

'The Tempest' Play Script

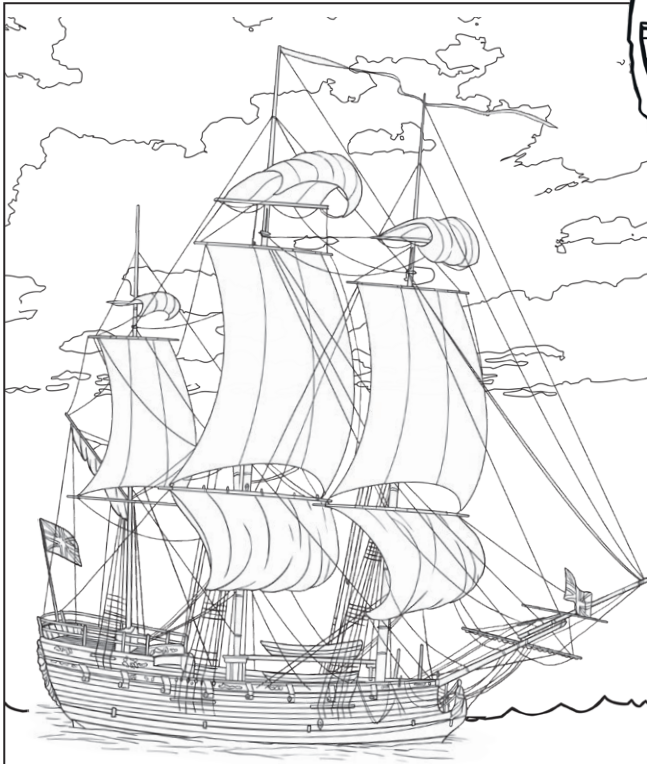
Differentiated Reading Comprehension: Teacher Notes

This play script contains some Shakespearean insults. You may wish to explain to your children that these are for comedic value. William Shakespeare was known for his witty put-downs and insults and these were intended to be performed in a comedic way in order to make this (rather dramatic) scene more lighthearted.

While much of the text has been translated into modern-day language to make it easier for children to understand, some of the traditional Shakespearean dialogue (such as, 'Make haste!') has been preserved in the three-star version of the text. It is intended that the children should infer the meaning of this archaic language but you may wish to use the opportunity to discuss some of this language with your class beforehand.

'The Tempest' Play Script

Below is the opening scene from William Shakespeare's play 'The Tempest'. This scene takes place immediately before a shipwreck. On board are the King of Naples and his companions. The ship's crew are battling to keep the ship from sinking.



Cast:

Master:

The ship's master.

Bosun:

The Master's assistant.

Alonso:

The King of Naples.

Gonzalo:

An old man and advisor to Alonso.

Antonio:

One of the king's noblemen.

Sebastian:

The brother of Alonso, the King of Naples.

Ferdinand:

Alonso's son, the prince.

Sailors

Act I Scene I:

(On a ship at sea. A loud storm can be heard. A ship's master and his assistant Bosun, enter.)

Master: Bosun!

Bosun: Here, master. How can I help?

Master: Speak to the sailors quickly or we will run aground. Hurry up!

(The Master leaves the stage. Bosun gathers together the sailors.)

Bosun: (gives orders to the sailors) Come on, men! That's how you do it. Listen to the master's orders. **(Sailors leave the stage.)** Keep blowing, storm! You won't run us aground.

(Alonso, Sebastian, Antonio, Ferdinand and Gonzalo enter, along with other passengers.)

Did You Know...? A 'tempest' is the name given to a violent and windy storm.

'The Tempest' Play Script

Alonso: Bosun, where's the master? Get these sailors working hard.

Bosun: Can't you hear him giving orders? You are getting in the way of our work. Keep to your cabins. You are making our work more difficult.

Gonzalo: Stay calm, my good man.

Bosun: (angrily) I'll be calm when the sea is calm. Now, leave! Go to your cabin and stop bothering us.

Gonzalo: Just remember that the king is on board, Bosun.

