



The Prince by Niccolò Machiavelli

Study Questions

Dedication

1. What does Machiavelli offer to “The magnificent Lorenzo de’ Medici” instead of the customary treasures?
2. What is Machiavelli’s purpose for writing the book?

Chapter 1

3. Give an example of an entirely new hereditary state.
4. Give an example of an new state annexed to a hereditary state.

Chapter 8

5. What cannot be called a “talent”?
6. Explain the reasons for Oliverotto’s guilt.
7. A leader who does not commit all his atrocities at once is compelled to...?
8. How should a prince “live among his people”?

Chapter 9

9. What do the nobles do “seeing they cannot withstand the people”?
10. Why should a prince fear his nobles?
11. What should a prince always guard against?
12. According to Machiavelli, what is it that a prince must be sure to do?
13. What is the principle danger in changing types of government?

Chapter 14

14. What does the study of war do?
15. Because there is _____ between _____ and _____.
16. List the skills that a great leader must acquire.
17. How can imitation bring glory?

Chapter 15

18. Hence it is necessary for a prince wishing to hold his own to _____, and make use of it or not according to _____.
19. According to Machiavelli then, virtue can be abandoned, because if it is followed it can bring about _____.

Chapter 16

20. Machiavelli offers a caveat about being liberal explain all the problems attached to being generous.
21. Explain the wisdom behind being mean.
22. Identify the two cases of generosity that Machiavelli delineates.
23. Why does “liberality” waste quickly?

Chapter 17

24. Princes should be careful to _____ and not mind the _____.
25. Translate Virgil's Latin verse as per notes in the back of the book and then explain how this relates to Machiavelli's overarching principal.
26. What is the warning that Machiavelli issues about friendship that has been bought?
27. Machiavelli believes that men will sooner forgive the killing of their fathers than unjustified seizing of property. is this true? Explain your answer.
28. Why was Alexander great?
29. What must a prince avoid?

Chapter 18

30. Who raised Achilles and other princes of old so that they knew how to behave in ways that were half man and half beast?
31. How is Machiavelli's ideal for human behavior antithetical to Erasmus's?
32. If, then Machiavelli believes in original sin, what does that mean he believes about all men?
33. What could happen if a person always appeared to have good qualities?
34. What are the five qualities a man should appear to have?

Chapter 19

35. What is it that makes a ruler the most and contemptible?
36. How should a wise ruler defend against internal attacks?
37. How should a wise ruler defend against external attacks?
38. What is the third difficulty that Roman emperors had to put up with?
39. Why did Alexander become despised, and what was the consequences of this?
40. How did Severus punish Albinus?
41. Why was Antonius hated and feared?
42. Why should it have been easy for Commodus to hold the empire?
43. What is it that makes the Turk so strong?

Chapter 21

44. Summarize the deeds of Ferdinand of Aragon, The King of Spain, that made him a good prince.
45. What should be a prince's primary endeavor?
46. What is the caveat that Machiavelli offers about declaring for one side or another?
47. Explain Machiavelli's theory about neutrality.
48. What is the importance of decisions made with prudence?
49. How can a prince show his favor?

Chapter 23

50. According to Machiavelli, what is the best way to avoid flatterers?
51. Paraphrase the specific example Machiavelli uses to illustrate his principle.
52. What skill should a prince avoid when asking for advice?