

## William Shakespeare's The Tempest

### PLOT

The play begins on the deck of a ship at sea in the middle of a violent tempest. The passengers, Alonso, Sebastian, Antonio, and Ferdinand, believe they are about to drown. The scene then changes to the island where Miranda and her father, Prospero, are living and have been since Prospero's brother, Antonio, stole Prospero's title as Duke of Milan, and set him and Miranda adrift on a rotting ship. The conspiracy to take over Prospero's power and station was the work of his brother who plotted with the King of Naples, Prospero's enemy. Through magic and the spirit Ariel who is required to do his bidding, Prospero created the storm and chaos among the sailors and passengers so that they would be separated and believe the others drowned. However, Prospero has protected them all from harm and hidden the ship under a charm. Through a series of events including the use of magic, plots to overthrow Prospero and the falling in love of Miranda and Ferdinand, son of Alonso the King of Naples, many of the key characters are able to seek forgiveness, and Prospero is able to embrace mercy over vengeance. He realizes that "the rarer action is in virtue than in vengeance."

### THEMES AND ISSUES:

Colonialism	Mercy
Imperialism	Nature vs. civilization
Power relationships	Good vs. evil
Artistry/magic	Love and romance
Atonement	Utopia
Justice	

### LANGUAGE AND STRUCTURE:

- Affects of language on genre
- Application of "the island" theme in various mediums
- Use of canonical text as a vehicle for contemporary issues
- Use of canonical text as a vehicle for analyzing past historical issues
- Use of Shakespeare's text to explore human relationships

### EXTENDED RESOURCES:

Film:	<i>The Tempest</i> (1982) dir. Paul Mazursky <i>Forbidden Planet</i> (1956) dir. Fred McLeod Wilcox <i>Lord of the Flies</i>
T.V.	Gilligan's Island Survivor
Literature:	Golding, William. <u>Lord of the Flies</u> Atwood, Margaret. <u>Handmaid's Tale</u> Huxley, Aldous. <u>Brave New World</u> Orwell, George. <u>Animal Farm</u> Sophocles. <u>Antigone</u>

**ACTIVITIES:**

1.	Pre-reading exercise: “To Agree or not to Agree”. Put a statement on the overhead and have students agree or not, and explain why. Statements should relate to themes in the play. For example: “I believe in love at first sight” or “revenge is the best medicine”. (Pinder, Brenda. “Shakespeare Workshops”. <u>Full Fathom Five Series</u> ).	Listening/ Writing Individual.
2.	The Missing Scene: have students write a final scene for the end of the play. Have them speculate on what happens to Prospero or to Ferdinand and Miranda.	Writing Individual
3.	Post-reading exercise: Text-based analysis. Looking at Caliban and Prospero, have students find specific quotes from the play to support Caliban’s right to own the island and his bitterness toward Prospero or Prospero’s argument that Caliban should feel indebted to him. (Pinder, Brenda. “Shakespeare Workshops”. <u>Full Fathom Five Series</u> ).	Reading Individual or small groups.
4.	Point of View: Write a paragraph about Caliban from each perspective: Prospero, Miranda, Stephano, Trinculo. How would these differ from Caliban’s own point of view?	Writing Individual
5.	Jerry Springer Show: Assign students a character to be. Then, have the students come up with two questions for each of the other characters assigned <u>except</u> for their own. You could use Prospero, Caliban, Ariel, Miranda, and Gonzalo. Then, have the students come up “on stage” a few at a time and be asked questions by “Jerry” and “the “audience members” and other characters.	*Speaking Group
6.	Jeopardy. Perfect for review. For homework have students come up with questions to fit under each category: “Out Out Damn Plot”, Things are not as they <u>Theme</u> , You’re Quite the <u>Character</u> , Can I <u>Quote</u> You, <u>Figuratively</u> Speaking (identifying figurative language). The next day organize the students into teams and play the game. Draw a grid with dollar amounts on the board.	Writing/Speaking/ Reading/Listening Individual and Group
7	Draw a map of Prospero’s island. Make sure to mark the important locations ie Prospero’s cell. (Pinder, Brenda. “Shakespeare Workshops”. <u>Full Fathom Five Series</u> ).	Writing/Drawing Individual
8	Mock Trial: Put Prospero on trial. Designate roles for all of the students (prosecutor, judge, bailiff, family members, defense, etc.) Have them choreograph a mock trial.	Writing/Speaking/ Listening Group
9	Charting Relationships/Sociograms: Where a play has a large number of characters, it sometimes helps to have pupils prepare charts which show the links among the characters. Therefore, first, construct a spider chart with Prospero’s name in the centre, and arrows leading to the names of other characters. Then write along each arrow a quotation indicating Prospero’s feelings toward that character. Also, by reversing the arrows, the chart could be used to indicate how the other characters feel about Prospero.	Writing/ Reading Individual
10	Game for Review: Who, What, When, Where, Why and How Utilizes the different levels of questioning like Bloom’s Taxonomy. Have students come up with questions that ask and answer a question from each category. Then, with the teacher randomly asking the questions, the students will answer.	Reading/Writing/ Listening Group
11	Choral Reading. Because Shakespeare was meant to be seen and heard, not read, it is good to get the students speaking the language.	Listening/Reading