Bosun: There's no one that I love more than myself. You are a king's advisor so why don't you advise this storm to calm down? If you cannot, be thankful you have lived so long and make yourself ready to face the end.

(shouts to the sailors) Come on, men - work harder!

(pushes past Gonzalo, Antonio and Alonso)
Now get out of our way!

(Bosun exits the stage.)

Gonzalo: Although this man is villainous, he seems brave. I don't think he will let us all drown. Let's hope that he will see us through this storm.

(The passengers exit the stage.)

Bosun: (re-enters and shouts to the sailors) Bring down the top sail! Quickly! Lower, lower!

(The passengers can be heard crying and howling below deck.)

Bosun: I wish they would stop howling! They are louder than this storm!

(Re-enter Sebastian, Antonio and Gonzalo.)

Bosun: You lot again! Why are you here? Do you want us all to sink?

Sebastian: Curse you! You selfish dog!

Bosun: Be off with you!

Antonio: You ill-mannered noisemaker! We aren't scared of drowning... you are!

Gonzalo: It should be you that sinks!

Bosun: (laughs then shouts to the sailors)
Turn the ship to the wind! Quickly!

(Enter the sailors - who are soaking wet.)
Mariners: (sounding helpless) All is lost! Pray for your lives! All is lost!

Bosun: What, are we going to drown?

Gonzalo: The king and prince are praying! Let's join them.

Voices below deck:
Save us! The ship is breaking apart!

(Antonio and Sebastian exit the stage.)

Gonzalo: I would give anything for a bit of dry ground. Whatever happens, happens but I'd love a dry ending.



Questions

1. Which author wrote 'The Tempest'? Check one.

- ☐ Charles Dickens
- ☐ William Shakespeare
- ☐ Jane Austen
- ☐ Robert Louis Stevenson

2. Which character from the play is the King of Naples? Check one.

- ☐ Gonzalo
- ☐ Alonso
- ☐ Antonio
- ☐ Bosun

3. Fill in the missing words.

On board are the King of Naples and his _____. The ship's crew are
battling to keep the ship from _____.

4. When does Bosun say that he will be calm?

5. Find and copy a word from the play which shows that the sailors are feeling despair.

6. How do you think Bosun feels about the ship's passengers in this scene? Give a reason for your answer.

7. **Just remember that the king is on board, Bosun.**

Explain why Gonzalo says this.

8. Summarize this scene in two sentences.

Answers

1. Which author wrote 'The Tempest'? Check one.

☑ **William Shakespeare**

2. Which character from the play is the King of Naples? Check one.

☑ **Alonso**

3. Fill in the missing words.

On board are the King of Naples and his **companions**. The ship's crew are battling to keep the ship from **sinking**.

4. When does Bosun say that he will be calm?

Bosun says that he will be calm when the sea is calm.

5. Find and copy a word from the play which shows that the sailors are feeling despair.

helpless

6. How do you think Bosun feels about the ship's passengers in this scene? Give a reason for your answer.

Students' own responses, such as: I think that Bosun is feeling irritated because the passengers keep disturbing him when he's trying to run the ship. I also think that he is angry because they are questioning his abilities.

7. **Just remember that the king is on board, Bosun.**

Explain why Gonzalo says this.

Students' own responses, such as: I think that Gonzalo says this because he wants Bosun to be extra careful and work even harder to keep the ship afloat because the king is a passenger and they need to keep him safe.

