

Texas Christian University

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The Tempest:
The Magic of Shakespeare

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These activities are designed to activate students' background knowledge, thereby preparing them to anticipate the plot and some of the themes of the play.

- One way to arouse students' interest in studying *The Tempest* is a scavenger hunt. Make a list of objects related to the setting, characters, and themes in the play. Have students gather a range of objects, from easy to difficult, to bring to class to organize displays. Following are some suggestions:

1. SETTING: sand; sea shells; a picture of a lush island with sandy beaches; a picture of a storm at sea; a sailing ship; a 17th-century map showing Naples, Milan, the Mediterranean Sea; an audio tape with the sound of the sea or ethereal music suitable for magic and romance.

2. CHARACTERS: a magician's hat, wand, or robe; a crown; a picture of halfman, halfbeast or a monstrous looking man; statues or pictures of a spirit, beautiful girl, or handsome man.

3. THEME: objects which symbolize ambition, greed, drunkenness, revenge, romantic love, marriage, justice, mercy, harmony (prior to the scavenger hunt allow students to brainstorm ideas of objects which suggest these abstract qualities).

A week or two before beginning a unit on *The Tempest* organize the class into teams of four to six students and give instructions for the scavenger hunt.

SCAVENGER HUNT

1. Each group appoints a leader and plans who will get the objects, models, or pictures.

2. Teams meet briefly during the week to check their progress.

3. On the kickoff day for the unit, all teams present their objects, models, or pictures to be tallied.

4. Teams set up class displays on tables or bulletin board. (Note to the teacher: These displays can be referred to during the discussions of the play.)

5. Scoring:

- a. two points for each object or model

- b. one point for each picture

- c. only one object, model, or picture counted per group for each word

- d. extra credit for creativity in designing the display of the objects

GENRE: ROMANCE, TRAGICOMEDY OR COMEDY?

The Tempest, like all great literature, is both complex and ambiguous, especially when attempting to characterize it by genre.

- Before reading the play, review with students other Shakespearian plays they have read and their genre classifications.

Ask: What makes *Midsummer Night Dream* a comedy and *Hamlet* a tragedy? Have you read other Shakespearian plays, such as *Much Ado About Nothing*, in which the definitions of comedy and tragedy seem blurred? Why and how are they blurred?

- Have students draw a distinction between the literary definition of romance and popular notions of this term. If the students have read *The Scarlet Letter*, they will have encountered Hawthorne's specific definition of this term in "The Custom-House" introduction which precedes the novel. Hawthorne describes the goal of the romance writer to create "a neutral territory, somewhere between the real world and fairyland, where the Actual and the Imaginary may meet, and each imbue itself with the nature of the other" (p.38 *The Scarlet Letter*, Penguin Classics, 1983). Using Hawthorne's definition as a guide, ask the students: Is *The*

Tempest best described as a romance? What expectations do you have about the setting or the events of the play?

- Roman, the word for novel in most western European languages, shows the connection between the relatively new narrative form of the novel with earlier romances, stories of knights, their adventures or quests, and their devotion to a lady who inspires chivalrous behavior. Depending on the students' background, have them compare and analyze how an epic like *The Odyssey* is different from *Gawain and the Green Knight* or Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*.

Ask them to consider: How does the emphasis or theme of an epic differ from a romance? What choices of the writer or poet create this difference in theme and tone?

- Have the class discuss several contemporary films classified as romances. What elements do these films have in common? Are these "romances" fundamentally different from the earlier tales of knights and ladies in distress? What elements have remained constant?

SHAKESPEARE, HIS THEATER, AND THE TEMPEST

Since most students have studied Shakespeare and previously read other Shakespearean plays, you can draw upon their background knowledge by means of an anticipation guide. Responding to questions will give students an opportunity to realize how much they know about Shakespeare and will also create some curiosity about the play they are about to read.

ANTICIPATION GUIDE QUESTIONS:

1. List two facts you know about the life of William Shakespeare.
2. List the titles of as many Shakespearean plays as you remember.
3. Using the play you remember most clearly, list three things you remember about it.
4. If you have seen a Shakespeare play performed, what was the play and what did you enjoy about the performance?
5. If you have seen a Shakespeare play in a movie version, what was the play and what did you enjoy about the production?
6. Describe what you think when you hear the phrase "Elizabethan or Shakespearean language." List words or phrases that come to mind when you think of Shakespearean language. What words that we use today do you identify with the Elizabethan period?
7. *The Tempest* was first performed in 1611, the seventeenth century. List three facts you know about this historical period.
8. What do you already know about the play *The Tempest* ?
9. Just looking at the title, what might you suspect this play is about?
10. This play is often classified as a romance. Knowing that, what might you suspect will happen in the play?

After completing the anticipation guide, have students work in a cybernetic session, a collaborative brainstorming session, pulling out all the information they already know about Shakespeare, his theater, and the context of this play

CYBERNETIC SESSION INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Divide the class into six groups.
2. Each group has one large sheet of paper and a marker.
3. At the top of each sheet have the group scribe write one of following topics:
 - a. Biography of William Shakespeare: What we know/What we would like to know
 - b. Seventeenth Century England and Europe: Facts and Questions

- c. Design of the Globe Theater and Acting in the Elizabethan Age
- d. Other Shakespeare Plays and their Themes
- e. What we know about *The Tempest* / What we would like to know
- f. The Language of Shakespeare famous quotes

4. Have groups brainstorm for 4 to 5 minutes, writing down everything they know about their topic.
5. Call time. Have the groups move the papers clockwise to the next group and continue with brainstorming until each group has had an opportunity to work on each topic. (In rooms with sufficient space you may choose to have students move from paper to paper.)
6. Return each paper to the original group.
7. Have the group read, review, and discuss all the ideas listed on the sheet.
8. Each group makes a brief presentation (summary) of the main ideas and questions that have been generated.
 - Make no corrections or comments at this point. During the next session, you can use students' ideas to lead into discussion. Students' questions can be used as a guide in order to fill in areas where students show they need additional background.

CHARACTER

Following a common Shakespearean convention, characters are listed in order of their social importance. Have students do some of the following activities to help them understand how Shakespeare deals with character.

