be compared with the picture of the decline and disintegration of Hecuba's moral stature as shown in Euripides' tragedy.

Euripides play will be studied first. As an introduction, there will be a brief survey of some of the pre-Socratic philosophers. What were their views on the organization of the world, the forces and relationships that gave stability or continuity, and the building blocks of the universe? Did they have a definite concept of evil, or, in their view, was evil simply the absence of good?

Before reading the drama, there will be a brief discussion or investigation of Greek theater and its conventions. Some of the topics to be considered will be the physical arrangement of the theater, the use of masks, the limited number of actors, which requires the doubling of roles, the competitions, and the festivals at which the plays were presented. Greek dramatic conventions that will be studied include the role of the chorus and the practice of having all acts of violence take place off-stage. A contrast will be made with contemporary films' and television's treatment of violence. For example, Euripides sets a tone of imminent horror or dread at the beginning of the play by using a child's ghost as the speaker of the Prologue. How would television news cover the impending discovery of a murder?

Portions of Aristotle's *Poetics* will be read at the conclusion of reading *Hecuba*. There will be a discussion of how closely *Hecuba* follows the criteria established by Aristotle for excellence in tragedy.

The students in the course in which this unit will be used have learned about the Trojan War. However, it is useful to review the name and places, so that references will be clear.

In reading *Hecuba*, the disintegration and the degradation of the title character will be examined scene by scene. The forces, events and characters that gradually drive Hecuba to her final murderous rage include the desire for revenge and the disappearance of normal human conventions, as illustrated by the destruction and betrayal of the guest-host relationship between Hecuba and both Odysseus and Polymestor.

Because Euripides wrote both *Hecuba* and *The Trojan Women* in response to Spartan and Athenian enslavement and killing of defeated enemies, parts of the following selections will be read in Thucydides:

Platea	(II.1-6)	431 B.C.	Thebans surrender and are killed.
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	(III.68)	427 B.C.	Plataeans surrender to Spartans. The men are killed, the women enslaved and the city destroyed.
Mytilene	(III.1-50)	428-427 B.C.	There is a debate on capital punishment. The first vote to kill all is rescinded; only 1000 are killed.
Scione	(V.32)	421 B.C.	Athens recaptures Scione. Men are killed; the women are enslaved.
Hysiae	(V.83)	417 B.C.	Spartans win and kill all free people.
Melos	(V.84-116)	416-415 B.C.	The debate on co-operation with or opposition to Athens is a dramatic dialogue. Athens besieges the town and wins. All the men are killed and the women and children are enslaved.
Sicilian expedition	(VI, VII, VIII)	415-413 B.C.	Athens extends the war unwisely and is thoroughly defeated.

First some of the problems that had to be settled by Thucydides should be considered. His aim was to write a history not just for his own time, but forever (I.22). To achieve this aim, he had to be cautious in using sources (I.21), and he had to invent a way to express events chronologically, in a way that would be understood by all cities in Greece, each of which used a different calendar. The problem was solved by selecting a beginning event, correlating this event with the calendars of Athens, Sparta and Corinth and then to date by counting the number of winters and summers (II.2).

To give an idea of what usual or accepted human behavior was, selections from several events will be read: the successful escape attempt from Platea (III.20-24), the Funeral Oration given by Pericles (II.34-46), Pericles' actions concerning his property outside Athens (II.13), Pericles' policy (II.60-64) and the outbreak of the plague (II.47-55). In this last episode, both noble and ignoble actions are described.

Pericles' ideals in the Funeral Oration will be used as a standard by which to compare the actions of Athens and other Greek states toward the states that they have conquered. Three events in particular from those mentioned above will be examined: the Spartan treatment of the Plataeans (427 B.C.), and Athens' treatment of Mytilene (428-427 B.C.) and Melos (416-415 B.C.).

Euripides was greatly influenced by the events described by Thucydides. His response was to write two plays that show the horror and the degradation of war: *Hecuba*, in 425 B.C., following Platea and Mytilene and *The Trojan Women* in 415 B.C., after Melos was conquered.

The unit will conclude with some excerpts from Plato (427-347 B.C.) on the virtues to be found in a good state and in a good person. Selections include readings from the

Republic (IX.588b-592b) on the profitability of justice, the development and the weaknesses of democracy (VIII.555b-562a) and the four virtues in the state (IV.427c-434d).

