

Prince Questions
Humanities
Mr. George

1. What two (2) animals must a prince be like? Why?
2. When should a “wise prince” not keep his pledge? How does Machiavelli justify that it is sometimes appropriate to break a pledge?
3. List the (5) five qualities a prince should *seem* to possess.
4. What type of disposition (character) should a prince have? Why?
5. In your opinion, does Machiavelli put a great deal of emphasis on appearance? Explain and cite examples.

Focus:

Would you vote for a presidential candidate who said publicly that officials should not hesitate to lie to the voters if their lies were in the best interests of the nation?

This question is particularly relevant in our study of Machiavelli, because Machiavelli urged rulers to lie to their subjects when expedient.

“Everyone knows how praiseworthy it is for a [ruler] to keep his word to live honestly and not be deceitful. Nevertheless, experience shows that princes in our times who have done great things have cared little for honesty; they have known how to confuse men’s minds with their cleverness and have finally defeated those who put their faith in honesty.”

“A prudent ruler ought not to keep faith when to do so would be disadvantageous and when the reasons for making promises no longer exist.”

“[A prince] should seem to be pious, faithful, humane, honest, religious, and to be so. But he should have his mind prepared that when occasion requires, he is able to change to the opposite.”

Write a short reaction to the scenarios below to the ruler in the spirit of Machiavelli.

- ❖ The United States has been at war in Vietnam for five years. Most citizens want the war to end, and the President has promised to end the war and halt bombing raids. The military, responding to information that the enemy is using a secret route through an adjoining country to supply its forces, wants authority to bomb the route.
- ❖ A noble was raised in one religion but stands to inherit the throne of his country. He must, however, give up his religion and convert to the religion of the majority of his subjects.