

# Antigone college essay



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

The first appearance of the sentry comes just after Creon has been drilling in the point to the Senators that anyone caught burying Polynices' body will be given the death penalty, regardless of the circumstances. At this point, as the Sentry, I would enter, taken by two guards; each guard would have grabbed one of my arms. When before Creon, I would shake both arms sharply, to get the soldiers off as they depart, shown in the text as 'struggling with the guards, who bring him before Creon'. I would then remove my cap from my head, and hold it with both hands in front of me, slowly, to show reluctance.

In the ensuing speech, I would be looking downward towards the cap, and passing the cap from hand to hand, in order to show nervousness. I would occasionally look up at Creon, in short, quick, furtive glances. I would speak with a very fast pace and a low tone, almost muttering. I would speak in a colloquial, East London accent, to show that the sentry is a common man, and also to add a bit of humour, as this character is comic relief. When saying 'I said to myself, "the chances are, / Poor sod, you'll cop it when you get there.

"', I would be mumbling quickly into my cap, still looking down. At the end of this line, I would make a cursory glance up at Creon, before hastily averting my gaze downwards again. I would say 'Poor sod' with pauses either side of it; and say the actual line very quickly; this is the sentry making a very short aside, to show self-pity in a light-hearted way. I would aim to make the audience laugh at this line, as it is intended for comic relief. After the somewhat pointless rambling, I would keep the fast pace, and run-on nature of many lines constant for most of the dialogue. For example, when the

sentry first begins to get to the point: ‘ Well, first of all sir, for myself, like, / My own point of view .

. . I never done it, / And I didn’t see who else done it neither. ‘ I would treat every comma as a very brief pause, with words running into each other. The ellipsis would be a pause of the length one would expect from a comma in ‘ normal’ speech. I would look up at Creon on ‘ first of all, sir’, and then look back downwards instantly.

I would then look up to face Creon again on ‘ My own point of view’. As the pause for ellipsis ends, as soon as I began saying ‘ I never... ’, I would snap my head back down again, and resume the fiddling with the cap. I would also shuffle my feet impatiently, to show nerves as well.

When finally admitting that the body had been buried, at ‘ Straight out with it then. The body’s buried. , I would look up and lock eye contact with Creon for ‘ Straight out with it then’, and hold still, not fidgeting or shuffling my feet. The pause between ‘...

it then. ‘ and ‘ The body’s... ’ would be about five seconds long; during which time, I would take a deep breath, and straighten my legs, backbone and arms, so that just before saying ‘ The body’s buried’, I would be stood completely straight and to attention.

My eyes would be opened wide, to show fear as well. Upon delivery of the line ‘ The body’s buried’, I would speak it very quickly and quite loud, blurting it out after the build-up. Immediately after saying this, I would snap my head to look at the cap once more, and the following lines would be

delivered as before; I would relax my muscles, to slouch slightly as before, and speak very quickly and quite quietly. I would resume the fidgeting with the cap and the shuffling of my feet.

When describing the burial, I would again speak very quickly, using many run-on lines to merge sentences to give an idea of a very fast pace, presenting the character as a very nervous one, who is reluctant to get to the actual point. For example, the line ' It was as though the body had disappeared - / Not buried in a proper grave, I don't mean,' shows that I would be anxious to qualify all of my statements with a kind of disclaimer. For the ' Not..

. ', I would look to Creon and raise my hands, the cap in my left hand, and wave them in front of me, palms facing upwards and outstretched as if to say ' stop'; here, I would be gesticulating to ' stop' Creon from thinking the body had been properly buried, and also show my hands as a way of showing innocence and detachment. This would show the audience that the Sentry is so concerned about what he is saying that he sees the need to hastily amend almost every sentence to that Creon cannot get the wrong idea. During the speech, I would use role-play to show the audience both how the sentry wants to dissociate himself from it all, and also to add more comic relief. For example, I would say ' One of us lot must tell the King, / Because we can't just hide it, can we! ' in a different voice; I would speak it in a higher pitch and tone, a variation on the same accent, to add humour and show that the sentry is mocking his fellow soldier.