GOALS OF THE UNIT

This unit has several goals. The first is to help students realize that the great works of Western civilization deal with subjects that are still typical and have relevance to contemporary problems. Books and plays that deal with other places and other times are still very useful and can be enjoyed.

A second goal is to learn about a specific time in history. Students will see how a modern reader can get a good idea of what life was like by reading primary sources. Included as a main part of this goal is the study of the strengths and weaknesses of Athens. The former will be demonstrated in Pericles' Funeral Oration and the latter in Athenian action toward conquered states.

The third goal is to understand the process by which a person can be changed from a humane individual into a desperately cruel dispenser of vengeance. The person is Hecuba; the driving elements in her change are the events following the Trojan War.

A fourth goal is to learn how history is written. The criteria used by Thucydides regarding his methods of using sources and the establishment of chronology will be studied.

A fifth goal is to learn to appreciate drama and to understand that it represents a certain kind of truth. Both Thucydides and Euripides portrayed war. How did each author show the evil of war? How "true" is the play?

A sixth goal is to increase the ability of the students to write effectively, to read with greater comprehension and to speak with precision. There will be new vocabulary included in each lesson.

The seventh goal is to have the students formulate for themselves a concept of what is good or evil conduct.

STRATEGIES

This is a general statement of the strategies that will be used. Specific examples of the strategies will be found in the individual lesson plans.

The strategies for goals one and two overlap. Learning about a specific place and time will provide parallels with the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Mass murder of enemies and racial or ethnic cleansing are the same, whether you are in ancient Greece or

modern Rwanda or Yugoslavia. It will be necessary for students to read a daily newspaper or watch news on television to find modern parallels.

Hecuba's downfall will be studied by reading the play. All students will be expected to read the play for homework. Then individual groups of students will enact sections of the play in class. Particular attention will be paid to the events in each scene that drive Hecuba to her final murderous rage. The context of key words such as evil, bad, right and terrible will be emphasized because these will provide a good idea of how Euripides was trying to indicate the downward slope of Hecuba's debasement.

Thucydides' statement of methods and purposes will be discussed. To illustrate the problem of testing the credibility of eyewitnesses, students will read newspaper accounts or watch television news reports of a controversial or complicated story.

The reading, writing, speaking and vocabulary goals will be addressed in several ways. English words that are unfamiliar, Greek terms and some Greek words that will help to increase English vocabulary will be introduced. Over the course of the four weeks, each student will write a brief report and will present this in class orally using only a 3"x 5" index card for notes. At the conclusion of the unit each student will write a brief (three to five pages) paper dealing with a subject such as his or her reaction to and evaluation of the events surrounding Hecuba's fate.

The seventh goal, formulating a concept of good or evil conduct, will be reached by using examples from the text and from current events. Students will have to decide whether Hecuba's actions could be justified and what alternatives might have been possible. Other examples from recent news or from historical events can be compared to see what decisions and choices are made by people confronted by morally difficult problems.

Some visual elements will also be included. Greek vases are a good source of illustrations of the myths surrounding the Trojan War heroes. Students can look on the Perseus Internet site for information. As of May 1999, there were only three vases with pictures of Hecuba listed; none of the three pictured the events of Euripides' tragedy. Students could discuss why some scenes are more popular than others. The use of maps will help the student visualize the locations of the events.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES AND RESOURCES

Sample Greek Vocabulary

<i>Agos</i>	pollution, curse, sin
<i>Aidos</i>	respect for public opinion
<i>Arché</i>	the beginning, the cause that moves
<i>Até</i>	rashness, irrational behavior, later is associated with punishment

<i>Chaos</i>	lack of organization
<i>Cosmos</i>	organization, order
<i>Diké</i>	justice
<i>Hamartia</i>	a great error, a tragic flaw
<i>Hubris</i>	excessive pride and arrogance toward the gods
<i>Kakos</i>	bad, evil, terrible
<i>Kalos</i> and <i>agathos</i>	good; together they sum up the ideal of a good person
<i>Miasma</i>	pollution, fear of pollution
<i>Pathos</i>	suffering
<i>Peripeteia</i>	reversal in plot
<i>Phthonos</i>	jealousy (of gods)
<i>Sophia</i>	wisdom
<i>Timé</i>	enjoyment of public esteem, honor

Other references to Hecuba

Lost epic on fall of Troy by Arctinus (eighth century B.C.)

Metamorphoses, Ovid, XIII 402-507.