- List and arrange the characters according to their familial relationships. Examine the brief descriptions for each character and make predictions about how they will act in the play. As the students read the play have them refer to their list of characters in order to keep their relationships clear.
- After they have finished reading the play, students can create a new list of characters, listed according to their moral behavior. This can lead to a discussion about how the moral behavior of these characters relates to their social standing.

The following questions can stimulate the discussion:

1. Who is the most moral person in the play and why?
2. What is the role of the king or the father in Elizabethan society?
3. How does King Alonso violate the right order?
4. What is the right relationship of subjects to their king?
5. What is the right relationship of children to their fathers?
6. How does Prospero upset the right order of his relationship to his subjects?
7. What is the right relationship of rulers to their subjects?
8. Is Prospero "right" in the way he treats Caliban?
9. Is Prospero "right" in the way he treats his daughter?

After students have read Act I, have them draw pictures or clip pictures from magazines of the characters. Post the pictures on a bulletin board leaving space for captions of the character's speech. As the action of the play unfolds, have students change the captions to reflect the state of mind of the character.

PLOT

The action of *The Tempest* takes place during a short period of time at a very specific location, the island where Prospero lives with his daughter. Complications are caused when the travelers

are shipwrecked and separated from each other; they assume that everyone else has been drowned in the storm. Here are some activities to help students keep track of the characters and the action.

- Draw a large map of the island, using information from “The Source of The Tempest” about a shipwreck off Bermuda that occurred in 1609. Figures representing the characters could be moved on the map to represent changes in location.
- Create a three dimensional model of the island.
- Create playing cards with the pictures of each character, using the back of the card to list information about the character. Students can add more details as they read the play. These cards can serve review purposes and show students how their general impressions of a character change as they see and hear the character in action.
- The first scenes of this play, as is usual in most drama, give background information and set up action that follows, so it is useful to spend significant time reading aloud and acting out these scenes. Assign small groups of students to read different sections of scenes 1 and 2. Assign scene 1 in its entirety; divide scene 2 into appropriate sections. Be sure the sections are short enough so students have time to read the lines aloud, to analyze the language, and feel confident they understand what is happening. Give students time to prepare for their performance of the lines for the class. Suggest the following to help students make their performances more interesting:
 1. use physical movements
 2. use classroom furniture or simple props
 3. use significant passages and condense the scene as appropriate
 4. vary voice inflections to indicate the emotions of the characters
 5. be creative in planning the scene—think like a play director or film maker to create a visual representation of the emotions and themes of the short scene
- Another technique that will help students better understand the play is to read aloud the first scene to the class. Emphasize the opening stage directions so students understand the action takes place on a ship at sea in a terrible storm with flashes of lightning and thunder. If you have an audio or video tape of a storm, play it prior to or during the reading to set the mood. Vary your voice to represent the different characters. Ask students: What did you learn about the characters in the first scene? How do the sailors relate to their passengers? How do the sailors act in the face of the tempest? How does their behavior compare to the way the noble passengers act?
- To show how Shakespeare varies the dramatic tension in the play, contrast the opening scenes of Act 1. After reading scene 1, read orally the first passages of scene 2. Have students compare the mood of the two scenes by asking: What do we learn about the situation immediately? What do we learn about Prospero? How does the sudden change in mood affect the reader or spectator of this play?

LANGUAGE

Since even experienced readers of Shakespeare’s plays often have some difficulty interpreting every word of a play, students can engage in activities to help them become more confident and to give them strategies for reading the play.

- Demonstrate to students that the most important key to understanding the language is visualizing the action by reading scene 1 aloud. Ask: What do you know about the characters so far? (Note: students may reply that the nobles are fearful while trying to appear in control and

the sailors have no time for their foolishness. The sailors are blunt and businesslike. They know what they need to do, and they don't want to stand around talking about what might happen. When the sailors cry out "All lost!" they really believe that they are doomed.) Cite a few lines from the scene; for example, Gonzalo says, "I have great comfort from this fellow. Methinks he hath no drowning mark upon him; his complexion is perfect gallows." Ask: What do these lines mean? What do they suggest about the importance of a person's appearance as a sign to their personality or fate? Since the action of a play moves quickly, students need to learn to rely on their first impressions.

- To help students carefully examine the language used by Miranda in the play, have them work in pairs to fill in the blanks in the Cloze passage below. They should not use their books to complete this activity; rather they should attempt to fill in the correct word through contextual and syntactical clues.

Miranda.

If by your art, my dearest father, you have
Put the wild waters in this roar, allay them.
The sky, it seems, would pour down _____ pitch
But that the sea, mounting to the welkin's cheek,
_____ the fire out. O, I have suffered
With those that I saw _____ ! A brave vessel
(Who had no doubt some _____ creature in her)
Dashed all to _____ ! O, the cry did knock
Against my very _____ ! Poor souls, they perished!
Had I been any god of _____, I would
Have sunk the sea within the earth or ere
It should the good _____ so have swallowed and
The fraughting souls within her. (I, ii, 113)

Have several of the pairs read their completed passages orally. Discuss with the class reasons for their word choices. More advanced students may be able to move beyond context to syntax. Compare students' answers with the original. Which pairs came the closest to Shakespeare's words?

- Devise another Cloze passage for the epilogue at the end of the play. After quoting the complete first two lines, get students to tune into the rhythm and rhyme of the passage by leaving blank one of the rhyming words in each of the couplets; for example:

Prospero.

Now my charms are all o'erthrown,
And what strength I have's mine own,
Which is most faint. Now 'tis true
I must be here confined by _____,
Or sent to Naples. Let me _____,
Since I have my dukedom got
And pardoned. .. (Epilogue, 17)

- Insults and name-calling are used to indicate the relationships between characters and also to define the status of a character, according to the speaker's perspective. Have students look

carefully at who is speaking and what his or her underlying motive or point of view might be. Use as an example how Prospero and Caliban interact exchanging insults.

Prospero.

Thou poisonous slave, got by the devil himself
Upon thy wicked dam, come forth! (I, ii, 519-520)

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Caliban.

