



Oxford Cambridge and RSA

Tuesday 21 June 2022 – Morning

A Level Drama and Theatre

H459/41 Deconstructing Texts for Performance
Antigone

Time allowed: 1 hour 45 minutes



No extra materials are needed.



Please write clearly in black ink. **Do not write in the barcodes.**

Centre number Candidate number

First name(s) _____

Last name _____

INSTRUCTIONS

- Use black ink. You can use an HB pencil, but only for annotation lines.
- Write your answer to each question in the space provided. If you need extra space use the lined pages at the end of this booklet. The question numbers must be clearly shown.
- Answer **all** the questions.

INFORMATION

- The total mark for this paper is **60**.
- The marks for each question are shown in brackets [].
- This document has **16** pages.

ADVICE

- Read each question carefully before you start your answer.

<i>Antigone:</i>	You're twisting too hard now. It doesn't even hurt. I just can't feel my arm.	
	<i>CREON looks at her and lets go of her, smiling.</i>	5
<i>Creon</i>	<i>(low):</i> Heaven knows I've got other demands on my time today, but I'm going to spend however long it takes to save you, you little pest.	10
	<i>He makes her sit on a chair in the middle of the room, then takes off his jacket and advances on her in his shirtsleeves, heavy, powerful.</i>	15
	There are plenty of urgent matters to attend to after a failed revolution, you know. But they can wait. I don't want you to die mixed up in a political scandal. You deserve better than that. Because it is only a political scandal, you know – this brother of yours, this forlorn ghost, this body decomposing as the guards watch over it ...	20
	All this pathos you get so worked up about. I may not be soft, but I am particular – I like things to be clean, neat, wholesome. Don't you think I'm as revolted as you are by that flesh rotting in the sun? You can smell it in the palace already, at night when the wind blows from the sea. It makes me feel quite sick. But I shan't even shut my window. The whole business is not only horrible, but also – between ourselves – abysmally stupid. But it's necessary that Thebes should smell the body for a while. I myself would have preferred to have your brother buried, just for reasons of hygiene. But to make those clods I govern understand what's what, the city has to stink of Polynices' corpse for a month.	25
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		35
		40
		45
		50

<i>Antigone:</i>	You're loathsome.	
<i>Creon:</i>	Yes, child. It's my job. Whether that job should or shouldn't be done is a matter for discussion. But if it is done, it has to be done like this.	55 60
<i>Antigone:</i>	Why do you have to do it?	
<i>Creon:</i>	One morning I woke up King of Thebes. Though heaven knows there were things in life I loved better than power.	65
<i>Antigone:</i>	Then you should have said no!	
<i>Creon:</i>	I might have. But suddenly I felt like a workman refusing a job. It didn't seem right. I said yes.	70
<i>Antigone:</i>	That's your look-out. I didn't say yes! What do I care about your politics and what you 'have' to do and all your paltry affairs! I can still say no to anything I don't like, and I alone am the judge. You, with your crown and your guards and your paraphernalia – all you can do, because you said yes, is have me put to death.	75 80
<i>Creon:</i>	Listen –	
<i>Antigone:</i>	I needn't if I don't want to. There's nothing more you can tell me. But you drink in every word I say. If you don't summon your guards it's because you want to hear me out.	85 90
<i>Creon:</i>	Huh!	
<i>Antigone:</i>	You're not amused – you're afraid. That's why you're trying to save me. It would suit you best to keep me here in the palace, alive but silent. You're too sensitive to be a tyrant. But just the same, as you know very well, you're going to have me put to death presently. And that's why you're afraid. Not a pretty sight, a man who's afraid.	95 100
<i>Creon</i>	<i>(dully):</i> All right – I am afraid.	

	Afraid you won't change your mind and I'll have to have you killed. And I don't want to.	105
<i>Antigone:</i>	I don't have to do what I don't want to! Perhaps you'd rather not have refused my brother a grave either? ... Well?	110
<i>Creon:</i>	I've told you already.	
<i>Antigone:</i>	But you did it just the same! And now, though you'd rather not, you're going to have me put to death. Is that what it means to be a king?	115
<i>Creon:</i>	Yes!	
<i>Antigone:</i>	Poor Creon. And I, with my broken nails, and the bruises your guards have made on my arms, and my stomach all knotted up with fear – I'm a queen.	120
<i>Creon:</i>	Have pity on me, then, and live. Your brother's body rotting under my windows is a high enough price to pay for law and order. My son loves you. I've paid enough. Don't force me to pay with you too.	125 130
<i>Antigone:</i>	No. You said yes. You'll never stop paying!	
<i>Creon</i>	<i>(suddenly shaking her, beside himself):</i> For God's sake! Try to understand for a minute, you little fool! I've tried hard enough to understand you! Someone has to say yes. Someone has to steer the ship. It's letting in water on all sides. It's full of crime and stupidity and suffering. The rudder's adrift. The crew won't obey orders – all they're interested in is looting the cargo. The officers are busy building a comfortable raft for themselves and cornering all the fresh water. But the mast's split, the wind's howling, the sails will soon be in shreds, and the whole lot of them will die together because they think of nothing but their own	135 140 145 150 155