Priameia coniunx /... externasque novo latratu terruit auras. (403-404).
latravit, conata loqui (569).

Inferno, Dante, Canto XXX ll.16-21.

Ecuba, trista, misera e cattiva....Latro si come cane.

Hamlet, Shakespeare: What's Hecuba to him or he to Hecuba? (II.ii.545-54).

Outline of Euripides' *Hecuba*

General background:

After the capture of Troy, which was brought about by Odysseus' trick of using a wooden horse, the men of the city were killed and the women and children were given as slaves to the victorious Greeks. Although the scene of *The Trojan Women* is immediately after the fall of Troy—while Troy is still smoldering—the scene of *Hecuba* is several weeks later, after the Greek fleet has sailed and has been becalmed in Thrace. Therefore, the death of Astyanax, Hector's son and Hecuba's grandson, has already occurred and the hope for a future for Troy lies in the survival of Polydorus, Priam's and Hecuba's youngest son who had been sent away for safety during the Trojan War. A second hope is the survival of Polyxena, the daughter of Priam and Hecuba. Before the play begins, Polydorus has already been killed for his gold and Polyxena has been chosen to be an offering for Achilles' tomb. Hecuba knows neither of these things.

The story of *Hecuba* describes the cataclysmic changes in fortune which have come to Hecuba, the widow of the slaughtered King Priam of Troy. Literally overnight she went from being a wealthy, powerful and, consequently, respected queen of a famous city

to a widowed slave of a conquering Greek. According to myth, she had a hundred sons and daughters; after the defeat she was to lose all of them. The play shows Hecuba's progressive realization of her devastating situation in the scenes in which she meets Odysseus and Agamemnon. In these encounters, Hecuba is an equal to the male characters in cleverness and determination, but as a slave and a female, she is powerless to prevent further evil from coming to herself and her children.

After her daughter Polyxena has been sacrificed, she learns of the murder of her son, Polydorus. She decides to get revenge or justice by killing the children of Polymestor, the man who killed her last remaining son. The women of Troy help her to commit the murder, as well as helping her to blind Polymestor. The play ends with the prophecy that Hecuba will be changed into a bitch and that her grave will be a signal for sailors.

Division of Play:

Prologue: Ghost of Polydorus. Gives background and says his mother will suffer terribly (*kakos*).

First Chorus (98-176): Tells of Achilles' ghost wanting Polyxena to be sacrificed.

First stage of dehumanization. Polyxena, Hecuba, Odysseus.

Odysseus refuses to return favor for Hecuba's saving his life.

Refuses to show pity.

Suggests That Hecuba's logical course is resignation to her fate.

Hecuba asks for the life of her daughter, Polyxena.

Says law (*nomos*) applies to free and slaves.

Odysseus refers to man's desire for honor. Says men won't fight if they don't get honor.

Earlier Hecuba had called Odysseus a demagogue (*demagogus*).

Second Chorus (444-83)

Second stage of dehumanization. Talthybius and Hecuba.

Realization that daughter, Polyxena, will die.

Description of Polyxena's death.

Talthybius says he'd rather be dead than be Hecuba.

Hecuba gives evidence of giving up hope. Says that evil stays evil and good stays good. Man judges evil from the good.

Third Chorus (629-55)

Third stage of dehumanization. Chorus leader, Agamemnon, Hecuba.

Polydorus' death is discovered.

Betrayal of friend for gold. Agamemnon shows weakness.

No help from moral law.

Desire for revenge.

Agamemnon's view of Hecuba is that she is unlucky (*dustuches*).

Hecuba is wronged because

She treated Polymestor as a guest: guest-host relationship defiled.

She is betrayed by murder of Polydorus for gold: sheer greed.

Agamemnon won't help even if he has Cassandra.

Reasons for not acting: he will appear to be weak and will lose face with the army.

Public opinion is most important to him. He worries about his image.

Hecuba asks Agamemnon to help her. He does, although he doubts that the women can do anything.

Chorus leader: Necessity joins enemies and friends

Hecuba: Everyone is slave of either money or luck

The moral law (*nomos*) stands over the gods and by this we know justice and injustice.

Agamemnon: There is good and bad in both the state and the individual

Fourth Chorus (905-51): Description of the fall of Troy.

Final dehumanization: Polymestor and Hecuba.

Heavy irony.

She knows what has happened to her son. He denies everything.

