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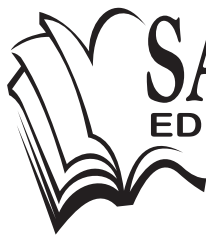
SHAKESPEARE

MADE EASY

The Tempest



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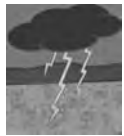
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To the Teacher

As any teacher or student who has read Shakespeare knows, his plays are not easy. They are thought-provoking and complex texts that abound with romance, deceit, tragedy, comedy, revenge, and humanity shown at its very worst as well as its very best. In short, to read Shakespeare is to explore the depths and heights of humanity.

The *Shakespeare Made Easy* Activity Guides are designed by teachers for teachers to help students navigate this journey. Each guide is broken into six sections of four activities and one review. At the end of each guide is a final test, a variety of culminating activities, and an answer key. The activities are meant to aid textual comprehension, to provide creative

opportunities for the reader to make personal connections with the text, and to help busy teachers gain quick access to classroom-tested and age-appropriate activities that make the teaching of Shakespeare an easier task.

Each regular activity, as well as each culminating activity, can be modified to be an individual or a group task, and the reviews and tests can be used as quick comprehension checks or formally scored assessments. The guides may be used in conjunction with the Barron's *Shakespeare Made Easy* texts or alone. Ultimately, the *Shakespeare Made Easy* Activity Guides are intended to assist teachers and students in gaining an increased understanding of and appreciation for the reading of Shakespeare.

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Introduction to the Play

Background to *The Tempest*

The Tempest is generally believed to be the last complete play written by Shakespeare. It is also considered to be the finest of his romance plays. As a dramatic romance, the play includes important romantic features that set it apart from his comedies, as well as his tragedies and histories.

A key component of a Shakespearean romance is the setting. The plays must take place in exotic, distant, and mysterious locations. These fairy-tale locations give the sense almost of a myth. The myth and mystery, while being obviously unreal, compels the viewer to realize that the play's themes and ideas in fact have something to say about everyday life.

A second characteristic of romance in Shakespeare's time was the focus on separation and then reunion of family members. This is often embedded in a story of exile and return, in which the exiled family member is reunited with family and returned and restored to his or her rightful place. This restoration of the family gives these plays importance and delight that is deeper than the restoration of courtship and marriage that are part of Shakespeare's comedies. Shakespeare's romances—*The Tempest* in particular—end with a spirit of hope. There is marriage and restoration, both of which come about through the action of mercy and forgiveness and the joyful intervention of providence.

Another feature of romance is that the characters are not so much fully realized people as

they are symbolic. In *The Tempest*, Prospero represents the great artist-philosopher who learns about reconciliation and forgiveness. Caliban represents “natural man”—uncivilized humanity. Many Shakespearean scholars have even argued that Caliban represents the American natives who inhabited the Americas prior to the colonization of America by Europeans. This theory is based on the fact that England was engaged in voyages of discovery and settlement to the Americas. In fact, a letter by William Strachey, written in the early 1600s, details his shipwreck near the island of Bermuda. His description of his experiences emphasized the miraculous survival of everyone on the ship and the beauty and loveliness of the island. These features are evident in *The Tempest*.

Another important component of romance is the spectacle or masque. The *masque* is a show within the play that is accompanied by music, dance, and remarkable visual effects, and it suggests that the supernatural invades and controls human life in order to bring about mercy, forgiveness, and reconciliation. In *The Tempest*, Prospero stages the masques at a banquet in Act three, a blessing dance of the Goddesses for Miranda and Ferdinand's engagement in Act four, and the chess game of Ferdinand and Miranda in Act five. One might also argue that the shipwreck scene in Act one is also masquelike because it is controlled by Ariel. Also, all the victims are miraculously saved from drowning.

However, the audience in Shakespeare's plays expected a spectacle for the price of admission. Therefore, there were many devices to produce a gasp from the audience. For example, a device in the loft of the theater could raise and lower actors so that they could play gods, ghosts, or other unusual characters. Additionally, a trapdoor in the stage offered a chance for a quick appearance or disappearance. The actors could suggest a beheading or hanging with various illusions on the stage. Sound effects suggesting thunder, horses, or war were common. Music was important, and drums and horns were often played.