I would also do a comic turn at this point; I would step aside, and face the opposite direction, as if talking to where I had previously been; this would show that I would be the sentry playing another character more clearly, and also provide a comic effect for the audience. When Creon makes his large, angry speech, I would crouch down, bending my knees and back, keeping my hands close to my body. I would then creep, with slow but long paces backwards away from Creon. I would head stage right, towards a side-door, as if trying to get out.

This would show the audience that I wanted to leave quietly, emphasizing my reluctance to be there. I would do this silently, looking at Creon cautiously, and slowly bending my knees and back lower and lower as I edge away. When Creon says ' You! Come Here! ', I would scamper back towards him; I would remain low, and move with very small, quick steps, like an insect, scurrying across the stage. I would stop about two feet away from Creon, and remain low but still during the rest of the speech. I would wince, screwing up my face and contracting all of my muscles, when he says ' die' in the line ' you, soldier, / Will die for it'. After Creon finishes his speech, I would ask ' Am I allowed to speak sir? ' in a humble manner; a low tone and quiet volume, looking at the floor.

This would show the audience that I, the sentry, would be indecisive as to whether or not to stand up to Creon. On the next line, however; ' Well it can't be earache, / Can it sir, not what I said! , I would suddenly ' perk up'; to do this, I would straighten up completely, straightening my neck, back and knees, put my cap back on in a swift, deft move, and put my hands by my sides. This would mark the turning point for the character; after having been

threatened with death, the sentry would adopt a 'nothing-to-lose' attitude towards Creon, thus he would gain a sense of confidence, as there is nothing more for him to fear. I would therefore stand up to Creon by straightening up as afore-mentioned, and speak with a much more controlled, confident manner; the preamble, stuttering and run-on lines would all disappear. My hands would remain still, and I would maintain eye-contact with Creon.

I would also speak in a very cheeky way; speaking fast, and raising my voice at the end of each sentence. This would show the audience that the sentry has suddenly gained the confidence to stand up to Creon. I would also try to turn the whole argument around, and suddenly make attacks on Creon. To do this, I would emphasise words like 'you', such as 'It must stick in your gullet'. In addition to trying to turn the argument round on Creon, I would also play the Sentry as defending himself, only much more assertively than before; 'I didn't bury the body.'

/ Not guilty to that sir. ' Would be said with a sustained, medium pace, and stated in a manner that suggests it is an obvious fact. To do this, I would stress the word 'I', and also the word 'not'. This would present me, the Sentry, to the audience as someone who is now confident of facts, and that the facts support my argument; rather than bumbling and 'beating about the bush', I would be concise and objective.

In response to his next comment, the line 'I think it's a shame sir, that an intelligent man / And as well educated as you are / Should miss the point so completely', would be delivered very calmly, despite the clear insulting nature of the line; this would show the audience that I would at this point be

very gutsy, and they may think that I am being very foolish. To deliver it 'calmly', I would speak it at a medium-slow pace, and lock eye contact consistently with Creon, speaking with little variation in tone, although clearly enunciating the word 'point', to drill the idea in deeper. I would keep it at the same pace throughout, and step up onto the same level as Creon at 'that an intelligent'; he would be on a base elevating him slightly over me, so I would step up onto this base to imply equal status. At the end of this sentence, I would turn away from him and step down with a flourish, walking two paces away, and folding my arms, as if to say 'case closed'; this would show the audience that the sentry has a great deal of daring and confidence at this point, and wishes to end the line of conversation.

In the aside following Creon's exeunt, I would relax again, and face the audience with body side-on, facing stage right, but head turned to face the audience. I would intend for the audience to see that I, the sentry, would be very eager to leave, and want to scarp quickly. To show this, I would speak very quickly, and in a low tone and in a stage whisper, as I would be addressing the audience, not the characters on stage. For example, when saying 'I've had an amazing stroke of luck, / And won't chance my arm a second time!', I would speak it with a fast pace, and a very slight pause given by the comma and the line break in the text. I would also rub my hands together rapidly with glee on the line 'I've had an amazing stroke of luck', and then hold my right arm a few inches above the elbow with my left arm when saying 'I won't chance my arm', to give a visual representation. I would then run offstage with quick, medium-length steps to show my hurry

to leave; I would begin running at the word 'second', so the word time would be drawn out slightly, as I would finish the word as I was offstage.

This furtive aside and exeunt would create an effect showing haste, giving a comic effect to the audience, to provide comic relief.