The killing of Polymestor's children and blinding of Polymestor.

Chorus comments on off-stage murders and blinding of Polymestor.

Polymestor calls all the women dogs.

His justification for murdering Polydorus is that he feared the Greeks would attack Thrace.

Hecuba speaks against Sophistic type of Polymestor's speech.

Calls him a barbarian (*barbaros*). She clearly does not consider herself to be a barbarian. This increases tragedy by emphasizing the "Greekness" of the slaves.

Says he would have been honored if he had kept promise made to Priam.

Comments that good friends appear in bad times.

Polymestor calls her a dog (*kuon*) and foretells her death.

Her tomb will be a landmark for sailors.

Final short chorus

General observations:

The word *kakos* is used in various forms (adjective, adverb, noun). It can indicate evil, trouble or bad things. Translators will use various meanings.

Kakos has as an opposite good (*agathos*) and beautiful (*kalos*). These two words define an ideal person (*kalos k'agathos*)

Other opposites associated with *nomos* are unjust things and just things, (*adika* and *dikaia*).

Chronology of Authors and Events of the Peloponnesian War

Authors:

Aeschylus	525-456 B.C.	<i>Agamemnon</i>	458 B.C.
Sophocles	496-406 B.C.		
Euripides	480-406 (?)B.C.		
Thucydides	460-404 (?)B.C.		

Events of the Peloponnesian War (431-404 B.C.) .

References to Thucydides are in parentheses.

Platea (II.1-6) 431 B.C.	Thebans surrender and are killed
Pericles' Funeral Oration and the Plague (II 34-46 and 47-55) 430 B.C.	
Platea (III.68) 427 B.C.	Plataeans surrender to Spartans. Men killed, women enslaved.
Mytilene (III.1-50) 427 B.C.	A revolt is stopped. After an initial vote to kill all the men and make the women and children slaves, there is a debate on capital punishment and the decision is rescinded, although 1000 leaders are killed.
Euripides writes <i>Hecuba</i> 425-424 B.C. (reference in Aristophanes <i>Clouds</i> in 423 B.C.)	
Scione (V.32) 421 B.C.	Athens recaptures Scione, kills the men and enslaves the women.
Hysiae (V.83) 417 B.C.	Sparta wins and kills all free people.
Melos (V.84-116) 416-415 B.C.	Melos refuses to join Athenian League. Athens besieges city and captures it. All the men are killed and the women and children are enslaved.
Euripides writes <i>The Trojan Women</i> in 415 B.C.	
Sicilian Expedition (VI, VII, VIII) 415-413 B.C.	Athens extends war and is defeated.
Aristophanes writes <i>Lysistrata</i> in 411 B.C.	This comedy is not included in this curriculum. It deals with women's efforts to stop war.

Chronology of Ancient Greek Philosophers

Hesiod	eighth century B.C.	<i>Theogony</i> . Idea of original chaos and cosmos.
Thales of Miletus	585 B.C.	Predicts eclipse, according to tradition. Water is most important element.
Anaxamander	mid-sixth. century B.C.	Uses term “ <i>arche</i> ”. Concept of “the Boundless”
Anaximenes	late-sixth century B.C.	Basic element is air, which can be condensed and rarefied. (Water, ice, stones are condensed air; fire is rarefied air.)
Xenophanes of Colophon	late-sixth century B.C.	Opposes anthropomorphic gods.
Heraclitus of Ephesus	c. 500 B.C.	Believes all things subject to change, “ <i>pantarrhei</i> ” and that there is an underlying unity of opposites.
Parmenides of Elea	c. 500 B.C.	Fragments in hexameters. Questions whether matter can be created or destroyed.
Pythagoras	late-sixth century B.C.	Stresses the importance of numbers and numerical relationships such as ratios in music; believes in transmigration of souls and so influences later Stoics.
Empedocles of Akragas	mid- to late- fifth century B.C.	Postulates four roots (<i>rhizomata</i>): earth, air, fire, water. There are forces of Love (<i>philia</i>) and Strife (<i>eris</i>).
Anaxagoras of Clazomene	late-fifth century B.C.	Postulates an original plurality.
<i>Atomists:</i>		
Leucippus	c. 430 B.C.	Matter consists of a number of atoms of various shapes and sizes that can not be created or destroyed.
Democritus	late-fifth century B.C.	
Socrates	late-fifth to early- fourth century B.C.	Interests shift to moral issues.
Plato	427-347 B.C.	Founder of the Academy
Aristotle	384-322 B.C.	Founder of the Lyceum

CURRICULUM OUTLINE

Week 1 Review mythology; read *Hecuba* _

Week 1, Day 1: Questions

Books for students: Hamilton Mythology, a dictionary

Books for teachers: Graves, Alford questionnaire (161).

