Overview: The idea of myths is strong in Greek traditions and most well known with Sophocles and the other classic mythology stories. ***However, is the power of myth still prevalent today? Has it stayed the same, or evolved in some way?*** To help us explore this, we will consider *Antigone* in relationship to *Star Wars*. We will study the film and some other crucial mentor texts, discuss and compare, and finally reflect on the idea of “myth” as a literary form and element of the human condition.

Opening Question: ***How would you define myth?***

Star Wars: Modernity and the Timelessness of Myth.

Introduction: The popular Star Wars series contains many similarities with Sophocles Opedial trilogy or the ancient myth itself. The central character Luke Skywalker, is compelled by destiny and a burning inner desire to become a member of the ancient but dying order of Jedi Knights. In the tradition of ancient Greek tragedy the conflict Luke is engrossed in is a war of good vs. evil as he becomes a member of the Rebel forces battling the powerful and relentless forces of the Empire. To do so he must journey to a far off mysterious planet to gain the wisdom of the ancient Yoda (compare to the oracle of Apollo) who teaches him the secret of the "Force"-- a universal energy something akin perhaps to the stoic notion of the "Logos". Soon he finds himself on a mission to save a Princess belonging to the old, and presumably legitimate, royal family who has fallen into the hands of the Empire and the notorious Darth Vader. Luke does rescue the princess and soon falls in love with her only to find later that he is her brother. Likewise, throughout the film Darth Vader has a strange preoccupation with the fledgling knight and seems to have a premonition that he will perhaps be the one who will precipitate his death (compare with Laius in Sophocles plays). In a dramatic duel to the death with Darth Vader Luke later discovers that his arch nemesis is none other than his father himself. While our modern day Oedipus may be able to avoid breaking the incestuous taboo Darth Vader does die in the duel--the riddle of the Sphinx being perhaps none other than the mystery of his life itself.

Things to consider:

* Do we have myths? If so what are they?
* Biblical stories as potential myths.
* How Greek dramas have a timeless nature of humanistic themes.

Focus Questions for the Film and *Antigone*:

1. What is more important? The dilemmas of the dictates of the state or the dictates of conscience?
2. If there had to be some form of “just conflict,” should that conflict take the form of a war or of civil disobedience?
3. Where or what is the basis for the state's (government’s) authority? Consider Creon’s motivations and desires for Thebes as compare to that in Star Wars…
4. How does Luke Skywalker's motives/dilemma compare with that of Antigone?
5. How do the outcomes/consequences of Luke and Antigone’s respective actions compare?
6. What traditions/prescriptions of Greek tragedy seem to influence Lucas' work?
7. What might "The Force" symbolize? Compare Luke's certitude with Hann Solo's scepticism? Might we say that Luke possesses a form of faith? A poetic certainty that everyone else in the film lacks and this sets him apart? Consider this in relationship to Antigone’s view of the gods.
8. Compare the way Luke is viewed by his peers for pursing the archaic discipline of the Jedi Knights and the way Antigone is viewed as being extreme in her conviction by those around her.
9. Did the fact that the central characters oppressors were close to him or her intensify the drama of their decision?
10. What does each of these pieces suggest about moral decisions?
11. Is war ever just? When is it right to question authority? How do we discern what is just?
12. Compare Luke Skywalker's Motives with those of Antigone. How are they similar? How are they different?
13. Is Star Wars considered a myth? If so, how? Has the idea of myth evolved or changed in our contemporary culture, especially with new media technology?