Most important to the sense of spectacle were the costumes worn by the actors. These were elaborate, colorful, and very expensive. Therefore, they often purchased these outfits from servants who had inherited the clothes from their masters, or from hangmen, who received the clothes of their victims as payment for their services.

Though Shakespeare's stage directions are sparse, definition of a few key terms will be helpful for the reader. The following is a brief glossary of stage directions commonly found in Shakespeare's plays.

Selected Glossary of Stage Directions in Shakespeare's Plays

Above: an indication that the actor speaking from above is on a higher balcony or other scaffold that is higher than the other actors

Alarum: a stage signal, which calls the soldiers to battle; usually trumpets, drums, and shouts

Aside: words spoken by the actor so the audience overhears but the other actors on the stage do not. An aside may also be spoken to one other actor so that the others on stage do not overhear.

Calls within: a voice offstage that calls to a character on the stage

Curtains: fabrics draped around a bed that could be opened or closed for privacy

Draw: Actors pull their swords from their sheathes.

Enter: a direction for a character to enter the stage. This can be from the audience's right (stage right) or the audience's left (stage left).

Enter Chorus: a direction for an actor to come to the center of the stage and offer some introductory comments, usually in blank verse or rhyming couplets. In *Romeo and Juliet*, the Chorus delivers a sonnet, a form of poetry associated with love.

Exeunt: All characters leave the stage, or those characters named leave the stage.

Exit: One character leaves the stage.

Flourish: A group of trumpets or other horn instruments play a brief melody.

Have at: Characters begin to fight, usually with swords.

Pageant: a show or spectacle of actors in unusual costumes, usually without words

Prologue: an introduction spoken by the Chorus that gives an overview to the audience and invites them into the play or scene

Retires: A character slips away.

Sennet: a series of notes sounded on brass instruments to announce the approach or departure of a procession

Singing: a signal for the actor to sing the following lines as a tune

Within: voices or sounds occurring offstage but heard by the audience

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Introduction to Shakespeare

A Brief Biography of William Shakespeare

William Shakespeare was born in April 1564 to John and Mary Shakespeare in Stratford-upon-Avon, England. His birthday is celebrated on April 23. This is memorable because April 23 is also the day Shakespeare died in 1616.

Shakespeare was the eldest of nine children in his family, six of whom survived to adulthood.

William Shakespeare's father worked with leather and became a successful merchant early in his career. He held some relatively important government offices. However, when William was in his early teens, his father's financial position began to slide due to growing debt. After many years, John Shakespeare's fortunes and respect were restored, but records indicate that the years of debt and lawsuits were very stressful.

Historians assume that young Will went to school and took a rigorous course of study including Latin, history, and biblical study. In 1582, at the age of eighteen, he married Anne Hathaway, who was three months pregnant.

Studies of Elizabethan family life indicate that Anne's situation was not unusual since it was accepted that the engagement period was as legally binding as the marriage. The couple had a daughter, Susanna, followed by twins, Hamnet and Judith. Not much is known about Shakespeare during the next seven years, but his name is listed as an actor in London by 1592. This was a difficult time for the theater

because measures to prevent the spread of the plague regularly closed the theaters.

Between 1594 and 1595, Shakespeare joined the Chamberlain's Men as a playwright and actor. The acting company featured actor Richard Burbage, and they were a favorite of Queen Elizabeth I. During this time, Shakespeare was writing such plays as *Romeo and Juliet* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Even though Shakespeare was enjoying great success by the time he was 32, it was dampened by the death of his son, Hamnet, in 1596. Soon after, Shakespeare refocused on his home in Stratford where he bought an estate called New Place, with gardens, orchards, and barns in addition to the main home. He still maintained a home in London near the theater.

In 1599, Shakespeare wrote *Henry V*, *Julius Caesar*, and *As You Like It*. The Globe Playhouse was up and running, with Shakespeare a 10 percent owner. This means that he was able to earn 10 percent of any show's profits. This business position helped him solidify his wealth.

In 1603, Shakespeare's reputation earned his acting troop the sponsorship of James I, who requested one play performance per month. Their name changed to the King's Men. By this time, Shakespeare had written and performed in almost all of his comedies and histories. He was proclaimed the finest playwright in London.