Activity 1. Introduction:

What examples of evil are there in the mythology previously studied?

Responses will probably include Hercules' killing of his children, Tantalus and the house of Atreus cannibalism, ill treatment of women by Zeus and insolence toward gods.

How do you define evil?

Is Hercules' action, done under the influence of wine, as evil as the actions of Tantalus?

Is something horrifying the same thing as something evil?

How were bad people punished in mythology and how were good people rewarded?

Good people—Deucalion and Pyrrha; bad person—Tantalus

Review the geography of the underworld.

Draw a circle on the board and have students locate and explain the following:

Places: Styx and Lethe Rivers; Asphodel the place of the unburied, Elysium for the good, Tartarus for the bad and Asphodel and Limbo for unburied souls.

People: Charon the ferryman, the three judges (Aeacus for Europe, Rhadamanthys for Asia and Minos for the other difficult cases), Ixion on wheel (tried to seduce Hera), Sisyphus rolling the stone (revealed divine secrets), Tantalus teased by not getting grapes and water (chopped up his son Pelops and served him to Zeus.) (Note: children of Pelops and Hippodameia are Atreus and Thyestes. Atreus gets revenge on Thyestes by killing Thyestes children and serving them to Thyestes.)

Activity 2. Group work: (groups of 4)

Each student lists five events from his/her own experience or from current events which he/she considers to be evil.

As a prompt, select several questions from Alford's questionnaire on evil.

Share them with the group, briefly. The group then makes its own definition of what common element each of the events has.

From these common elements, the group arrives at a definition of evil.

Each student will turn in a copy of his/her definition.

In the conclusion there should be some agreement that evil is a departure from the normal expected customs and morals of a group. Evil can be manifested in many ways.

Activity 3. Vocabulary:

From which places or people mentioned in the lesson do the following words come?
Can you explain the connection between the person/place and the meaning of the English word?

lethal	Lethe
tantalize	Tantalus
Sisyphian	Sisyphus
Stygian	Styx
limbo	Limbo

After the words have been explained, have each student write five sentences showing that they have an understanding of the meaning.

Activity 4. Possible topics for brief paper:

Find what the law says about the culpability of a person with diminished mental capacity.
Find pictures of the Greek underworld. What are the familiar subjects?
Find representations in art or music of other cultures' view of Hell.

Week 1, Day 2: Some Greek views of the universe.

Books for students: *Hecuba*

Books for teacher: Kirk and Raven, Lloyd, outline of Philosophers

Activity 1. What is the nature of God?

Use KR&S fragments 168 and 169 from Xenophanes of Colophon.

“The Ethiopians say that their gods are snub-nosed and black, the Thracians that theirs have light blue eyes and red hair.”

“But if cattle and horses or lions had hands, or were able to draw with their hands and do the works that men can do, horses would draw the forms of the gods like horses, and cattle like cattle, and they would make their bodies such as they each had themselves.”

Discussion: Do you think these are true statements?

How do different contemporary religions depict their divinity?

Do all religions allow their divinities to be pictured?

What does this tell you about the Greeks' view of God?

Is the view of God shifting from polytheism to monotheism?

Activity 2. What are the elements of the universe?

Focus on Heraclitus' unity of opposites and Empedocles of Akragas' four elements: earth, air, fire, and water. The forces of love and strife (*philia* and *eris*). First write chaos and cosmos on the board. Explain that these were used by Hesiod to describe the original unordered condition of the universe (chaos) and the condition after there was a creation (cosmos) organization.

For Heraclitus: List these pairs in random order:

hot, cold	love, hate
action, sleep	200, 800 (SAT scores)
0, 100 (test grades)	sweet, sour
truth, lying	honesty, dishonesty

What would be the mid-point of each range? When are things not hot?

Can you give a definition to the center of each range?

For which two pairs is there no center range?

Have students list other pairs of opposites.

For Empedocles: Fragments 369 and 370.

"From water air came by evaporation. The heavens came into being from aither, the sun from fire and the bodies around the earth from the others."