	Therefore, have the students each take a line from a soliloquy and go around the room reading it aloud. For variation, have the students try different tones and emotions to see if it changes the way we interpret the scene.	Group
12	Brainstorm Themes. This exercise works very well just before an exam. Split the class into small groups and give each a large piece of poster paper. At the top of each piece of paper, write one theme from the play. (ie:) revenge. Have each group brainstorm as many ideas as possible for their theme. Then, rotate the papers and have each group try to build on the answers provided by the group before them. Keep rotating until each group has brainstormed for each theme. The post the paper and have the class critique it.	Reading/Writing/ Speaking/Listening  Small groups
13	“In Your Own Words”. Have students summarize each Act in their own words. A variation on this is to have them summarize the whole play in 10 sentences or less. This makes them focus on the important details and choose their words very carefully	Writing/Reading  Individual
14	Pictionary or Charades. Both of these games get the kids out of their seats and engaging in the action of the play. Put a bunch of scenes into a hat and have students come up, draw one out, and act it out or draw it, until their teammates guess what it is.	Reading/Acting  Group
15	“Tempest Production”. In groups of approx. 5, students will put together the directions for acting out an Act from the Tempest. Directions to include will be: lighting, stage directions, music. They will then act out their scene using as many of the directions as possible. (Pinder, Brenda. “Shakespeare Workshops”. <u>Full Fathom Five Series</u> ).	Writing/Viewing  Small groups
16	Soliloquy: Using (V. i. 33-57), have students read this soliloquy but change the tone and gestures. How does this affect our perception? <a href="http://www.teachervision.com">www.teachervision.com</a>	Reading/Listening  Small groups
17	Sociolinguistic analysis: Using picture books that depict settlers coming to a “New World” ie. Christopher Columbus, have students contrast and compare with The Tempest. Also, have them discuss how point of view and word choice affects our impressions of a work. <a href="http://www.teachervision.com">www.teachervision.com</a>	Reading/Listening Speaking/Viewing  Group
18	Scavenger Hunt. This could be a pre-reading activity to hook students into the play. Have students search for items that are related to the characters, setting and theme of the play. For example, sea shells, a map, magic wand, crown and anything that symbolizes ambition, greed, drunkenness, revenge, love, mercy, etc. Have the students brainstorm items for each of these categories. <a href="http://www.teachervision.com">www.teachervision.com</a>	Viewing/Speaking  Group
19	Utopian society. Have students write about their ideal society, taking into consideration social structure, social hierarchies, and politics. Look at Gonzalo’s speech (II. i. 152-172). <a href="http://www.teachervision.com">www.teachervision.com</a>	Writing  Individual
20	“Different Genre”. In groups, have students re-write a scene in a different genre and then perform it. Some genres to consider are: Western, Fairy Tale, Gangsta Rap, WWF, Soprano’s, SciFi.	Writing/Listening Speaking/Viewing  Small groups
21.	Magnetic Tiles. If you can get your hands on these you can use them to have the students build heroic couplets, Shakespearean insults, blank verse, iambic pentameter, etc. All of these will help students to become more familiar with Shakespearean language. <a href="http://www.magneticpoetry.com">www.magneticpoetry.com</a>	Writing  Small groups

