

DRAMA *Works*

Plays Through Practice

THE TEMPEST
by
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EXTRACT

NOTES

1. It does not matter what edition you use. I have been careful to make references clear, and when working through the text, it is taken in order.
2. Please note that the contents of this teaching guide have been copyrighted. Permission is given to photocopy pages for the use of your own students but it is not permissible to pass copies to teachers in other establishments.
3. The hardest thing about giving practical work on a set-text is to try not to be too proscriptive. All the way through, I have attempted to give a variety of possibilities, a number of interpretations or approaches. There are of course many different ways of doing things, other than the suggestions I have made. I hope that the work here will be approached as a starting-point on a journey of personal discovery made by each group of students. And then, if all their ideas fail, at least these ones are there to fall back on!

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EXTRACT:

c] Creating the Magic.

The Tempest is a play which lends itself to what Brook calls Moments of Wonder. There are practical ideas throughout the resource encouraging experimentation on these lines, but it would be a good idea to prepare for starting the play by the group finding ways of creating their own moments of wonder.

First of all experiment with sound, just using voices, breaths, and their own bodies, e.g. slapping thighs, upper chests etc - different parts of the body make quite different sounds. Create the following:

from a quiet and peaceful beginning, build up tension through fear or horror and back down again to calm

using voice alone create a clashing chord just by humming in the group. Again, start soft and build, then bring it back down again

repeat the last group hum and add random unsettling sounds to create a scary atmosphere. The sounds could be scratching of nails on the floor, sudden drum-like noises made on chairs or floor or walls, shrieks and wails - again random and short, etc.

make the sound of a peaceful sea, physicalising it with the whole group, in staggered lines, curling over and slapping down onto the floor as waves, then scrabbling the fingers as the curled body drags back, and straightens to become the peak of a wave once more. The rhythm needs to be slow and easy. See if you can build this into a storm by increasing the tempo and adding sounds with the voice as well.

As a group, physicalise the spirits [half the group] splitting the ship apart and dragging passengers into the sea. Focus first on the panic of the passengers, their flailing limbs and desperate breaths. Then have the spirits pass a gentle hand over the face of their passenger and help him/her to shore, magically unconscious. Arrange him/her on the shore and make a wide circle around them. Then allow them to slowly wake and look around in wonder at the beautiful place on which they have landed. Accompany their awaking with peaceful sounds.

Experiment, in pairs, with one person 'hypnotising' the other with the palm of their hand. As in the famous Boal exercise, the person who is hypnotised keeps their nose close to the palm of that hand. Rooted to the spot, the hypnotiser gently and slowly makes their partner bend their body and move their head, as they follow the quiet movement of the hypnotic hand.

Expand the distance between the hypnotiser and hypnotised, still keeping the movements slow. Only the hypnotiser moves away - his partner stays rooted to the spot. The hypnotised must concentrate hard to keep his movements synchronised with the hypnotiser. By the end, there should be considerable distance, a few yards, between the pairs, and other members of the group may have crossed between, so that the whole floor is covered by gentle patterns of movements, like waving seakelp.

Add appropriate sound.

Throughout the text, you will find physical exercises like these with which to experiment.

WORKING THROUGH THE TEXT IN A PRACTICAL WAY

NOTE: Before beginning the work in the following pages, it is essential that the students have read the play through - either in class or just individually in preparation. At the very least, they should have read the plot and character delineations outlined earlier in this resource. Much of the following work assumes a knowledge of both.

Students will need to keep a careful record of all decisions made as they experiment with the options suggested in the following practical exercises. These will piece together into an acting, directing, designing notebook which will inform all their written work.

FIRST IDEAS ABOUT SETTING

As usual I like to start with the setting. The play has many changes of scene, but all take place on the island, albeit different parts of it. Groups of characters come in as others exit, but they are supposed to be in totally different parts of the island. This presumption is, of course, the same as for any Shakespeare play.

Shakespeare's stage was part of a long tradition where an empty space can conjure up anywhere. That in itself is a kind of magic. But audiences accept the changes of place happily, educated in that tradition. So you don't need to weigh down the setting with anything too elaborate and certainly not anything that would involve any changes of scenery. Stick to the tradition of bringing essential props and furnishings in where necessary, using a character in the play to do so.

Even though I say this, there are options that you may want to consider. Remember that for any thought about setting you need to have an actual space – one that you are familiar with – in mind. It could be your school stage, or studio, or a local theatre's stage which you know well. Measure out the space available [the local theatre may have a handout sheet you can use of the stage measurements if you use this option]. For any design you need to be able to place it in your chosen space.

