



Oxford Cambridge and RSA

Wednesday 14 June 2023 – 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>	Just rest your hand on my cheek – like this. (<i>She keeps her eyes closed for a moment.</i>) There, I'm not afraid any more. Not of the wicked ogre, nor of the bogey man, nor of the Pied Piper. (<i>Pause. Change of tone.</i>) Nurse, you know Floss ... ?	5
<i>Nurse:</i>	Don't talk to me about that blessed dog. Pawmarks over everything. Oughtn't to be allowed in the house.	10
<i>Antigone:</i>	Promise you won't grumble at her any more. Even if she leaves pawmarks everywhere.	15
<i>Nurse:</i>	You mean I'm to let her ruin everything and not say a word?	20
<i>Antigone:</i>	Yes.	
<i>Nurse:</i>	No, that's too much – !	
<i>Antigone:</i>	You're quite fond of her really. And you enjoy polishing and scrubbing – you wouldn't like it if everything was always spick and span ...	25
<i>Nurse:</i>	What if she wets my carpets?	
<i>Antigone:</i>	Promise not to scold her even then. Please, Nan.	30
<i>Nurse:</i>	You know how to get round people, don't you?	
<i>Antigone:</i>	And I want you to talk to her too.	
<i>Nurse</i>	(<i>shrugging</i>): Talk to brute beasts!	35
<i>Antigone:</i>	Not as if she's a brute beast! As I do ... As if she were a real person.	
<i>Nurse:</i>	Play the fool like that at my age? But why?	40
<i>Antigone</i>	(<i>gently</i>): Well, if for some reason or other I couldn't talk to her myself any more.	
<i>Nurse</i>	(<i>not understanding</i>): What do you mean? Why not?	45
<i>Antigone</i>	(<i>first looking away, then in a harsher voice</i>): But if she's too miserable ... if she keeps waiting with her nose glued	50

to the door like when I go out without her – then perhaps it would be best to have her put to sleep.

Nurse: Have Floss put to sleep?
Whatever's the matter with you this morning?

Enter HAEMON.

Antigone: Here's Haemon. Leave us, Nan. And don't forget what you promised.

Exit NURSE.

Antigone (running over to HAEMON): Forgive me for quarrelling yesterday evening, Haemon. And for everything. It was my fault. Please forgive me.

Haemon: You know I'd forgiven you as soon as you'd gone out and slammed the door! The perfume you were wearing was still in the air, and I'd forgiven you already. (*He takes her in his arms, smiles, looks at her.*) Who did you steal it from, that scent?

Antigone: Ismene.

Haemon: And the lipstick, the powder, the pretty dress?

Antigone: Ismene.

Haemon: And what was it all in aid of?

Antigone: I'll tell you presently. (*She nestles closer to him.*) Oh, my darling, how stupid I've been! A whole beautiful evening wasted.

Haemon: There'll be others.

Antigone: Will there?

Haemon: Other quarrels too. Happiness is full of them.

Antigone: Happiness ... Listen, Haemon.

Haemon: Yes, Antigone.

Antigone: Don't laugh this morning. Be serious.

Haemon: I am serious.

Antigone: And hold me tight. Tighter than ever before. Give me all your strength.

<i>Haemon:</i>	There ... All my strength ...	100
<i>Antigone:</i>	Ah ... (<i>They remain silent for a moment.</i>) Haemon, you know the little boy we would have had ...?	
<i>Haemon:</i>	Yes.	105
<i>Antigone:</i>	You know I'd have shielded him against everything?	
<i>Haemon:</i>	Yes.	
<i>Antigone:</i>	I'd have held him so tight he'd never have been afraid – not of the creeping dark, nor of the unmoving sun, nor of the shadows. He'd have had an unkempt, skinny little mother, but one who was safer than all the real mothers put together, with their real bosoms and their nice big aprons! You believe me, don't you?	110 115 120
<i>Haemon:</i>	Yes, my love.	
<i>Antigone:</i>	And you do believe you'd have had a real wife?	
<i>Haemon</i>	(<i>holding her</i>): I've got one already.	125
<i>Antigone:</i>	Oh Haemon, you did love me that evening, didn't you?	
<i>Haemon</i>	(<i>gently</i>): Which evening?	
<i>Antigone:</i>	You are sure, aren't you, that when you came and found me at the dance, you didn't pick the wrong girl? You're sure you've never regretted it, never thought – even deep down, even once – that you ought really to have asked Ismene?	130 135
<i>Haemon:</i>	Don't be silly!	
<i>Antigone:</i>	You do love me, don't you? Your arms don't lie, nor the smell of you, nor this heavenly warmth, nor the confidence that fills me when I lean my head on your shoulder?	140 145
<i>Haemon:</i>	Yes, Antigone. I love you.	
<i>Antigone:</i>	I'm so dark and thin. Ismene's pink and gold like an apricot.	
<i>Haemon</i>	(<i>low</i>): Antigone ...	

