

PERFORMANCE OPTION 2

Creating Choral Work Using *The Tempest*

Materials: Storm scene from *The Tempest* (Act 1, Scene 1) for each actor

Grade: 2-12

Goal(s): To develop ensemble performance opportunities from a Shakespearean monologue. To provide greater exploration of Shakespeare's plays, themes, and language through ensemble performance.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Distribute the text to each actor.
2. Assign the lines of the text. How does the actor's gender inform the delivery of a line? Do attitude, speed, and gesture change the meaning and/or power of how words are said?
3. Perform the text, with each performance being reviewed and revised for clarity and meaning.

SUGGESTED VARIATION(S):

- **For beginning actors:** Review the text for pronunciation and meaning.
- **For advanced actors:** Assign the text to smaller groups. Within these groups, have the actors decide their own line assignments.
- **Raising The Bar:**
 - Have the actors research and develop their own choral pieces from monologues, scenes, and sonnets.
 - Combine the work of all of the groups to develop a final presentation in front of an audience.

SYNOPSIS:

During a dangerous and dreadful storm on the high seas, several characters struggle to keep their ship from wrecking. The scene is extremely physical. In this version, the text has been edited to be performed by six actors. Many of Shakespeare's emotional or action-based scenes lend themselves to similar exploration.

Actor 1: Boatswain!

[Enter Actor 2]

Actor 2: Here, master: what cheer?

Actor 1: Good, speak to the mariners: fall to't rarely, or we run ourselves aground.

Actor 2: Bestir, bestir.

[Enter Actors 3 and 4]

Actor 3: Heigh, my hearts!

Actor 4: Cheerly, cheerly, my hearts!

Actors 3 and 4: Yare, yare!

Actors 1 and 2: Take in the topsail.

Actor 1: Tend to the master's whistle.

Actor 2: Blow, till thou burst thy wind, if room enough!

[Enter Actors 5 and 6]

Actor 5: Good boatswain, have care.

Actor 6: Where's the master?



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Actors 5 and 6: Play the men.
Actor 3: I pray now, keep below.
Actor 6: Where is the master, boson?
Actor 4: Do you not hear him?
Actor 1: You mar our labour!
Actors 1, 2, 3, and 4: Keep your cabins!
Actor 2: You do assist the storm.
Actors 5 and 6: Nay, good, be patient.
Actors 1 and 2: When the sea is.
Actors 3 and 4: Hence!
Actor 5: What cares these roarers for the name of king?
Actor 4: To cabin: silence!
Actor 1: Trouble us not.
Actor 6: Good, yet remember whom thou hast aboard.
Actor 1: None that I more love than myself.
Actor 2: You are a counselor: if you can command these elements to silence,
Actor 1: And work the peace of the present.
Actor 3: We will not hand a rope more; use your authority
Actor 4: If you cannot, give thanks you have lived so long, and make yourself ready in your cabin for the mischance of the hour
Actor 1: If it so hap.
Actors 3 and 4: Cheerly, good hearts!
Actor 2: Out of our way
Actors 5 and 6: I say.
Actor 5: I have great comfort from this fellow: methinks he hath no drowning mark upon him; his complexion is perfect gallows.
Actor 6: 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.
Actor 1: Down with the topmast! Yare!
Lower, lower!
Actor 2: Bring her to try with main-course.

[Actors 5 and 6 gasp at the work of the other actors.]
Actor 3: A plague upon this howling!
Actor 4: They are louder than the weather!
Actor 2: Or our office!
Actor 5: A pox o' your throat, you bawling, blasphemous, incharitable dog!
Actor 2: Work you, then.
Actor 5: Hang, cur, hang!
Actor 6: You whoreson, insolent noisemaker, we are less afraid to be drowned than thou art.
Actor 4: All lost!
Actor 3: To prayers, to prayers!
Actor 4: All lost!
Actor 5: What, must our mouths be cold?
Actor 6: The king and prince at prayers!
Actor 5: Let us assist them, for our case is as theirs.
Actor 2: I am out of patience.
Actor 5: We are merely cheated of our lives by drunkards.-
Actors 1 and 2: This wide-chapp'd rascal!
Actor 3: Would thou might'st lie drowning,
Actor 4: The washing of ten tides!
Actor 6: He'll be hang'd yet, though every drop of water swear against it,
Actor 5: And gape at wid'st to glut him.
[A confused noise within]
Actor 1: Mercy on us!
Actor 2: We split, we split!
Actor 3: Farewell, my wife and children!
Actor 4: Farewell, brother!
Actor 2: We split, we split,
Actors 1, 2, 3, and 4: We split!
Actor 5: Let's all sink wi' the king.
Actor 6: Let's take leave of him.
Actor 2: Now would I give a thousand furlongs of sea for an acre of barren ground,
Actor 1: Long heath,
Actors 3 and 4: Brown furze,
Actor 2: Any thing.
Actors 5 and 6: The wills above be done!
Actors 1, 2, 3, and 4: But I would fain die a dry death.