As wicked dew as e'er my mother brushed
With raven's feather from unwholesome fen
Drop on you both! A southwest blow on ye
And blister you all o'er! (I, ii, 521-524)

For discussion ask: Why does Caliban resent being called a "slave"? Why do Prospero and Miranda insist on using this word repeatedly? What European attitudes towards the people they conquered are shown through this language use? Have students find more examples in the same scene and discuss their reactions to the use of various derogatory terms.

- Shakespeare is a master of comic word play. Cite as an example Act II, scene ii when Caliban encounters Trinculo and Stephano. Ask students: What classic types of comedy does this scene employ? (answers: slap stick and word play). In small groups of three, have students read the scene and plan how they would act it out. Suggest that they try out various physical actions to show what is happening.
- Have the class do a "still photograph" of their favorite part of Act II, scene ii or another comic scene.
- Ask students to choose their favorite joke or word play and tell why they liked it.

THEME

RULER AND SUBJECTS

An important theme of *The Tempest*, the right relationship between ruler and subjects, is set within the context of the discovery of new lands during the seventeenth century.

- Have students find and compare passages in the play that show the relationship between Prospero and Caliban to Prospero's relationship to his subjects as Duke of Milan. Ask: What happens when Prospero forgoes his duty for his own intellectual pursuits? Why does Prospero assume that he has the right to rule on the island? What rights do the native inhabitants possess?

REVENGE OR MERCY

- To enable students to see personal relevance in the revenge or mercy theme of *The Tempest*, present the class with a problem situation. Have them free write their responses and then share their reactions in pairs or small groups. Lead a whole class discussion using the students' responses or asking students to take a stand about the way they would act in the situation: take revenge or be forgiving. "You have been elected President of the Student Council during the last election, but your brother betrays you. Because you are very involved with your studies, you allow your brother, who is Vice-President of the Student Council, to take over most of your duties. He seems to enjoy the work, and this allows you to be free to really get into your multimedia and English classes. But you also enjoy the status of being President, and you make sure that the work of the Council is being done. However, early in the Spring semester, your brother engineers your downfall. He goes to the faculty advisor with whom he is friendly and

enlists his help in deposing you. At a Council meeting, the advisor charges you with dereliction of duty and kicks you out of office. He installs your brother as President. Hurt and aggrieved, you withdraw within yourself to reflect on what has happened to you. Through reflection, meditation, and study of the classics, you develop powers that you did not know you had before. Also, you discover that an audio tape you had been using to record environmental noise for your multimedia class somehow picked up the conversation of your brother and the advisor when they plotted to force you out. When the activity bus breaks down on a field trip that the Council officers and the advisor are taking, you offer the two a ride to get help. They are stunned when you put the tape in your tape player and play back their conversation to them. You have them in your power. Now you have a choice. Do you go for vengeance, get the advisor fired and your brother publicly dishonored and maybe suspended from school? Or do you go for mercy, forgive your brother and the advisor; have the advisor reinstate you as president and your brother as vice-president? What would have to happen before you could feel merciful to your brother?"

LOVE

Ask students to list moments in film that depict love at first sight, such as the moment when Maria and Tony see each other across the crowded dance floor in *West Side Story*. Ask them why the moment of seeing each other is so important. What does it mean? Consider that in the middle ages it was a common belief that the soul could be seen through the eyes of a person. What is the significance of the look exchanged between lovers given this idea?

UTOPIAS

While for most Europeans the colonies represented vast economic advantages, at least some thinkers saw the "new lands" as an opportunity to experiment in forms of government and social systems, to overcome some of the failures of the past. Shakespeare alludes to this utopian urge in the speeches of Gonzalo. To help students understand the utopian theme, have them do the following:

- Describe the world you would create if you were given the chance to design an "ideal" society.
- Compare your ideas to Gonzalo's description of an ideal commonwealth in Act II, i, 152-172. What do you think of his vision? Have you used any of these features in the world you described? Would such a state be able to survive? How would success be defined in this world? What would keep people from competing?
- Role play: How would it feel to live in the utopia described by yourself or Gonzalo? To prepare for the role play, make a list of the positive and negative aspects of life in an ideal state. Then with two other students, prepare a scene from the daily life of your utopia. Create dialogue for the scene which suggests some of the positive and negative aspects of the life.
- Read another piece of utopian literature. The selection can be short, such as the description of Candide's journey to El Dorado or More's description of the daily life of the people in Utopia. Ask: What elements do these writings have in common with Gonzalo's speech? Are you aware of similar attempts to create ideal communities in the modern world? What is the impulse behind such communities? Why do they so often fail? Do the writers intend for these ideas to be a blueprint for a community, or do they have some other purpose in mind?

ENCOUNTERS WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

To help students understand how Shakespeare deals with the theme of the encounter between Europeans and indigenous peoples, have them read the excerpt from Montaigne's "Of the Cannibals" in the Signet edition. Ask: What commentary does he make about the European approach to the culture of indigenous peoples?

- Role play or imagine through free writing or dramatic play what it would be like to live on a Caribbean island in the seventeenth century and to witness the arrival of Europeans. List the feelings of native peoples. List the kinds of behavior they might show to the Europeans. List the way the Europeans might react to the natives. Ask: What do you think would pose the greatest difficulty to the two groups surviving together?
- Read out loud an excellent picture book, *Encounter by Jane Yolan* (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1992) which tells the story of the Spanish invasion of San Salvador from the point of view of a native Taino child. Discuss the way in which a native, as opposed to a European viewpoint, creates fundamental differences in the way events and persons are described.

ROLE OF THE ARTIST

Prospero, the magician, who seems to manipulate the other characters, may represent Shakespeare's idea of the power of the artist to heal and restore order. Perhaps as some critics have speculated, Shakespeare saw himself in the character of Prospero. Although we can't know for sure, it is interesting to look at the way Prospero uses his art for good or ill and what this says about the role of the artist.

