



 Prestwick House

Activity Pack

THE TEMPEST

BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE



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Written by Michael Corcoran

Name: _____

Date: _____

Pre-Reading

The Globe Theatre

Objective: Researching and drawing Shakespeare's theatre

Activity

The Globe Theatre was built by Shakespeare's theater company and was the primary location for the performances of his plays. Research the history and design of the Globe and then create a drawing of it. Write a brief summary about the history of the theatre to accompany your illustration.

Essential elements to include in the drawing:

- auditorium in three levels
- performance areas
- places where actors entered and exited
- groundlings' pit
- audience entrance and seating area
- apron stage
- inner stage with curtain
- balcony with side windows
- side entrances to apron
- musicians' gallery
- trapdoor in apron
- opening in stage canopy

Name: _____

Date: _____

During Reading**Headlines****Objective:** Writing newspaper headlines for each act**Activity**

Journalists strive to make newspaper headlines both informative and intriguing. The idea is to create a balance between capturing the main issue of a story and compelling readers to continue on and read the entire article.

Imagine that you are an undercover journalist for *The Daily Drivel*, Milan's premiere news source. You are a master in your field, and you manage to eavesdrop on every event and conversation that takes place in *The Tempest*. It is in your best interest to come up with scandalous articles that everyone will want to read.

As you read *The Tempest*, compose three newspaper headlines for each act. Remember that headlines are brief; yours should be no longer than eight words each. The following is an example:

Act I: Headline #1: KING SHIPWRECKED BY SORCERER**Act I: Headline #2:** _____**Act I: Headline #3:** _____**Act II: Headline #1:** _____**Act II: Headline #2:** _____**Act II: Headline #3:** _____**Act III: Headline #1:** _____**Act III: Headline #2:** _____**Act III: Headline #3:** _____**Act IV: Headline #1:** _____**Act IV: Headline #2:** _____**Act IV: Headline #3:** _____**Act V: Headline #1:** _____**Act V: Headline #2:** _____**Act V: Headline #3:** _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Act I**Talk Show Interview****Objective:** Interviewing a main character**Activity**

You are a talk-radio host known for your ability to extract the memories of witnesses to historic events. Your interviewing skills often help your guests reveal new details about popular events.

You now have the chance to interview Prospero, the former Duke of Milan, on your show. It will be an open mike program, and you will be taking calls from listeners. It has been two years since Prospero was deposed by his brother, but public indignation about the takeover is still high.

Carefully examine the first scene of Act I to collect all the details of the event. Use these details to write your questions.

Remember, you are a talk-radio host. It is your job to pry the most interesting information from your guest so that listeners will continue to support you. Do not be afraid to unearth debatable issues that will draw phone calls. People are still shocked by what they know about the overthrow of their Duke, and they want to know how and why it happened.

You will be divided into four groups. Each group will work together to produce a list of questions to ask Prospero. Then, exchange your questions with another group, and create answers to them based on your knowledge of Prospero.

The first question has been written for you.

- Why did you allow your brother Antonio to take over the government of Milan?

Name: _____

Date: _____

Act II

Outlining the Play

Objective: Writing an outline to summarize events

Activity

Imagine that you are a Hollywood screenwriter who must convert *The Tempest* into a movie. Each scene will be filmed separately, and the actors and crew will need help remembering the details of each scene. As you read the play, outline each act by scenes, and assign a title to each one. Give a brief description of the events in each scene. The title should reflect the content of the respective act or scene.

We have done Act I to get you started. When you finish the outline, think of three alternate titles for the film version of *The Tempest* and then write them at the top of your paper.

Example:

- I. Act I – Prospero Prepares His Trap.
 - A. Scene I: A storm is conjured.
 1. The ship's crew fights to keep the vessel off the rocks.
 2. Alonso and his party seek to interfere.
 3. The ship is lost.
 - B. Scene II: Prospero tells his story and sets his plan in motion.
 1. Prospero explains to Miranda how Antonio took over his Dukedom.
 2. He describes how the King of Naples assisted him.
 3. He describes how they were set adrift.
 4. Ariel reports on successfully staging the storm and bringing everyone ashore.
 5. Prospero forces his complaining slave Caliban to obey.
 6. Ferdinand meets Miranda, and they fall in love.
 7. Prospero imprisons Ferdinand to test the lovers.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Act III

Letter Writing

Objective: Writing to characters in the play

Activity

Prospero refuses to let Miranda speak to him about his treatment of Ferdinand because he is trying to bring his daughter and Ferdinand together. He also wants to test Ferdinand's resolve. He is afraid that if he hears his daughter's pleas, he will weaken in his resolve.

Imagine that you are Miranda or Ferdinand. You are afraid to further anger Prospero, so you choose to write to him to plead your case. Miranda wants Prospero to treat Ferdinand as an honest man, not a traitor. Ferdinand wishes to plead his own innocence and declare his devotion to Miranda.