"There are two hemispheres revolving around earth, one entirely of fire and the other a mixture of air and a little fire."

Strife and love are the forces that unite or separate things.

Explain how fragment 370 describes the make-up of the sun and moon.

If things are formed from a combination of earth, air, fire and water, of what are the following composed? Also explain how strife or love might be involved.

a stone, dust	water, ice and steam
blood and bone	diamonds or talc
fish and beef	green bell peppers and jalapeno peppers

Are there similarities here to Yin and Yang?

Activity 3. Vocabulary

chaos	disorganization	theos	god	monos	one
cosmos	organization	philia	love	poly	many

Explain that Greek words are used as roots for English words. You can find the root in many cases by taking off the last *s*.

What do the English words chaos and cosmos mean? Is the meaning the same as the Greek?

Use the words in the list to complete the following English words

----tic in a state of great disorder

----etic	improving the appearance
----etics	items that are supposed to improve the appearance
----etician	a hairdresser
----ologist	person who studies the origin and organization of the solar system
----ology	the study of the origin of the solar system
-----politan	sophisticated
-----naut	Russian space explorer
theo----	the study of religion
poly-----	the belief in many gods
poly---	a two dimensional figure with many sides
poly-----	a three dimensional figure with many sides
poly----	someone who knows many languages
mono----	the belief in one god
philanthropy	generosity toward other humans
phil-----	someone who admires the Greeks

Why is a hemophiliac called this?

Papers for this segment could be on any one of the pre-Socratics on the list.

Activity 4. Begin to read the play.

Have students silently read the first scene of *Hecuba*.
Then have each student read a few lines.

Week 1, Days 3, 4 and 5.

Teachers' references: Bieber and Walton for the theater, Mossman for the play, Carroll for discussion of horror. Maps of the Mediterranean.

Read *Hecuba*.

Assign groups of students to read a section of each play in class. Assign groups of students to try to speak the chorus sections in unison. The following is one way to divide the play:

Day 1:	Prologue	1-58	Polydorus
	First Scene	59-98	Hecuba
	First Chorus	99-153	
	Second Scene	154-443	Hecuba, Polyxena, Odysseus, Chorus leader
Day 2:	Second Chorus	444-483	
	Third Scene	484-629	Talthybius, Hecuba, Chorus leader
	Third Chorus	630-655	
	Fourth Scene	656-904	Hecuba, Chorus leader, servant, Agamemnon

Day 3: Fourth Chorus	905-952	
Fifth Scene	953-1290	Polymestor, Hecuba, leader and individual chorus members, Agamemnon
Fifth Chorus	1291-1296	

There will be differences between classes. Some will want to read right through and then do other activities. Some might need to have the reading varied with different activities.

Research on the Internet is a good activity. Use the University of Pennsylvania Museum site for information on women or art and the Perseus site for vases and an atlas.

Week 1, Day 3: (Day 1 of play reading)

Review the background of the Trojan War.

Names and places associated with the Trojans: King Priam and Queen Hecuba, their sons: Hector, Paris and Polydorus; Hector's wife, Andromache, and son, Astyanax; Paris' wife, Helen of Troy, whom he took from King Menelaus of Sparta; their daughter Cassandra, Apollo's priestess who has the power to speak the truth about the future, but is never believed.

Places: the river Simois, Mt. Ida. The name for Troy is Ilion (Ilium). Troy had a founder, Teucer. Sometimes they are called Teucrians. Phrygians.

Places associated with the Greeks: King Menelaus of Sparta, King Agamemnon of Mycenae, his wife Clytemnestra and their children, Orestes, Electra and Iphigenia; Odysseus from Ithaca. Greeks are called Argives, Hellenes, Achaeans. The Greek fleet had sailed from Aulis at the beginning of the 10 year Trojan War. Iphigenia, daughter of Agamemnon was sacrificed to get good winds for sailing.

In the opening scene of *Hecuba*, the ghost of her son delivers the explanatory monologue. This is the only example in Greek drama of a child's ghost having this role. The time of this play is later than that of the *Trojan Women*, which is set while Troy is still smoldering. The time of *Hecuba* is several weeks later, after the Greek fleet has set sail to return home. They have been stopped in Thrace because of bad winds. (There are parallels to the becalming of the fleet at Aulis at the beginning of the Trojan War and also the sacrifice of young girls in each event, although the sacrifices are for different reasons.)