- Remind students or have them brainstorm other works they have read in which the main character is an artist, such as Joyce's *Portrait of an Artist as a Young Man* (1916) or Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* (1929). Or you may wish to use brief excerpts from these works as a way to stimulate discussion about the role of artists in a society. Remind students that Plato did not want artists in his ideal society because he considered their way of creating illusions dangerous. Ask: What do you think about the role of contemporary artists, writers, painters, musicians? What is their role? Do we need artists? Why?

These activities and writing prompts are designed to aid students' reading and develop their initial reactions to the play. Many of these activities and questions follow up on the themes and ideas explored in the prereading activities.

- As students are reading the play, have them brainstorm what they already know and also what they would like to know, i.e. questions they have about the action and characters. These lists can be displayed in the classroom and can be reviewed at intervals as the students read more of the play. Using the lists generated in brain storm sessions, students can connect what they already know about character and plot, adding new information or generating new questions to begin next day's discussion, moving toward a deeper understanding of the overall themes of the play.
- Have students write their own KWL lists, what they already know and what they would like to know before reading a new section of the play. Share these lists in small groups, and decide together a key question to guide their reading of the next scene. Read the next scene as a group, stopping from time to time to discuss what they are learning. Have each student write a response to the question posed by the group after the complete scene has been read. These questions and answers can then be used for wholeclass discussion.

- Model for the students how to read a key scene. Select one that occurs early in the play, for example a section of Act I, scene ii where Prospero explains their history to Miranda or where he questions Ariel about the events on board the sinking ship.
 1. Read orally approximately one page of the scene just as you would read it silently.
 2. Go back over the lines, thinking aloud about difficult passages and asking yourself questions. Draw on your background knowledge to make connections.
 3. Summarize the action and make connections to some of the themes identified in initial discussions of the play.
 4. Have the students, working with partners, try out this technique using the next page of the scene.
 5. Discuss with the students how the technique works for them. Ask: What do you like about the technique? What would you rather do? List on the board the strategies suggested by different students, making it clear that different strategies work effectively for individual readers.
 6. Follow up by asking students to read another section with a partner, this time using any technique they prefer.
 7. After reading, have each student “free write” his or her understanding of the passage, explaining the reading technique tried and indicating the preferred technique. Suggest that students use their reading strategy on the reading assigned for that day.

- Assign sections of the play for dramatic acting. Good scenes are:

Act I, i : This scene reveals the characters of Antonio and Gonzalo.

Act I, ii, 375-504: In this scene Miranda and Ferdinand meet.

Act II, i, 225-331: Sebastian and Antonio attempt to murder Alonso and Gonzalo.

Act II, ii: This is the comic scene where Trinculo and Stephano discover Caliban.

Act III, iii, 52-110: Alonso feels guilt at deposing Prospero.

Act V, i, 1-215: Prospero, Alonso, Miranda, and Ferdinand are united.

READER RESPONSE

- Reader response is an excellent technique for helping students understand the play in increasing depth. Have students respond personally, subjectively, and freely to what they have read; however, provide some structure so that students will not be frustrated not knowing where to begin. Invite students to express their reactions to the reading and the ideas of the play by writing a quote from the play on the board or directing students to passages in the play. Have students explain what the quote means to them and how it connects to other ideas they already have about the play. Tell them to write freely for three to five minutes about any ideas the quote brings to mind. Have them share their responses in pairs, small groups, or to start a wholeclass discussion.

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The following quotations may lead to rich responses:

ACT I

1. “Me (poor man) my library was dukedom large enough.” (I, ii, 109-110)
2. “But as ‘tis, we cannot miss him. He does make our fire, fetch in our wood, and serves in offices that profit us.” (I, ii, 310-313)
3. “You taught me language, and my profit on’t is, I know how to curse.” (I, ii, 363-364)
4. “Sitting on a bank,

Weeping again the King my father's wrack,
This music crept by me upon the waters,
Allaying both their fury and my passion
With its sweet air." (I, ii, 390-394)

5. "There's nothing ill can dwell in such a temple. If the ill spirit have so fair a house, good things will strive to dwell with't." (I, ii, 457-459)

ACT II

1. I' th' commonwealth I would by contraries
Execute all things. For no kind of traffic
Would I admit; no name of magistrate;
Letters should not be known; riches, poverty,
And use of service, none; contract, succession,
Bourn, bound of land, tilth, vineyard, none;
No use of metal, corn, or wine, or oil;
No occupation; all men idle, all;
And women too, but innocent and pure;
No sovereignty. (II, i, 152-161)

2. "Misery acquaints a man with strange bedfellows." (II, ii, 40-41)

ACT III

1. "I would not wish any companion in the world but you; Nor can imagination form a shape, besides yourself, to like of." (III, i, 54-57)

2. "Travelers ne'er did lie, though fools at home condemn 'em." (III, iii, 26-27)

ACT IV

1. "All thy vexations were but my trials of thy love, and thou hast strangely stood the test." (IV, i, 5-7)

2. "Do not give dalliance too much the rein; the strongest oaths are straw to th' fire i' th' blood." (IV, i, 51-53)

3. "We are such stuff as dreams are made on, and our little life is rounded with a sleep." (IV, i, 156-157)

4. A devil, a born devil, on whose nature
Nurture can never stick; on whom my pains,
Humanely taken, all, all lost, quite lost!
And as with age his body uglier grows,
So his mind cankers. (IV, i, 188-192)

ACT V

1. "The rarer action is in virtue than in vengeance." (V, i, 47-48)

2. "I'll break my staff, bury it certain fathoms in the earth, and deeper than did ever plummet sound I'll drown my book." (V, i, 54-57)

3. "How many goodly creatures are there here! How beauteous mankind is! O brave new world that has such people in't! (V, i, 181-183)

4. "This is as strange a maze as e'er men trod, and there is in this business more than nature was ever conduct of." (V, i, 242-244)

ORAL RESPONSE

• Students' personal responses to the play can be deepened through wholeclass discussions. The goal of the discussion is not to summarize the plot, but to clarify and deepen understanding of the motives of the characters and the themes of the play. Vary your role throughout the discussion by doing some or all of the following:

1. Ask questions.
2. Keep the discussion focused.
3. Summarize ideas.
4. Be a participant, following the lead of students' questions.
5. Select and adapt any of the following questions to develop the students' own initial responses to the play. These questions can also be used as writing prompts.