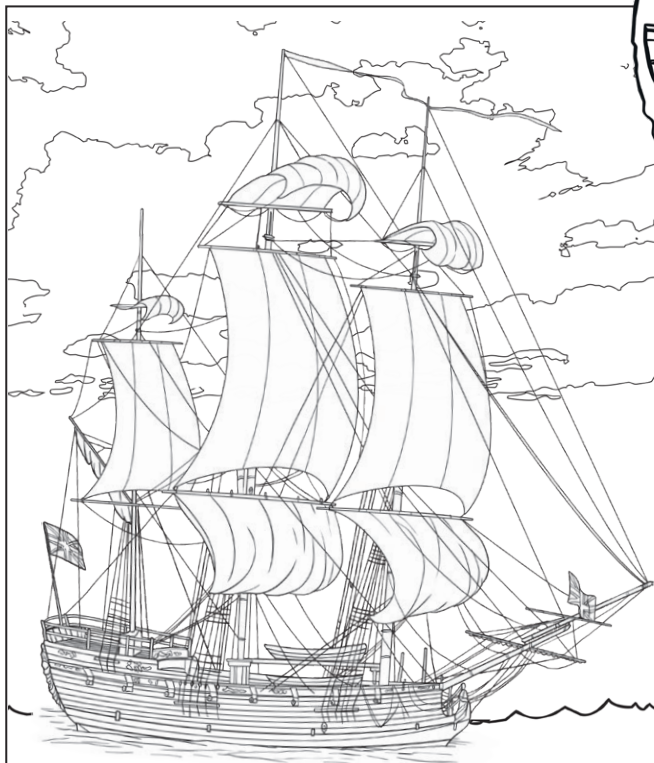
8. Summarize this scene in two sentences.

Students' own responses, such as: Bosun and the sailors are trying to keep the ship from sinking. The passengers, including the King of Naples, are worried that Bosun isn't doing the best job.

'The Tempest' Play Script

William Shakespeare's comedy 'The Tempest' follows the story of several shipwrecked passengers who wash up on the island following a violent storm - known as a tempest.

Below is the opening scene, which takes place immediately before the shipwreck. On board are the King of Naples and his courtiers. The ship's crew are battling to keep the ship afloat.



Cast:

Master:

The ship's master.

Bosun:

The Master's assistant.

Alonso:

The King of Naples.

Gonzalo:

An old man and advisor to Alonso.

Antonio:

One of the king's noblemen.

Sebastian:

The brother of Alonso, the King of Naples.

Ferdinand:

Alonso's son, the prince.

Mariners

Act I Scene I:

(On a ship at sea. A loud noise of thunder and lightning can be heard. A ship's master and his assistant, Bosun, enter.)

Master: Bosun!

Bosun: Here, master. How can I help?

Master: Good, speak to the mariners quickly or we will run ourselves aground. Hurry up!

(The Master leaves the stage. Bosun gathers together the ship's mariners.)

Bosun: (gives orders to the mariners) Come on, men! That's how you do it. Listen to the master's orders. (Mariners exit the stage.) Keep blowing, storm, until you run out of wind so long as we don't run aground!

(Alonso, Sebastian, Antonio, Ferdinand and Gonzalo enter, along with other passengers.)

'The Tempest' Play Script

Alonso: Bosun, where's the master? Get these sailors working hard.

Bosun: Can't you hear him giving orders? You are getting in the way of our work. Keep to your cabins. You are making our work more difficult.

Gonzalo: Stay calm, my good man.

Bosun: (angrily) I'll be calm when the sea is calm. Now, leave! Go to your cabin and stop bothering us.

Gonzalo: Just remember that the king is on board, Bosun.

Bosun: There's no one that I love more than myself. You are a king's advisor so why don't you advise this storm to calm down? If you cannot, be thankful you have lived so long and make yourself ready to face the end.

(shouts to the sailors) Come on, men - work harder!

(pushes past Gonzalo, Antonio and Alonso)
Now get out of our way!

(Bosun exits the stage.)

Gonzalo: Although this man is villainous, he seems brave. I don't think he will let us all drown. Let's hope that he will see us through this storm.

(The passengers exit the stage.)

Bosun: (re-enters and shouts to the sailors)
Bring down the top sail! Quickly! Lower, lower!

(The passengers can be heard crying and howling below deck.)

Bosun: I wish they would stop howling! They are louder than this storm!

(Re-enter Sebastian, Antonio and Gonzalo.)

Bosun: You lot again! Why are you here? Do you want us all to sink?

Sebastian: Curse you! You selfish dog!

Bosun: Be off with you!

Antonio: You ill-mannered noisemaker! We aren't scared of drowning... you are!