Here are some ideas from past productions of the play which may inspire your own ideas. One of these had the stage floor covered with varying sized shells. A huge one was where Caliban had his den; he emerged from it like a snail, on his stomach.

Another had a stage, the back and edges of which were festooned with greenery and rocks, even a trickle of water running down a rock into a pool, all very beautiful. This had the advantage of giving many places from which Prospero can spy on others, which he does many times in the play, as well as many levels for sitting and making varied groupings.

Most versions have kept to the idea of a bare stage, even if the main part of it has been, for instance, covered in glittering white sand, with scattered rocks for sitting places and raised levels.

One idea to consider would be a setting made out of books. I am adapting this from a version of *The Winter's Tale* at the Round House a few years ago. Though the set was marvellous to view: bookcases full of books created doorways and walls, and collapsed in the second half, strewing a rubble of books everywhere which the characters had to pick their way over, all to symbolise the destructiveness of Leontes' jealousy, it did not, to my mind, fit with the themes of that particular play. I could find no justification for it; it was just a design/directorial idea forced onto the play.

Such an idea would find justification in *The Tempest*, however, which has a theme of books running through it from beginning to end. Imagine a studio production where open books, showing their white inner pages, make an outer rim, surrounding the playing area like sea foam. Piles of books make crags and

scatters of rock and stone, like a stumbled beach. How could it work? The books glued haphazardly together into craggy shapes, or making pathways up to Prospero's cave, or balled papier mache, showing the scribble of print to make other shapes - rocks, cliffs, and so on... It would be a fun and inventive idea. And, sad to say, it is never hard to find books to use. Huge numbers are pulped by charity shops, who are inundated with more than they can sell.

Another idea comes from a touring production that took place in a circus tent. The circus performed in the tent during the day and the actors took it over in the evenings. This meant that the setting had to be simple, but could take advantage of trapezes and ropes above the heads of the audience. Lighting had to be very basic and used only a few free-standing lamps. There were two Ariels, who used trapezes on different sides of the tent. And Prospero too used a trapeze at times, to spy on the machinations he had set in motion. Other than that, staging was a bare wooden platform.

Discuss all the above ideas, with any that you can add. At the start of your work on the play you may not be able to finalise any set ideas you have, but the above may have got your imaginations working. Your ideas will start to come together as you work through and explore the themes. Until these ideas emerge, stick at first to planning groupings and entrances and exits, making notes as you go of where you think it would be good to have concealments, places where characters are hidden from others but not to the audience, and so on. Gradually the *how* of these ideas may emerge through your explorations.

ACT ONE, SCENE ONE

This is a scene of frenetic action, where sailors run around trying to haul in the sails and steer the ship. We are introduced to a group of characters being sent by the tipping deck from one side of the ship to the other. Alonso, the King of Naples, emerges briefly and is sent below deck by the Boatswain, who with the other sailors is striving to keep the ship from sinking and is not taking kindly to a number of landlubbers getting in the way. Antonio [called Anthonio in some versions] and Sebastian, the two 'baddies' in the play, are revealed as foul-mouthed and unpleasant straightaway, from their language, while old Gonzalo tries to keep everyone's spirits up for as long as possible. He chatters more than anyone else, too. Even in this opening there are clues to three of the main characters.

With this opening, we are plunged straight into one of the hardest scenes for any director to envisage and the first big directorial decision. Do you follow the simple staging ideas of Shakespeare's own time? Or do you throw at it all the technical effects the modern theatre can muster?

You already know the story of the play and know that this storm is not a natural one [though it certainly appears so to Miranda], but one that is conjured up by Prospero and manipulated by his spirit servant, Ariel. This might give you some ideas, while bearing in mind that the sailors themselves believe the ship is foundering for sure and the whole play hangs on that belief, in which people are separated and believed to be drowned, so horrific is the storm.

So the storm must look good and sound good – yet people speak throughout it and ought to be heard. Already you can see the main difficulty.

Let's begin with just the words to start with. There isn't anything of any great matter said here. That could be an argument that it doesn't matter too much if some of the words are lost amidst sound effects. Certainly many directors have taken this point of view. Yet, as a member of the audience, it could be frustrating and off-putting hearing speech but not being able to catch what they are talking about.