ACT I

1. Why is it significant that the play begins with a storm at sea?
2. Why does Miranda have such immediate empathy for the men in the ship? Since we learn that she has lived on a deserted island with her father since childhood, where would she have learned these ideas of pity and mercy?
3. Why is she so merciful towards the shipwreck victims but has only contempt and hatred for Caliban? Where and how would she have gotten her ideas?
4. What does it mean that Prospero has to take off his robe, his "magic garment," before he can tell Miranda about her history?
5. Think about how you might tell your own child or a close friend the story of your past. How would you tend to characterize yourself and your actions in your story? What about Prospero's story? Does he take any responsibility for what happened to him? Should he?
6. What crimes does Antonio, Prospero's brother, commit? What motivates him? For which crimes is he most responsible? How do you judge him?
7. In Prospero's questioning of Ariel, we learn that the storm is part of Prospero's design. Does he want to punish the conspirators or lead them to repentance?
8. Ariel was imprisoned by Sycorax. Why? How does the physical description of Sycorax compare to your impressions of Ariel?
9. What connection does Shakespeare establish between outward appearance and inner spirit? Do you think this is true? Why or why not?
10. What is your reaction to Prospero's treatment of Caliban? Does Caliban have a legitimate complaint against Prospero? Why does Prospero keep Caliban as his servant even when he despises him? Why do you think Caliban attempted to "violate the honor" of Miranda? Did he or is this the way his acts were interpreted by Prospero and Miranda?
11. Prospero is happy that when Miranda first sees Ferdinand she is immediately captivated by his appearance? Why? What is his plan?
12. Ferdinand and Miranda fall in love at first sight; Prospero says, "They have changed eyes." Why does this seem feasible, given the emotional state of the two young people?

ACT II

1. What type of person is Gonzalo? What was his role in the plot against Prospero? Does his behavior seem consistent with how he acts now?
2. Sebastian and Antonio ridicule Gonzalo. What does this tell us about their characters?
3. What is Gonzalo's idea of the type of government or life style that could be possible on this island? Why does he say this at this time?

4. Antonio incites Sebastian to kill his brother and take the crown of Naples. Why? What does this tell us about Antonio's motives? What does Sebastian's response tell us about him? What could Shakespeare be saying about human nature?

5. Is it surprising that Caliban willingly worships Stephano and desires to give him control of the island when he resents Prospero for usurping what he considers his rightful claim to the island? What does this show about Caliban?

ACT III

1. How has Ferdinand's and Miranda's love deepened from their first attraction? What is Shakespeare suggesting about the true nature of love?

2. What does Caliban hope to accomplish by his plot against Prospero? Why does Shakespeare include this subplot mirroring the conspiracy of the nobles?

3. How does the apparition of the banquet affect Alonso and his retinue? How is the banquet used as a symbol? Why aren't the men allowed to eat the food? Is this an effective moment for Ariel to accuse them of their sins?

ACT IV

1. How is Ferdinand different from Caliban in his relationship to Miranda? Why does he pledge to keep her honor safe?

2. Why is Miranda's virginity so important to Prospero?

3. What is the overall impact of the Masque-like? How is it supposed to affect the two young lovers? What is its message about the sanctity of the marriage bond?

4. Why does the masque suddenly disappear when Prospero remembers the plot against him by Caliban and his crew? What is Shakespeare suggesting by contrasting these two events?

5. How are Stephano and Trinculo distracted from their plot? What does this show about their natures? What does Caliban think about their behavior?

ACT V

1. Why does Prospero decide to show mercy to his enemies? Why is Ariel the first to speak of mercy? Do you think Prospero had planned to forgive them from the beginning?

2. Why does Prospero decide to give up magic? What does his choice show about what he thinks happened in the past? How does he plan to live in the future? What has Prospero learned? Has he changed in any fundamental way or had the change already occurred before the beginning of the action?

3. Are Caliban and Prospero reconciled?

4. Are Alonso, Antonio, and the other conspirators truly sorry for their plot against Prospero? Has their ordeal on the island changed them?

After students have read and discussed various themes in the play, conduct activities which will deepen their interpretations and provide a creative outlet.

- Review the definitions of romance, tragedy, comedy, and tragicomedy. What is *The Tempest*? Have small groups of students select one of these four genre and have them argue that *The Tempest* should be classified in this genre. A lot of the discussion should focus on the end of the play. Did a true change occur in the characters or have they been manipulated by Prospero's magic so that they have not changed in any fundamental way?

- One of the prereading activities was to read a picture book, *Encounter*, which told of the landing of Columbus in the "new world" from the viewpoint of a native child. Have students

create their own picture book telling of the landing of Prospero and Miranda on the island and what happened from the point of view of Caliban. Use his speeches from the play to create his dialogue and to gather concrete details for illustrations.

- Since *The Tempest* was Shakespeare's last play, critics liken him to Prospero when Prospero breaks his wand and returns to Milan without his magical powers. Form small groups and have students list the instances in the play when magic is used by Prospero. Then have them brainstorm and list ways Shakespeare's work as a playwright and poet mirror the use of magic by Prospero. (Students will need knowledge of other plays to complete this successfully.)

- Show one or parts of several films either based directly on the story of *The Tempest* or that use its themes. For example:

1. *Forbidden Planet* (1956 Director: Fred McLeod Wilcox) is a science fiction version of Shakespeare's play. Space travelers visit a planet where the ruler has built his own empire, with only his daughter and Robby the Robot as companions.
2. *Tempest* (1982 Director: Paul Mazursky) is a comedy loosely based on Shakespeare's play. The main character, played by John Cassavetes, is a New York city architect with a midlife crisis who decides to move with his daughter to a Greek island.

OTHER LITERATURE DEALING WITH THE THEMES OF THE TEMPEST

UTOPIAS AND DYSTOPIAS

Atwood, Margaret. *The Handmaid's Tale*.

Gilman, Charlotte Pulionds. *Herland*.

Golding, William. *Lord of the Flies*.

Huxley, Aldous. *Brave New World*.

Lowry, Lois. *The Giver*.