Activity 1.

As students are doing their first reading, have them keep a list of the characters.

With the names of Polyxena and Polymestor, use Mossman's explanation of the meanings (give or receive much hospitality) and much planning. Refer to the root *poly* (much) and point out that Polydorus means many gifts and that Odysseus descriptive epithets in the *Odyssey* are:

polytlas dios Odusseus Much suffering shining Odysseus
polymetis dios Odusseus Rich in devices shining Odysseus

Activity 2. Read Polydorus' opening speech.

Locate Thrace and Troy on a map.

Have students restate why Polydorus was sent to Polymestor.

Discuss the location of Polydorus' body and the location of Polydorus, the speaker.

Mention motifs of play: gold, greed, betrayal of guest-host relationship, murder, slavery. All of these are evils that will overwhelm Hecuba.

Activity 3. Read Hecuba's entrance speech and the first Chorus.

Explain that the chorus functions as a commentator on events. The chorus sang and moved around the stage (so choreography). There was a leader. In Euripides' plays, individual chorus members will have their own lines.

What words convey the horror of this scene? (bats, see Carroll, chap. 1, on creatures that combine categories, here a non-bird that flies).

What is Hecuba's physical state? (See the end of Polydorus' speech).

Activity 4. Read the scene 154-443.

What are Odysseus' reasons for the sacrifice? Political necessity, vengeance or destruction of beauty?

Hecuba's speech has anachronisms in referring to the Greek law regarding murder (291-92) and to politicians who will say anything to the crowd (255-57).

The second passage will be used later as a comparison in Thucydides.

The view that a conqueror can do whatever he wants is a theme that will be used in Thucydides in the Melian Dialogue and in the Mitylene debate.

Whose slave is Hecuba? Odysseus'? Agamemnon's? Does it matter?

Why must so many people be killed or enslaved? Is this ethnic cleansing?

Have students find similes and metaphors using animals. Some possibilities are:

Bats (1.73)

A nightingale (337)

A doe mangled by a wolf (90)

Oxen (375)

A lamb that is butchered (204)

Conclusion for this section:

If Hecuba is the tragic heroine, is her tragic flaw her loss of control? Look for evidence of this.

Does Hecuba's character change? Hecuba denied that this is possible (592-602).

Human beings know what is good and know what is evil by comparing evil with the good.

Can events be evil? If this is true, does necessity cause evil?

Notes on vocabulary: Give an assignment to look up and write sentences using the following words that appear in the prologue and the first scene.

disembodied	intact	rooted up	wraith	novice
demagogue	hypocrite	embittered	rite	yoke
vengeance	revenge	sanctuary	kneading	

Week 1, Day 4: (Day 2 of Play reading)

Vocabulary Activity words from *kakos*, bad and *kalos*, good, beautiful or noble.

Cacophony calligraphy

Week 2, Days 1 and 2: Aristotle and *Hecuba*.

Teacher's references: Janko's translation of Aristotle's *Poetics*, Cornford's translation of Plato's *Republic*, Bill Moyers' interview with Martha Nussbaum. Janko's introduction to the *Poetics* includes a discussion of Plato's attack on poetry and Aristotle's response.

General remarks: The Moyers-Nussbaum interview makes good points on the ability of Greek drama to address universal themes. An example in *Hecuba* would be the conflict the queen has between seeking revenge for her son's and daughter's death and refraining from doing evil. Revenge involves murder, but murder is evil.

Aristotle differentiates between poetry (which includes drama) and history by saying that the latter deals in particulars whereas the former deals in universals. However, the definition of a universal as a type of thing that a person might do or say as a result of probability or necessity (Janko, 12) could be applied to the way that Thucydides constructed the speeches.

Activities and projects for students. These could be done individually or in small groups and presented to the class.

Compare and contrast *Hecuba* to the following parts of the *Poetics*.

1. Definition of Tragedy (*Poetics*, 1449b VI)

A serious and complete action using people acting and not narration which obtains catharsis by means of pity and terror.

Find examples of narration and acting. Use references to gestures in the Odysseus-Hecuba scene.

2. The six parts of tragedy (*Poetics* VI)

Spectacle, song, diction, plot, characters, reasoning.

Find examples of the first two topics.

