**Introduction and Directions**

Niccolò Machiavelli’s book *The Prince* was written as a guide for how to be an effective ruler, and to stay in power. Some see his advice as **cruel and heartless**, while others see it as **straightforward and realistic**. Read the following quotes from *The Prince* by Niccolò Machiavelli. For each, answer the question about the quote, and then discuss whether or not you agree with his advice and why. Remember these are guidelines for a ruler, whose main goal is to maintain power.

**NOTE:** The word “Prince” here is meant to refer to any type of ruler in general.

“Men should be treated in such a way that there’s no fear of their seeking revenge—either well-treated so that they won’t want revenge or utterly crushed so that they won’t be capable of it.

Why does Machiavelli think people should be either treated very well or completely destroyed? Why not something in between?

Agree/Disagree:

“A prince, then, [should not] devote any of his serious time or energy to anything but war and how to wage it. This is the only thing that is appropriate for a ruler, and it has so much [value] that it not only enables those who are born princes to stay on their thrones but also, often, enables ordinary citizens to become princes. And on the other hand it’s clear that princes who have given more thought to life’s refinements (luxuries) than to arms (weapons, war) have lost their states

Why does Machiavelli value war so highly for a ruler?

Agree/Disagree:
“Open-handedness (generosity, free-spending) with wealth eats itself up faster than anything: the more you do it, the less you have to do it with. So you end up poor and despised (hated), or else (because of the means you took to avoid poverty) [greedy] and hated. A prince should, above all, protect himself from being despised and hated; and open-handedness with wealth leads you to both. So it is wiser to have a reputation for miserliness (being cheap), which brings criticism without hatred, than to be led by the pursuit of a reputation for open-handedness to get a reputation that brings criticism and hatred.”

According to Machiavelli, how will being generous in spending make a ruler hated? Wouldn’t it make the ruler loved?

Agree/Disagree:

“A question arises out of this, namely: Is it better to be loved than feared or better to be feared than loved? Well, one would like to be both; but it’s difficult for one person to be both feared and loved, and when a choice has to be made it is safer to be feared… And men are less hesitant about letting down someone they love than in letting down someone they fear, because love affects men’s behaviour only through the thought of how they ought to behave, and men are a low-down lot for whom that thought has no power to get them to do anything they find inconvenient; whereas fear affects their behaviour through the thought of possible punishment, and that thought never loses its power.”

Meaning:

Agree/Disagree:

ANSWER THIS: In general, do you think Machiavelli’s advice is good advice or bad advice? If you were a ruler, would you follow it? Would you want your ruler to follow it?