More, Sir Thomas. *Utopia*.

Orwell, George. *Animal Farm*.

Orwell, George. *1984*.

Plato. *The Republic*.

Voltaire. *Candide*.

Wells, H.G. *The Time Machine*.

NATIVE PEOPLES ENCOUNTER EUROPEANS

Dorris, Michael. *Morning Girl*. Hyperion Books for Children, 1992.

Johnson, Charles. *Middle Passage*. Plume, 1991.

Markandaya, Kamala. *A Nectar in a Sieve*. Signet, 1982.

Paton, A. *Cry, the Beloved Country*. Scribner's, 1948.

Rockwood, Joyce. *To Spoil the Sun*. Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1976.

Yolan, Jane. *Encounter*. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1992.

LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT/ROMANCE

Mazer, Norma Fox and Harry Mazer. *Heartbeat*. Bantam, 1989.

Clements, Bruce. *Tom Loves Anna Loves Tom*. Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1990.

Shakespeare, William. *Romeo and Juliet*. Signet, 1964.

Activities

The following guide is provided by Joseph R. Scotese through the Folger Shakespeare Lesson Plan Series.

Today students will be introduced to *The Tempest*. They will act out the opening shipwreck scene, or watch and direct others doing it. By doing this activity, students will use the text to understand the plot, see that what seemed daunting is not quite so difficult, and have fun and embarrass themselves in the name of Shakespeare. This activity will take one class period.

What to Do:

1. Preparation (reading the night before)

Students will have read the opening shipwreck scene before coming in to class today.

Expect (didn't they teach you never to have any "prejudgments" about students?) students to grumble that they didn't "get it."

2. Getting started

Before you can say "Jack Robinson" rush the students out to some public place that has lots of movable objects like desks and chairs. Lunchrooms and study halls are ideal. Break the students up into groups of seven to ten.

3. Students on their feet and rehearsing the scene

Give the students scripts of the scene from which you've removed any stage directions, line numbers or glosses. Have the students divide the parts for the opening scene. Make sure they include all the sailors, crashing waves, etc. Then they are *first* to pantomime the entire scene, so they must plan and act out *every* important action that occurs in the scene. Give the groups a good ten minutes to do this.

4. The finished product

Have all the groups present their pantomimes. After each scene ask students (the ones not performing) to quietly write down what the performing group did well and what they might have missed. When all of the scenes have been performed, have the students read their comments.

5. Directing the spoken scene

Randomly choose one of the groups and have the students perform the scene complete with words. Give them five minutes or so to prepare and tell them to make sure they include the students suggestions for all of the scenes. If time permits, allow the other students to make comments that direct the group's performance.

What you'll need:

a lunchroom; kids who aren't afraid of getting a wee bit embarrassed; a copy of the shipwreck scene that has had all of the stage directions, line numbers, and glosses taken out

How did it go?:

You can check how the students did based on their pantomimes, their comments, their final production, and the inclusion of any comments such as "that wasn't as hard as it seemed last night ..."

More specifically, after you are finished, ask the students to contrast their understanding of the scene before and after the exercise. (You may wish to have them write down their understanding of the scene before you begin, then have them write it again after they finish.)

Carol Jago'S Four Boxes

I've adapted her technique listed in the book, so that Elementary and Middle school students working on Shakespeare can use it as well.

1. Begin with a large sheet of white paper and have the class fold it into fours.
2. Based on in-class reading or discussion of a theme or plot within the play (revenge, Prospero frees Ariel, Proteus lies to the Duke, friendship, etc.), have the students, in the **FIRST BOX**, draw a picture of a powerful image they had during the reading or discussion. You may assign the entire class one theme or plot or you could have the students choose the image that spoke strongest to them. This image may or may not **directly relate** to the example within the play- the student may chose to represent something from their life or the play, whichever is stronger. *Not everyone's an artist- and artistic talent is not required- just a sincere effort to get at what's in their mind's eye. Encourage them to draw a metaphor of those thoughts, feelings, or themes.*
3. In the **SECOND BOX**, put that picture into words. *Ariel is a cloud that wears cinderblock boots. She flies around and stuff, but she's still stuck in the mud and can't blow away like the other clouds.*
4. In the **THIRD BOX**, have the students pretend that they are the teacher. Have them write down what or how they would teach the theme or plot discussed.
5. In the **FOURTH BOX**, have them write a poem, create a word collage, write a quote from the play, a piece of a song, or in any other way that suited them to respond to the scene or theme drawn.

It can take a single class period or be stretched out over two or three. It provides the option of allowing students to explore themes or scenes that they found powerful in the play and they examine this moment from various perspectives.

Scatterbrained Soliloquies

Can be used with 4th – 12th graders depending on the passage.

The following is provided by Russ Bartlett through the Folger Shakespeare Lesson Plan Series.

Small groups of students will look at a famous soliloquy or monologue whose lines have been written on sepa- rate pieces of paper and then scrambled. As the students work to reassemble their scrambled passages, they will become more aware of sentence structure, meter, meaning, characterization, and vocabulary. You will need one scrambled soliloquy or monologue packet for each small group; each packet must be printed on different colored paper.

This lesson will take one to two class periods.

1. Divide the class into small groups of three to five students, and assign each group a color. Explain that they will be looking at a passage from the current play, trying to make sense of its meaning. First (my favorite part)...
2. Take all of your scrambled packets, mix them together for a rainbow effect, and throw them up into the air, in two or three dramatic tosses. Once the pieces of paper settle to the floor ... 3. Assure the students that you have not gone crazy. Remind each group of its assigned color, and ask each group to pick up all the pieces of that particular color. Each group should end up with the same number of pieces. Briefly set up the context of the speech and explain that now they must...
4. Put the speech in order, laying out the papers on their desktops or on the floor. (No peeking in their books is allowed!) How can they accomplish this task, they wonder, not knowing many of the words or expressions?

Easy, you tell them...

5. Create a word bank on the blackboard, noting unfamiliar words, phrases, and concepts. Ask a few probing questions that might help them figure out the meanings for themselves. If students get stuck on a particular word or phrase, have the students refer to dictionaries or Shakespearean glossaries. Armed with this new knowledge, they can...

