The famous Grecian theme is a key feature of Greek writing. The idea is that two opposing absolutes can not be resolved, the two can not be united. In the Greek plays, the downfall of the protagonist is always the excessive pride or hubris. Because of pride, the hapless main character fails to realize that the two opposing forces can not be taken as absolutes or they will never be reconciled. This pride and consequences have been the downfall of literary characters throughout the ages, from Hamlet to Rachel of Toni Morrison’s *Beloved*.

An idea could not be so prevalent throughout culture and history if it were not true in the real world. Indeed, pride does lead to downfall. Pride closes the process of rational thought, preventing a man from realizing his failures and that inherent danger until beyond the procedure of disaster. Pride is powerful and vicious, refusing to allow a strong man to yield in the face of overwhelming odds. It is amazing that an enemy of success and happiness which is so well understood can still create problems today.

Bill Clinton may not have been impeached, had he not been too proud to admit to the American people that he was truly sorry. Across the political spectrum, Newt Gingrich may not have had to resign had he not been too proud to admit that his political tactics were wrong. As Sophocles wrote, evil can be repaired but the crime lies in pride.

Pride and its consequences are not only limited to individuals but can in fact encompass entire nations. The refusal of top Human officials and much of
the German army to admit defeat near the end of WWII led to the annihilation of much of Germany at the end of the war. The German people were too proud to give up. Similarly, pride prevented America, leaders and officials from admitting error in Viet Nam and making repairs. It led to the final, ultimate disgrace of the flight from Saigon as it fell.

It is no wonder our heroes are far from overly proud. The humble Mark McGuire and unassuming Sammy Sosa captivated the minds and hearts of America with their unbelievable performace and continual humility. The humble Michael Jordan is always overlooked while the flashy and proud Dennis Rodman often goes unrecognized for his amazing skill. People recognize a strength and desirable trait in the humble individual.

At the same time many complain that a large problem in the world today is the prevalence of excessive pride. Japan is still too proud to accept blame for bringing America into WWII. Such pride always hinders the healing process, old wounds are left open, it is impossible to forgive someone who is too proud to admit guilt. The problems are never really solved when pride gets in the way.

The examples are many, yet it is easy to look at them and miss the point. Pride prevents the solution to problems from being found. Pride makes forgiveness and healing hard. Pride puts too much focus on one side, and in any type of conflict it is compromise and shared vision which will be the final solution to the problems.
It seems that if the many writers over the ages were attempting to teach us all a lesson, too many failed to understand it. Sophocles, Shakespeare, and the many modern writers all attempted to give examples of how pride hinders and even with many modern historical examples, it seems there is still too much excessive pride in the world. Pride is a part of human nature. But we must learn its dangers. As Seneca goes on to say, later in 'Antigone,' the willow survives where the proud oak does not because when the wind gets too strong, the willow bends while the oak breaks.
Men are fallible beings, constantly prone to mistakes and errors. But amidst these constant mistakes, what separates those who survive and learn from those mistakes from those who witness a downfall? The blind prophet Tiresias in Sophocles' play Antigone provides a surprise explanation: pride. According to the prophet, pride separates the foolish from the wise, the good from the evil, the successful from the doomed. From early days of the Greeks and the Romans to our contemporary age, the theme of pride can be found in literature and history as it relates to a character's eventual downfall or tragedy.

In the second episode of the Oedipus Trilogy (Antigone, the third), the main character Oedipus promises to find his own downfall through his son, character八个: pride. Amidst the warnings from oracles and prophets (including the blind prophet Tiresias), Oedipus continues to deny the truth. Unbeknownst to him at the time, Oedipus is indeed the murderer of his previous king. But his pride and stubbornness lead to a sudden, harsh revelation: that he killed the truth and was undeservedly steered down as king. Oedipus possibly could have avoided his own disgraceful exile. In the end, Oedipus blinded himself and left his kingdom never to return.

In Elizabethan times, the theme of pride continued to flourish. In Shakespeare's tragedy Romeo and Juliet, the constant feud between the Montagues and the Capulets results in the deaths of a man outside both families -- Mercutio. After a harmless duel that begins as playful dialogue, Mercutio curses both families only seconds before
Write in the box the number of the question you are answering on this page as it is designated in the examination.

"WW2"

dying, yet the feud rages on. Both families, unwilling to reach a compromise, indirectly caused the death of an outsider. Kurt Vonnegut, a contemporary author, writes: "If there really was a Merkin, and there really is a paradise, he'd be there discussing with the Vietnam casualties on the subject of what it's like to die for other people's foolishness and pride." Vonnegut relates the Merkin tragedy to a contemporary example of a tragic result of pride: the Vietnam War. Caught between the powerful U.S. and Communist government, soldiers lost their lives.

Even today, as we observe this day, at this very hour, are our manners of pride rage on, will the Kosovo crisis or the fighting in Northern Ireland result in death and tragedy? Most likely. If it is in the world's interest to avoid tragedy, let it heed Terence's warning to "know when the course is wrong and repair the evil."