3. The nature of Plot (*Poetics* VII, VII, VIII, IX)
 - Does this play represent a single complete action of heroic magnitude?
 - Is the plot unified?
 - Are there universals? (e.g., Emotions, predicaments involving choices)

4. Parts of a Plot (*Poetics* XI, XII, XIII)
 - Reversal, recognition and suffering.
 - Which type of change of fortune is present?
 - Good man going from good to bad fortune.
 - Moderately bad man going from bad fortune to good fortune.
 - Very bad man going from good fortune to bad fortune.
 - The role of error (*hamartia*)
 - The best plot involves a change from good to bad fortune which is not caused by evil or wickedness on the part of the character, but is caused by an error.

5. Types of character (*Poetics* XV)
 - Characters should be good. A woman character can be good, but is inferior.
 - Characters must act appropriately. A man can be manly or clever, but not a woman. Slaves are worthless.
 - Characters must be life-like and act in a consistent manner.
 - Students should discuss how an audience should react to a female slave.

6. The Complication and the Solution of the tragedy (*Poetics* XVIII).
 - The complication is the part from the beginning to the point that moves toward good or bad fortune. (In *Hecuba*, there are many points that could fit.)
 - The solution is the point of the beginning of the transformation to the end.

7. The Function of Tragedy (Reconstruction of *Poetics* II, 2)
 - Tragedy reduces the emotions of pity and terror by using compassion and dread .
 - Tragedy's purpose is catharsis. This catharsis causes the pleasure tragedy gives.
 - Students should discuss to what extent compassion and dread are present in the play and whether or not *Hecuba* is evil.

Week 3: Sample Thucydides lesson.

Teachers reference: Plato's *Apology* for Socrates' opinions on giving lessons on rhetoric for money.

Comments on Thucydides.

Pericles' Funeral Oration is an eloquent statement of the ideals and accomplishments of Athens. The Athenians think men must participate in government. Also the Athenians are restrained and respect the differences of others.

The following section describes the plague that hit Athens with terrible results. The sickness (*nosis*) causes the Athenians to become dehumanized: they don't respect the dead, they neglect funeral customs. Worst of all, people lose hope and act in irresponsible and sometimes even criminal ways. Following the plague, Athens begins a downward course.

There are similarities with concerns in *Hecuba*:

The Melian dialogue: Athens is afraid of seeming weak to her allies and uses this as justification for the attack. Athens says the strong rule whatever they can, that it is a law of nature that the strong do what they want and the weak must obey. Compare this to Odysseus and Hecuba.

Sophists: Pericles criticizes them and says that selling instructions on how to argue is wrong.

Use the Perseus Project Maps and Atlas section to get an enlarged view of the Athens area (Attica).

Locate Athens, Corinth, Plataea, Delphi, Eleusis and Mycenae. These are shown by dots on the map.

Point out Euboea.

Read II. 34-46 Pericles' Funeral Oration and the Plague (II. 47-55)

Answer the questions:

Who was Pericles? (This could be done as a student report.)

Why was he chosen to give the speech?

Why does Pericles think it's a bad idea to honor the dead with a speech?

How and why might the speaker be criticized by those who know the dead and by those who don't know the dead?

Up to what point can individuals endure the praise of others?

Why should the ancestors, the fathers and present day Athenians be praised?

Pericles (II.37) says he will have 3 topics: the Athenian spirit, the way of life and government of Athens and the praise of the dead. First he deals with the government. Students should answer the following questions.

What kind of government does Athens have?

Is everyone equal before the law?

How does one get a position of power?

Poverty is not shameful. What is shameful? (Discuss modern attitudes toward the poor.)

Do Athenians meddle in the affairs of their neighbors? (What if your

neighbor did something that was very different – but still legal.)
What sort of unwritten laws are there which must not be broken. Can you mention any customs that were broken in *Hecuba*?
What contests are there for Athenians?
What objects of beauty are there in the homes?
How does Athens differ from Sparta?
Do Athenians participate actively in the state? What does Pericles think about people who aren't interested in politics?
Why is Athens an education to Greece? Compare this to John Winthrop's view of the new Massachusetts colony being a "city on a hill".
In speaking of the dead, why does Pericles think they have done more good in death than whatever amount of bad they had done in life?
Finally, what are the duties of women? Would Pericles be called sexist today?

The Oration is followed directly by a description of the Plague. The effect on the Athenians is that they lose their respect for customs such as honoring the dead, providing for proper burial, following the laws and living a moderate life.

If there is time, a contrast can be made with Pericles' speech on war (I.140-144)

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