6. Put the various pieces of paper in order and be prepared to explain/defend all of the choices made. Why did you put a certain line where you did? What clues led to your group's final order? When the groups are finished... .

7. Pick one group to read its assembled passage aloud, while other groups check it against their finished sequences. After one group has had its chance...

8. Check the order of the lines in each group's soliloquy, asking each group to explain its choices. List on the board the criteria used to determine line order. Compare and contrast the different versions. When the entire class has decided on the best, most accurate, plausible or even elegant version ...

9. Tack the pieces in order on a bulletin board, or punch holes in them and string them together for a hanging display. The possibilities are endless. Inform the students that they may now...

10. Consult their texts to check the order of the speech. Were the students able to reassemble the soliloquy in logical and meaningful ways? Did the explanations offered by group members reflect attentiveness to meaning, sound and rhyme, characterization, compatibility with prior events occurring in the play, etc.?

"Scatterbrained Soliloquy" packets: You will need to divide up the speech into at least ten sections, writing in large letters on white typing paper. Preserve the poetry in your transcribing (don't turn it into prose as you copy it) but feel free to create a break in mid-line or mid-sentence. When you have broken up the passage into at least ten sections, copy the sets in different colors or number them per group, as many different colors or numbers as there are groups participating. The prep time for this lesson is a bit long, but if you collect the copies from your students at the end of the exercise, you can use the packets again next year.

Exercises

1. Analyze Caliban's "the isle is full of noises" speech (111.ii.130-138). What makes it such a compelling and beautiful passage? What is its relation to Caliban's other speeches, and to his character in general? What effect does this speech have on our perception of Caliban's character? Why does Shakespeare give these lines to Caliban rather than, say, Ariel or Miranda?

2. What is the nature of Prospero and Miranda's relationship? Discuss moments where Miranda seems to be entirely dependent on her father and moments where she seems independent. How does Miranda's character change over the course of the play?

3. Discuss Ferdinand's character. What is the nature of his love for Miranda? Is he a likable character? What is the nature of his relationship to other characters?

4. Who is forgiven at the end of the play and actually accepts the forgiveness? This production has

Antonio walk away from Prospero's forgiveness. If you were to direct the last scene, how would you stage the forgiveness and who would accept it? Use the text to back-up your ideas.

5. Virtually every character in the play expresses some desire to be lord of the island. Discuss two or three of these characters. How does each envision the island's potential? How does each envision his own rule? Who comes closest to matching your own vision of the ideal rule?

6. Analyze the tempest scene in Act I, scene i. How does Shakespeare use the very limited resources of his bare stage to create a sense of realism? How does the APT Production grapple with the opening? Previous productions have had Prospero standing center holding a little wooden boat while the storm sounds and dialogue are heard from off stage. Other productions have had the court and crew enter in a tight boat-like formation while crossing the stage in a rhythmically swaying motion. When the boat splits the court and crew disperse chaotically. If you were to direct the opening tempest scene, how would you approach it?
7. "Have we devils here?" What does Caliban look like? Find all the references to Caliban's look and behavior...||a man or fish?" Armed with these descriptions design or describe your own costume.

Handout for Tempest in the Lunchroom

THE TEMPEST 1.1

Boatswain!

Here, master. What cheer?

Good, speak to th' mariners. Fall to 't yarely, or we run ourselves aground.
Bestir, bestir!

Heigh, my hearts! Cheerly, cheerly, my hearts! Yare, yare! Take in the topsail.
Tend to th' Master's whistle.—Blow till thou burst thy wind, if room enough!

Good boatswain, have care. Where's the Master? Play the men.

I pray now, keep below.

Where is the Master, boatswain?

Do you not hear him? You mar our labor. Keep your cabins. You do assist the storm.

Nay, good, be patient.

When the sea is. Hence! What cares these roarers for the name of king? To cabin! Silence! Trouble us not.

Good, yet remember whom thou hast aboard.

None that I more love than myself. You are a councillor; if you can command these elements to silence, and work the peace of the present, we will not hand a rope more. Use your authority. If you cannot, give thanks you have lived so long, and make yourself ready in your cabin for the mischance of the hour, if it so

hap.—Cheerly, good hearts!—Out of our way, I say!

I have great comfort from this fellow. Methinks he hath no drowning mark upon him. His complexion is perfect gallows. Stand fast, good Fate, to his hanging. Make the rope of his destiny our cable, for our own doth little advantage. If he be not born to be hanged, our case is miserable.

Down with the topmast! Yare! Lower, lower! Bring her to try wi' th' main course. A plague upon this howling! They are louder than the weather or our office. Yet again? What do you here? Shall we give o'er and drown? Have you a mind to sink?

A pox o' your throat, you bawling, blasphemous, incharitable dog!

Work you, then.

Hang, cur, hang, you whoreson, insolent noisemaker! We are less afraid to be drowned than thou art.

I'll warrant him for drowning, though the ship were no stronger than a nutshell and as leaky as an unstanch'd wench.

Lay her ahold, ahold! Set her two courses. Off to sea again! Lay her off!

All lost! To prayers, to prayers! All lost!

What, must our mouths be cold?

The King and Prince at prayers. Let's assist them, for our case is as theirs.

I am out of patience.

We are merely cheated of our lives by drunkards. This wide-chopped rascal—would thou mightst lie drowning the washing of ten tides!

He'll be hanged yet, though every drop of water swear against it and gape at wid'st to glut him.

“Mercy on us!”—“We split, we split!”—“Farewell, my wife and children!”—“Farewell, brother!”—“We split, we split, we split!”

Let's all sink wi' th' King.

Let's take leave of him.

Now would I give a thousand furlongs of sea for an acre of barren ground: long
heath, brown furze, anything. The wills above be done, but I would fain die a dry
death.

Classroom Connections

Before the performance...