Gonzalo: It should be you that sinks!

Bosun: (laughs then shouts to the sailors)
Turn the ship to the wind! Quickly!

(Enter the sailors - who are soaking wet.)

Mariners: (sounding helpless) All is lost!
Pray for your lives! All is lost!

Bosun: What, are we going to drown?

Gonzalo: The king and prince are praying!
Let's join them.

Voices below deck:

Save us! The ship is breaking apart!

(Antonio and Sebastian exit the stage.)

Gonzalo: I would give anything for a bit of dry ground. Whatever happens, happens but I'd love a dry ending.



Questions

1. What is a 'tempest'? Check one.

- ☐ a ship
- ☐ an island
- ☐ a storm
- ☐ a sea

2. What happens to the ship at the end of the scene? Check one.

- ☐ It sets on fire.
- ☐ It tips over.
- ☐ It comes to a stop.
- ☐ It begins to break apart.

3. Fill in the missing words.

I have great _____ from talking to this man: he doesn't look like someone who will let us all _____.

4. Give the name of **two** of the characters that Bosun tells to stay below deck.

- _____
- _____

5. Find and copy a word that means when a ship is touching the ground under shallow water.

6. Give a suitable title for this scene of the play.

7. Discuss why the passengers are 'crying and howling' below deck.

8. **I'll be calm when the sea is calm. Now, leave! The roaring sea cares not about the king. Go to your cabin and trouble us not.**

Explain why Bosun says, 'the roaring sea cares not about the king'.

9. Predict what might happen in the next scene of the play.

Answers

1. What is a 'tempest'? Tick one.

☑ **a storm**

2. What happens to the ship at the end of the scene? Tick one.

☑ **It begins to break apart.**

3. Fill in the missing words.

I have great **comfort** from talking to this man: he doesn't look like someone who will let us all **drown**.

4. Give the name of **two** of the characters that Bosun tells to stay below deck.

Accept any two of the following: Gonzalo; Antonio; Alonso.

5. Find and copy a word that means when a ship is touching the ground under shallow water.

(run) aground

6. Give a suitable title for this scene of the play.

Students' own responses, such as: A Storm at Sea.

7. Discuss why the passengers are 'crying and howling' below deck.

Students' own responses, such as: The passengers are 'crying and howling' below deck because they are scared for their lives; they may be worried that they may drown and never see their loved ones again. They may also be feeling seasick due to the stormy sea.

8. **I'll be calm when the sea is calm. Now, leave! The roaring sea cares not about the king. Go to your cabin and trouble us not.**

Explain why Bosun says, 'the roaring sea cares not about the king'.

Students' own responses, such as: Bosun says this because the sea and the storm do not recognise the importance of the king. It doesn't make any difference to the sea whether a king is on board the ship or not.

9. Predict what might happen in the next scene of the play.

Students' own responses, such as: I predict that the ship will sink and that some passengers may swim towards the shore. Others may make it onto a boat and sail ashore to a nearby island.

'The Tempest' Play Script

William Shakespeare's comedy 'The Tempest' is set long ago on an unnamed island that is inhabited by a father and daughter who were marooned many years earlier. The play follows the story of several shipwrecked passengers who wash up on the island following a violent storm - known as a tempest.

Below is an extract of the opening scene, which takes place at sea prior to the shipwreck. On board are the King of Naples and his courtiers - who are returning to Italy. The ship's master and his crew of mariners are battling to keep the ship afloat.

Act I Scene I:

(On a ship at sea. A tempestuous noise of thunder and lightning can be heard. A ship's master and his assistant, Bosun, enter.)

Master: Bosun!

Bosun: Here, master, what cheer?

Master: Good, speak to the mariners: go briskly or we will run ourselves aground. Make haste! Make haste!

(The Master exits the stage. Bosun gathers together the ship's mariners.)

Bosun: (gives orders to the mariners) Come on, men! That's how you do it! Quick, quick! Take in the topsail. Tend to the master's orders. **(Mariners exit the stage.)** Keep blowing, storm, till thou burst thy wind so long as we have enough room to avoid running aground!