	skins and their own petty concerns. And do you really think this is the moment for fine distinctions? Do you think there's time to debate whether you say yes or no, to wonder whether some day the price isn't going to be too high, whether afterwards you're going to be able to call yourself a man again? No! You grab the tiller, you stand up to the mountains of water, you shout an order – and if you're attacked you shoot the first comer. The first comer! He hasn't got a name. He's like the wave that's just broken over the deck, like the wind tearing at your limbs. He may be the man who smiled at you and gave you a light yesterday. He hasn't got a name any more. And neither have you, as you hang on desperately to the tiller. The only things that have got a name now are the ship and the storm. Do you understand?	160 165 170 175 180 185
<i>Antigone</i>	(<i>shaking her head</i>): I don't want to. It's all very well for you, but I'm not here to understand. I'm here to say no to you, and to die.	190
<i>Creon</i> :	It's easy to say no!	
<i>Antigone</i> :	Not always.	
<i>Creon</i> :	To say yes you have to sweat, roll up your sleeves, grab hold of life, plunge in up to the neck. It's easy to say no, even if it means dying. All you have to do is keep still and wait. Wait to live. Wait to die, even. It's feeble! – something human beings have thought up for themselves. Can you imagine a world where trees have said no to the sap? Where the animals have said no to the instincts of hunting and love? Brute beasts at	195 200 205

	least are good and natural and tough. They all jostle each other bravely along the same path. If any fall, others trample them. No matter how many die there'll always be one of every species left to reproduce and follow the same path with the same courage.	210 215
<i>Antigone:</i>	What a dream for a king! To be like an animal! Wouldn't that make life easy!	220
	<i>Pause. CREON looks at her.</i>	
<i>Creon:</i>	You despise me, don't you? <i>(She doesn't answer. He goes on as if to himself.)</i> Funny. I've often imagined having this conversation ... with a pale young man who's tried to kill me ... from whom I can extract nothing but scorn. But I never thought it would be with you, Antigone, and over something so foolish ... <i>(He buries his head in his hands. We realise he is at the end of his tether.)</i> Listen to me for the last time. I'm cast as the villain, and I'm going to have you put to death. But before I do I want you to be sure of your role. Do you know why you're going to die, Antigone? Do you realise what a squalid story it is you're going to put your poor little bloodstained name to – for ever?	225 230 235
	<i>Pause.</i>	
<i>Antigone:</i>	What do you mean?	240 245
<i>Creon:</i>	The story of your brothers, Eteocles and Polynices. You think you know it, but you don't. No one in Thebes knows except me. But I think that this morning you too have the right to know. <i>(He meditates for a moment, his head in his hands, his elbows resting on his knees. As if to himself.)</i> It's not pretty. <i>(Dully, not looking at</i>	255 260

	ANTIGONE.) To start with, what do you remember about your brothers? You probably remember two boys who looked down on you and wouldn't let you play with them ... who broke your dolls and were always whispering secrets together to make you jealous ...?	265
<i>Antigone:</i>	They were older than I was ...	
<i>Creon:</i>	Later on, I suppose, you were impressed by their first cigarettes and their first long trousers. Then they started to go out in the evenings, to act like men, not to take any notice of you ...?	275
<i>Antigone:</i>	I was only a girl ...	
<i>Creon:</i>	You saw your mother weep, your father get angry. You heard your brothers slam the door when they came home, and guffaw all along the corridors. They'd lurk past making feeble jokes and reeking of wine ...	280
<i>Antigone:</i>	Once I hid behind the door. We'd just got up, and they'd just come home. Polynices saw me. He was pale, with shining eyes – so handsome in his evening clothes! He gave me a big paper flower he'd brought home with him from the party.	285
<i>Creon:</i>	And you kept it, didn't you? And last night, before you went out, you opened the drawer and looked at it, to help you summon up your courage?	290
<i>Antigone</i>	(<i>with a start</i>): Who told you?	295
<i>Creon:</i>	Poor Antigone! You and your paper flower! Do you know what your brother was really like?	300
<i>Antigone:</i>	I knew you'd say horrible things about him!	305
		310

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ADDITIONAL ANSWER SPACE

If additional space is required, you should use the following lined page(s). The question number(s) must be clearly shown in the margin(s).

A large rectangular area with a vertical solid line on the left side and horizontal dotted lines across the rest of the page, providing space for writing answers.



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