ACTIVITY 1

Caliban and Ariel

Act one, Scene 2

Background In this scene, we are introduced to Ariel and Caliban, two reluctant servants of Prospero’s.

Directions Fill in the chart below, and then answer the questions that follow.

	How did this character come to know and serve Prospero?	How does the character feel toward Prospero?	What type of errands/service does the character perform for Prospero?	Give a physical description of this character as you imagine him to look.
Ariel				
Caliban				

1. Do both Ariel and Caliban seem justly or unjustly “imprisoned”? Explain.

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2. Based on the information given thus far in the play, what kind of man is Prospero? Cite evidence from the play in your answer if possible.



ACTIVITY 2

Miranda's Upbringing

Act one, Scene 2

Background After Miranda weeps over the shipwreck, Prospero assures her that no one has drowned. He proceeds to tell his daughter the story of how they came to live on the island and the deception and betrayal that occurred to make that happen.

Directions Fill in the blanks to test your understanding of the events that caused Prospero and Miranda to live on the island.

_____ years ago, Prospero was the Duke of _____ and a powerful _____ . Prospero's brother, named _____ , managed Prospero's kingdom for him as Prospero obsessively studied the Liberal _____ . _____ began to form secret alliances with Prospero's supporters to usurp Prospero's power and position. Antonio's most powerful alliance was with the King of _____ , to whom he pays annual _____ for protection. Antonio also paid him to _____ Prospero from his dukedom and throw Prospero and Miranda out to _____ . A noble Neapolitan named _____ provided them with food, water, and books. Fortune has brought Prospero's _____ to the shore of his island, and he plans to exact his revenge upon his brother.

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ACTIVITY 3

Miranda and Ferdinand

Act one, Scene 2

Background As part of Prospero's plan to regain the dukedom of Milan and punish his scheming brother, he plans for Miranda (his daughter) and Ferdinand (son of the King of Naples) to fall in love, thereby securing favor with his enemy, the King of Naples. Prospero's plan seems to be working, as Miranda and Ferdinand seem taken by each other at first sight. Miranda, who has never seen a man other than her father, reflects upon this handsome new stranger who has awakened new feelings in her. Ferdinand, who is being treated badly by Prospero, doesn't seem concerned by his impending imprisonment as long as he is within eyesight of the lovely Miranda.

Directions Imagine what thoughts both Ferdinand and Miranda would have immediately after the conclusion of Scene 2. Remember that Ferdinand is temporarily imprisoned by Prospero, and Miranda has most likely been led away (despite wanting to stay and speak with the handsome new stranger). Put yourself in their places and, writing in the first person as Ferdinand and Miranda, describe what thoughts are going through each person's mind.

Ferdinand:

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ACTIVITY 4

Prospero

Act one, Scene 2

Background From what we have seen of Prospero so far, he is a complex character, capable of great tenderness and great cruelty, endowed with magic and consumed with the desire for revenge.

Directions To understand Prospero better, find a quotation or a passage from the play that illustrates each character trait below. Use another sheet of paper, if necessary.

Tenderness:

Gratefulness:

Desire for revenge:

Supernatural powers/Interest in supernatural powers:

Capacity for great anger and/or cruelty:

Egotism:

Love of reading and knowledge:

Willingness to manipulate:

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ACTIVITY 5

Review

Directions Read each statement, and decide if it is true or false. Then write true (T) or false (F) in the space provided.

- _____ 1. There was a shipwreck, and some people drowned.
- _____ 2. Prospero was Duke of Milan ten years ago.
- _____ 3. Caliban is imprisoned in a cave for trying to rape Miranda.
- _____ 4. Miranda's mother is on the island as well.
- _____ 5. Ferdinand is the son of the King of Naples.
- _____ 6. Ferdinand knows that his father is alive.
- _____ 7. Prospero wants to form an allegiance between Sebastian and Miranda.
- _____ 8. Caliban's mother is the one who put the curse on Ariel.
- _____ 9. Miranda accidentally saved Ariel from the curse.
- _____ 10. Prospero has access to magical/supernatural powers.

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