(Alonso, Sebastian, Antonio, Ferdinand and Gonzalo enter, along with other passengers.)

Cast:

Master:

The ship's master.

Bosun:

The Master's assistant.

Alonso:

The King of Naples.

Gonzalo:

An old man and advisor to Alonso.

Antonio:

One of the king's noblemen.

Sebastian:

The brother of Alonso, the King of Naples.

Ferdinand:

Alonso's son, the prince.

Mariners

Alonso: Good Bosun, have care. Where's the master? Work these men hard.

Bosun: I pray now, keep below the deck.

Antonio: Where is the master, Bosun?

Bosun: Do you not hear him giving orders? You are getting in the way of our labour; keep to your cabins, you do assist the storm.

Gonzalo: Stay calm, my good man.

Bosun: (angrily) I'll be calm when the sea is calm. The roaring sea cares not about the king. To your cabin and silence! Trouble us not.

Gonzalo: Just remember who you have aboard, good man.

'The Tempest' Play Script

Bosun: None that I love more than myself. You are a king's advisor; if you can command these elements to silence and make the waters peaceful, then we will not hand a rope more. Use your authority: if you cannot, give thanks you have lived so long, and make yourself ready to face the worst of fates, if it comes to that. **(shouts to the mariners)** Come on, men - work harder! **(pushes past Gonzalo, Antonio and Alonso)** Now out of our way, I say.

(Bosun exits the stage.)

Gonzalo: I have great comfort from talking to this fellow: methinks that he doesn't look like someone who will let us all drown. He seems to be villainous, yet brave. Let us hope he will see us through this storm.

(The passengers exit the stage.)

Bosun: (re-enters and shouts to the mariners) Down with the topmast! Quickly! Lower, lower! Bring the ship to sail close to the wind.

(The passengers can be heard crying and howling below deck.)

Bosun: A plague upon this howling! They are louder than the weather or our own mariners.

(Re-enter Sebastian, Antonio and Gonzalo.)

Bosun: You again! Why are you here? Shall we give up and drown? Have you a mind to sink?

Sebastian: A mind to sink? Curse you! You incharitable dog!

Bosun: Well, get to work then!

Antonio: You insolent noisemaker! We are less afraid to be drowned than you are.

Gonzalo: Yes, if we drown then it should be you that sinks!

Bosun: (laughs at the passengers then turns to the mariners) Turn the ship to the wind! Set her sails and make a course off to sea again.

(Enter the mariners - who are soaking wet.)

Mariners: (sounding helpless) All is lost! Pray for your lives! All is lost!

Bosun: What, are we going to drown?

Gonzalo: The king and prince are at prayers! Let's assist them; our fate is the same as theirs.

Sebastian: I'm out of patience.

Antonio: We are being cheated out of our lives by drunken sailors!

Voices below deck: Mercy on us! We split, we split! Farewell, my wife and children! Farewell, brother! The ship is breaking apart!

Antonio: Let's all sink with the king.

Sebastian: Let's say farewell to him.

(Antonio and Sebastian exit the stage.)

Gonzalo: Now would I give a thousand furlongs of sea for an acre of dry ground. Our fate has been decided yet I long for a dry ending.

(Gonzalo exits the stage.)



Questions

1. Which genre of play is 'The Tempest'? Check one.

- ☐ tragedy
- ☐ comedy
- ☐ history
- ☐ romance

2. Draw **four** lines and match each phrase from the play to its modern-day meaning.

make haste

have care

what cheer

mercy on us

be careful

what is the matter

be kind to us

hurry up

3. What does Gonzalo say he will give in return for 'an acre of dry ground'?

4. Find and copy one word which means 'very stormy'.

5. Who can be heard crying and howling below deck during the storm?

6. **Do you not hear him giving orders? You are getting in the way of our labour; keep to your cabins: you do assist the storm**

Explain what is meant by the phrase 'you do assist the storm'.