Stormy Weather

It's no surprise that a play named *The Tempest* opens in the middle of a huge storm at sea. But how can a director and a team of designers create that storm onstage? Ask students to brainstorm different ways to present the storm and shipwreck onstage. Then break the class into three groups and assign each a budget—one group has a high school drama club budget, one has a regional theatre budget, and one has a Broadway theatre budget. Each group should develop a concept or proposal for the storm scene, complete with lights, set, sound, props and costumes, considering their respective budgets. Have each group present their ideas to the class. How does budget affect the staging of the storm? How realistically should the storm be staged?

Love at First Sight

In *The Tempest* Miranda and Ferdinand are instantly captivated by one another. It is the first time that Miranda has seen another man. Is it love at first sight? Divide the class into two groups and have them sit across the room from each other. Pair each student with someone on the opposite side and remind them to keep it a secret! It is okay if more than one person is paired with another. Instruct the students to imagine themselves asleep in their beds. Begin playing a syrupy love song (*We've Only Just Begun* by the Carpenters works very well). In slow motion, have the students wake up and begin their morning routines. On your cue, they should make eye contact with their object of love and physicalize (in slow motion!) their response to love at first sight. How do we show love? What actions do we perform to get someone to notice us?

Be a Sound Designer

The Tempest is one of Shakespeare's most sound-heavy plays. Have students reread Caliban's speech at III.ii.132, "Be not afeard, the isle is full of noises." Then go back and ask students to pick out as many references to sound as they can find, both in the text and in the stage directions. Creating a sound design for a play or movie is an important part of telling the story. What kinds of sounds exist on the island in *The Tempest*? Ask students to create one sound cue for a moment in the play, using music, voices or found items (recorded or live) to create the sound. How does sound help to tell the story?

Ariel & Caliban in Visual Art

Ariel and Caliban, two of Shakespeare's non-human characters, have left much room for interpretation in how they can be portrayed. The 19th century produced a number of artists inspired by Shakespeare who put scenes of his play on canvas. Visit this site (http://www.english.emory.edu/classes/Shakespeare_Illustrated/TempestPaintings.html) and find a painting depicting Ariel or Caliban from *The Tempest*. Compare how you expected these characters to look with the artist's rendering. Keep these images in mind when you see the play and compare all three interpretations!

What Really Happened in Jamestown

As described in the article *A Whole New World*, Shakespeare drew inspiration for *The Tempest* from real accounts of a crew headed to Jamestown, Virginia, that crashed on the island of Bermuda and then reappeared almost a year later. Have students research the Jamestown colony and the shipwreck of the *Sea Adventure* and then discuss how the real life events may have inspired Shakespeare. How did Shakespeare alter the story to create *The Tempest*?

Seeing Things That Aren't There

Stranded on a mysterious island and thoroughly drunk, Stephano the butler believes he sees a great beast that in reality is nothing more than Caliban and Trinculo hiding together. This is an island that Prospero claims to be inhabited by spirits. His most trusted servant is a spirit that no other character ever sees. The only time spirits are witnessed by characters other than Prospero is in the wedding masque for Ferdinand and Miranda. This scene is not always included in productions of the play. If you were the director, would you choose to stage the masque? Is the island really magic or are we seeing a distorted image of a stranded soul?

Classroom Connections

...After the performance

Slaves and Servants

In *The Tempest*, Ariel and Caliban both serve Prospero and Miranda. In the Folio version of the play, Caliban is described as a “savage and deformed slave.” Given that Ariel and Caliban are “natives” of the island, what class issues does their relationship to Prospero bring up? What responsibilities does a director have in staging *The Tempest* for a contemporary audience? Are Ariel and Caliban positive or negative characters? How would you portray them today? How did the director at The Shakespeare Theatre portray Caliban and Ariel?

Forgiveness and Reconciliation

One of the reasons *The Tempest* is sometimes considered a comedy is that all the characters are forgiven for their misdeeds. Prospero forgives everyone in the very last scene of the play. Discuss when you think he makes the decision to forgive the characters who have betrayed him. Did those forgiven really repent? Do you think there is a possibility of Prospero being wronged again? Are there any characters who deserve an apology from Prospero?

Fathers and Daughters

Some Shakespearean scholars believe that in his latter works, the Bard examined more closely the bonds between fathers and daughters because of his relationship with his eldest daughter, Susanna. Reflect on views of father-daughter relationships: What are contemporary views of the roles of fathers and daughters in each others’ lives? What images or stories from television shows, news, movies, books or magazines support these views? How do students see them playing out in their personal experiences? Ask students to compare contemporary views to the relationship of Prospero and Miranda in *The Tempest*.

Are You My Mother?

Many female characters in Shakespeare’s later plays grow up never knowing their mothers. Ask students to consider why Shakespeare would make this choice? How would these plays be different if a mother was present? Ask students to rewrite Act I scene ii of *The Tempest*, adding a third character—Miranda’s mother. How does the scene change? How might this change affect the rest of the play?

Water, Water Everywhere

Water imagery abounds in *The Tempest* and plays a vital role in the events that unfold. Ask students to share all of the ways that water is used in the play. Then ask students to pick one example of water imagery to recreate. They can make a collage, write a poem, use their bodies, voices, instruments, or any other form of expression to demonstrate the feeling that the water evokes.

Adaptation

Shakespeare’s plays are continually adapted into other stories and media. For example, Robert Browning’s 1864 poem *Caliban Upon Setebos*, Franz Marc’s 1914 painting *Caliban* and the 1956 sci-fi film *Forbidden Planet* are all based on Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*. Screen the film, or another film adaptation of the play, look at the painting (see page 19) or read a selection of Browning’s poem (available online at: eir.library.utoronto.ca/rpo/display/poem267.html). How do artists take ideas from literature and incorporate them into their own work? Ask students to create their own work of art based on their response to *The Tempest*. Possibilities include a drawing, a poem, a short story, a treatment for a screen play or a short video essay. Work can be shared and displayed as students discuss their different responses to the play. Share your students’ work with us by mailing it to The Shakespeare Theatre Education Department.

Look Up at the Sky!

Did you know that many of the moons of Uranus are named after Shakespearean characters, many of them from *The Tempest*? (Those that aren’t Shakespearean are taken from Alexander Pope’s poem, *The Rape of the Lock*.) For extra credit, ask students to look up the names of the moons of Uranus and find their namesakes in Shakespeare.