Choose one of the two characters, and compose a letter asking Prospero to change his attitude. Look carefully at what both Miranda and Ferdinand say before Prospero silences them. This will provide you with ideas. You can also get additional ideas by studying the scene between the couple. Use your imagination to build your case, and feel free to invent detail, as long as it is in keeping with what you have learned of the characters so far.

Be as persuasive as you can. In Shakespeare's time, a letter pleading for a favor would be more exaggerated than one we would write today. Use the language of Shakespeare, and don't be afraid to use poetic expressions.

The following is an example of how a letter from Miranda might begin:

Dearest and Most Respected Father,

I know not how to bring my suit before thee, in such a way that I might avoid arousing thy wrath. If my concern were only for myself, I would remain silent and suffer any torment...

Name: _____

Date: _____

Acts II – III**Strange Creatures****Objective:** Visualizing from verbal descriptions**Activity**

At the time this play was first performed (1611), Europeans had been exploring the world for over a hundred years. However, communication over such vast distances was difficult and unreliable. Ships and their crews could disappear without a trace. Some journeys took years. Even on land, communication was slow. It could take several days for a letter to travel from one town to another. This provided fertile ground for many tall tales from world travelers. Stories of monstrous man-like creatures, strange kingdoms, and exotic plants and animals were the talk of Shakespeare's London.

Even though Prospero's island is in the Mediterranean Sea, Shakespeare treats it as though it were in some remote and unexplored part of the globe. In Act II, Scene II and Act III, Scene III of *The Tempest*, Shakespeare plays on this popular interest in monsters.

Examine these scenes, and find descriptions of strange creatures. Make a note of the act, scene, and lines where you found the description. Choose one of these descriptions, and study it carefully. Take the verbal hints that Shakespeare provides, and combine them with a little imagination to create a drawing of the monster. Your drawing should be labeled with the lines that inspired it. Provide act, scene, and line references, and give your drawing a title.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Act IV

The Masque

Objective: Recognizing elements of the masque

Activity

During the reign of King James I, a new form of drama was introduced to the English court. It was called a *masque*. Masques were plays that included singing and dancing, as well as lavish costuming and scenic effects. They were the 17th-century equivalent of the latest blockbuster movie, with all the newest visual and sound effects. To modern viewers, who are used to the marvels of computer-generated special effects, the devices used in masques would seem primitive. In Shakespeare's time, however, they were new and exciting.

Masques were very expensive to stage, so it was usually only the king and his court or very wealthy noblemen who saw them. Because of the time and expense, they were usually reserved for special occasions. *The Tempest* was performed at court in honor of the wedding of the king's daughter. It may have had lavish costuming and scenery, but there is no record of the details of the performance. Nevertheless, Shakespeare has included many of the elements of masques in this play.

Some of the effects that were a regular part of masque performances and that also appear in *The Tempest* were:

- the lowering of actors, usually playing deities, from above the stage
- poetry and dancing
- having actors and objects suddenly appear and/or disappear
- music, singing, and sound effects
- the use of fanciful and elaborate costumes, especially for mythical creatures
- the presence of characters from Greek and Roman mythology

Look back over Act IV, and find places where Shakespeare uses these elements of the masque in his drama. Note any examples and then complete the chart. Where there are multiple examples you should give only one. An example from Act III has been done for you.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Acts I – IV**Quotations**

Objective: Putting a quotation into its context and identifying its significance

Activity

Being able to identify who spoke lines and where they occurred is important in testing your knowledge of the play. Being able to explain the importance of the words helps you to develop ideas for the discussion of the character and themes/motifs of the play.

For each of the six quotations, do the following:

- Identify who spoke the lines.
- Describe what happened just before the lines were spoken.
- Describe what happened after.
- Explain how you could use this quotation to illustrate a point about a character, theme, or motif.

A quote from Act I, Scene II has been done for you as an example.

“I pray thee, mark me.
I, thus neglecting worldly ends, all dedicated
To closeness and the bettering of my mind
With that which, but by being so retired,
O'er prized all popular rate, in my false brother
Awakened an evil nature; and my trust,
Like a good parent, did beget of him
A falsehood, on its contrary as great
As my trust was, which had indeed no limit,
A confidence sans bound.”

- These words are spoken by Prospero.
- Before these words are spoken, Prospero tells Miranda how his brother took over his dukedom.
- After these words, he goes on to explain how he and Miranda were set adrift in a leaking vessel and came to the island.
- This quote is important because it reveals that Prospero played a role in his own downfall. He was too taken up with his studies to fulfill his duties as duke and left it to his brother, thus, encouraging him to take control.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Act V**Prospero's Forgiveness**

Objective: Finding quotations that illustrate the motif of forgiveness

Activity

In the course of this act, Prospero forgives those who have wronged him. In order to discuss this motif, an examination of whom Prospero forgives is important.

As you read the act, note any lines that suggest that Prospero is forgiving another character. Note the line numbers and what wrongdoing Prospero is forgiving, as well as the name of the character he forgives. Enter your findings on the following chart.