7. Discuss how Bosun may be feeling in this scene.

8. Do you think that Bosun is doing a good job at helping to sail the ship through the storm?
Explain your answer.

9. Predict what might happen in the next scene of the play.

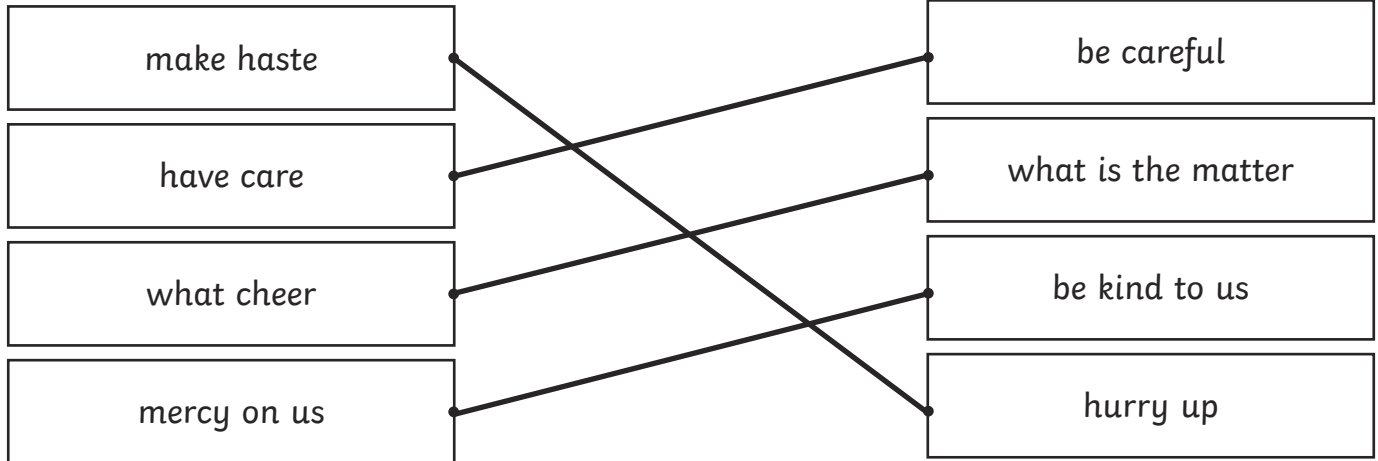
10. Summarize this scene in fewer than 30 words.

Answers

1. Which genre of play is 'The Tempest'? Tick one.

☑ **comedy**

2. Draw **four** lines and match each phrase from the play to its modern-day meaning.



3. What does Gonzalo say he will give in return for 'an acre of dry ground'?

Gonzalo says that he would give a thousand furlongs of sea for an acre of dry ground.

4. Find and copy one word which means 'very stormy'.

tempestuous

5. Who can be heard crying and howling below deck during the storm?

The passengers can be heard crying and howling below deck.

6. **Do you not hear him giving orders? You are getting in the way of our labour; keep to your cabins: you do assist the storm**

Explain what is meant by the phrase 'you do assist the storm'.

Students' own responses, such as: I think it means that the passengers are helping the storm by adding to the work that Bosun and the mariners have to do. By interfering, they are making it more difficult to navigate through the storm.

7. Discuss how Bosun may be feeling in this scene.

Students' own responses, such as: I think that Bosun might be feeling worried about the fate of the ship and its crew. He may also feel irritated and angry by the interruptions from all of the passengers.

8. Do you think that Bosun is doing a good job at helping to sail the ship through the storm? Explain your answer.

Students' own responses, such as: I think that Bosun is doing a good job. He cannot help the fact that the ship is caught in a storm and he is working hard to give the mariners orders, despite interruptions from some of the passengers.

9. Predict what might happen in the next scene of the play.

Students' own responses, such as: I predict that the ship will start to sink and some passengers will make it to a nearby island on boats and others may swim to the shore.

10. Summarize this scene in fewer than 30 words.

Students' own responses, such as: A ship has been caught in a tempest. The crew are battling to keep it afloat and the passengers (including the King of Naples) are worried for their lives.