**Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Directions: Read and annotate the Parados, the first ode from Oedipus Rex. Then, answer the questions that follow.**

Strophe 1

Chorus:

What is God singing in his profound

Delphi of gold and shadow?

What oracle for Thebes, the sunwhipped city?

Fear unjoints me, the roots of my heart tremble

Now I remember, O Healer, your power, and wonder:

Will you send doom like a sudden cloud, or weave it

Like nightfall of past?

Speak, speak to us, issue of holy sound:

Dearest to our expectancy: be tender!

1. What is the Chorus concerned about most in the first three lines of Strophe 1? How does the chorus feel about it?
2. The “healer” is another name for Apollo. In these lines, what two sides of Apollo does the chorus consider?

Antistrophe 1

Let me pray to Athena, the immortal daughter of Zeus,

And to Artemis her sister

Who keeps her famous throne in the market ring,

And to Apollo, bowman at the far butts of heaven—

O gods, descend! Like three streams leap against

The Fires of our grief, the fires of darkness;

Be swift to bring us rest!

As in the old time from the brilliant house

Of air you stepped to save us, come again!

1. What three gods does the chorus call on here?
2. What does the chorus want from the gods?
3. Why do you think the chorus calls on more than one god at all?

Strophe 2

Now our afflictions have no end

Now all our stricken hosts lies down

And no man fights off death with his mind;

The noble plowland bears no grain,

And groaning mothers cannot bear—

See, how our lives like birds take wing,

Like sparks that fly when a fire soars,

To the shore of the god of evening.

1. What is the main idea of this strophe? What message is the chorus trying to send?
2. What specific details do they use to illustrate that image?

Antistrophe 2

The plague burns on, it is pitiless,

Though pallid children laden with death

Lie unwept in the stony ways,

And old gray women by every path

Flock to the strand about the altars

There to strike their breasts and cry

Worship of Phoebus (Apollo) in wailing prayers:

Be kind, Gods’ golden child!

1. What do you think the lines “though pallid children laden with death/lie unwept in stony ways” means?
2. What does the chorus want from the god in this section?

Strophe 3

There are no swords in this attack by fire,

No shields, but we are ringed with cries.

Send the besieger plunging form our homes

Into the vast sea room of the Atlantic

Or into the waves that foam eastward of Thrace—

For the day ravages what the night spares—

Destroy our enemy, lord of the thunder!

Let him be riven by lightening from heaven!

1. This section gives us a reason for why the chorus is calling on the gods, and not fighting their enemy themselves. What is that reason?

Antistrophe 3

Phoebus Apollo, stretch the sun’s bowstring,

That golden cord, until it sing for us,

Flashing arrows in heaven! Artemis, Huntress,

Race with flaring lights upon our mountains!

O scarlet god, O golden-banded brow,

O Theban Bacchus in a storm of Maenads,

Whirl upon Death, that all the Undying hate!

Come with blinding torches, come in joy!

1. This last section of the parados ends with a lot of exclamation points, suggesting that the chorus is getting really excited and passionate. What is the Chorus’s final hope? What do they want the gods to do?