- Antigone:* Oh, I'm making myself blush. 150
 But this morning I must know.
 When you think how I'm
 going to be yours, do you feel
 a great void growing inside
 you, as if something were 155
 dying?
- Haemon:* Yes.
- Antigone:* So do I. And I want you to
 know I'd have been proud to
 be your wife, the one whose 160
 shoulder you'd have patted
 absent-mindedly as you sat
 down in the evening, as if you
 were patting something that
 was truly yours. (*She moves 165*
away from him and speaks in
a different tone of voice.) So.
 Now two things. And when
 you've heard them you must
 go away without asking any 170
 questions. Even if they seem
 strange. Even if they give you
 pain.
- Haemon:* But what can they be?
- Antigone:* Promise you'll go without 175
 even a backward glance. If
 you love me, promise. (*She*
looks at his shocked, pitiful
expression.) It's the last
 foolishness you'll have to 180
 forgive me.
- Pause.*
- Haemon:* I promise.
- Antigone:* Thank you. Well, to go back
 to yesterday first. You asked 185
 me just now why I was
 wearing Ismene's dress, her
 perfume and make-up. Well,
 I was a fool – I wasn't sure it
 was me you really wanted, 190
 and I was trying to make you
 want me by being more like
 the other girls.
- Haemon:* So that was it!
- Antigone:* Yes. And you laughed, 195
 and we quarrelled. My bad
 temper got the better of me
 and I flounced off. (*Pause.*
Lower.) But I really came to
 see you yesterday evening 200
 so that you might make love

to me – so that I might be
your wife already. Before ...
*(He draws back and is about
to speak, but she cries out.)* 205

You promised not to ask!
(Humbly.) Please ... *(Turning
away; harshly.)* Anyway,
let me explain. I wanted to
become your wife because 210
that's how I love you ... And
because – forgive me for
hurting you, my darling –
because I can never marry
you. 215

*He is dumbfounded. She runs
over to the window and cries
out.*

Haemon, you promised! Go
now. If you speak, or take one 220
step towards me I'll jump out
this window. I swear it on the
head of the son we had in our
dreams. The only son I'll ever
have. Go now, quickly. You'll 225
understand tomorrow. Soon.

*(She sounds so despairing
that HAEMON does as she
says.)* That's right, Haemon,
leave me. It's the only thing 230
you can do now to show that
you love me.

HAEMON *has gone.*
ANTIGONE *stands still, with
her back to the audience,
then shuts the window and
goes and sits on a little
chair in the middle of the
stage. When she speaks she
sounds strangely at peace.* 240

There, Antigone. Now
Haemon's over and done
with.

Enter ISMENE.

Ismene *(calling):* Oh, you're still here! 245

Antigone *(not moving):* Why aren't you
asleep?

Ismene: I couldn't sleep. I was so
afraid you might go and bury
him, even in the light. *(Close.)* 250
Antigone ... little sister ...
here we all are – Haemon,
Nurse, me ... Floss ... We

	love you, we're alive, and we need you! Polynices is dead, and he didn't love you. He was always more a stranger to us than a brother. Forget him, Antigone, as he forgot us! Let Polynices' harsh ghost wander for ever unburied, since that's what Creon decrees. Don't attempt what's beyond your strength. You like to hurl defiance at the whole world, but you're only one small person. Stay with us. Don't go near the place. Please.	255
	ANTIGONE <i>stands up, faintly smiling. She goes over to the door, and there, on the threshold, speaks.</i>	260
Antigone	<i>(quietly):</i> It's too late. This morning, when you saw me, I'd just come back from there.	265
	<i>Exit</i> ANTIGONE. ISMENE <i>runs after her.</i>	270
Ismene:	Antigone!	275
	As soon as ISMENE disappears, CREON and his PAGE enter through another door.	280

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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 horizontal dotted lines for writing, intended for providing additional answer space. A solid vertical line is on the left side, serving as a margin.



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