It is clear that Shakespeare has done his research, or perhaps been

caught in a storm at sea himself. The instructions the Boatswain [bo'sun] gives throughout the scene are sensible and in the proper order for a foundering ship, that is to 1] Take in the main sail [topsail], 2] take the main mast down, for it might otherwise break 3] take in any remaining sails [lay her a'hold] though then he cancels this out by saying 'set her two courses' – in other words, let out two of the smaller sails again - a panic instruction to try to sail away from the shore perhaps. In between his shouted instructions to the sailors, the Boatswain is trying to clear the decks of the passengers who keep getting in the way.

Everything is done at speed, as he obeys the instructions of the ship's Master at the beginning, who tells him to do all he can 'yarely', which means speedily, and to generally get a move on. But it all fails by the end of the scene, for the ship is on the rocks and is breaking up.

Carefully read through the scene now, for the purpose of making sense of it. You will see how difficult the passengers are making it for the beleaguered Boatswain. Up on deck, instead of staying in their cabins out of the way, they 'assist the storm.' In other words they are hindering the sailors, who are fighting against the storm.

The king, Alonso, appears to think that by 'play'ing the men – in other words 'ply'ing them - to effective tasks which will get them out of trouble, and by demanding to see the Master, all will be solved. He has no understanding of the trouble they're in. Antonio backs the king up and, more aggressively, demands the Master's presence.

Gonzalo tells the Boatswain to 'be patient', that is to calm down, and the curt answer is that he can afford to calm down only when the sea does.

The entire attitude of these nobles and courtiers is outrage that the elements do not respect the king!

The Boatswain points out that he loves his own life. Do they not think that he is doing everything he can? But it doesn't help having interference from landlubbers.

Outraged by the Boatswain's lack of respect for authority, Gonzalo jokes that the man has a 'complexion' that is 'perfect gallows'. In other words, he was born to be hung as a rogue. Gonzalo takes comfort from this. If the Boatswain has written in his face that his fate is to be hung, then they will not drown.

Briefly the courtiers obey the Boatswain, who has run elsewhere on deck to see what needs doing, and they go to their cabins. After 'A cry within' they re-emerge. The cry is one of terror from all below decks. The courtiers Antonio and Gonzalo re-appear, accompanied this time by the King's brother, Sebastian. The two friends, Sebastian and Antonio then berate the poor Boatswain, blaming everything on him. The Boatswain suggests they work with the sailors then, but this suggestion – made in anger – engenders more swearing. Their pride touched as gentlemen [though there's nothing gentle about these two] Antonio states they're not afraid of drowning and Gonzalo repeats his assertion that he cannot see in the Boatswain's face any hint of drowning as his fate. Note that the word 'for' can, confusingly mean 'against' – which it does here: 'I'll warrant him for drowning.' Gonzalo hasn't changed his mind.

The entry of the soaking sailors with their cry that all is lost, ends any further attempt to save the ship. The Boatswain takes to the bottle; he doesn't want the 'cold' waters of the sea in his mouth, so fills it instead with the comfort of alcohol.

Incensed by this 'wide-chapp'd rascal' [his chaps, or chops, are stretched wide over the mouth of the bottle] Antonio curses him to suffer drowning ten times over. The sailors below decks warn that the ship is breaking up and Antonio and Sebastian decide to go below to die with the King, Alonso. Gonzalo is left wishing for a dry death anywhere, so long as it be on land.

I have gone into some detail over the text here, for the language is not easy and there is a lot of to and froing which makes it harder to visualise. Before trying some practical work, what else can we notice about this opening scene?

It is written in a mixture of blank verse [iambic pentameter] and prose. Shakespeare usually breaks into prose when writing comedy scenes and uses iambic pentameter for serious scenes and tragedy. This play is a blend of both and throughout many scenes there is a similar blend of verse and prose.

We already do not have a good opinion of Antonio or Sebastian. Nothing about them has been likeable or deserved our respect.

Gonzalo appears garrulous. We know already from the cast list that he is old. He doesn't appear too worried by anything until the end of the scene, but has a tendency to look on the bright side. His repeated assertion that he does not see drowning as the Boatswain's fate means that he remains hopeful about their fate too. He tries to get the two baddies to go and comfort the king and his son. For this small section he speaks in verse, showing that he has employed his 'higher self', to coin a modern term, and tries to steer these courtiers to do the right thing.

See if you can list first of all what you learn about the passengers from this scene. Then, sticking as closely as you can to the events of the scene, improvise it in your own words.

Having discovered the gist of the scene, try to choreograph the general movement of the characters: where they enter, where they exit and how they stand on board a ship in a storm. Might they catch on to each other? Or to a mast? Does this give you ideas of what props might be helpful for this scene – ropes, a mast, sails?

There are no further scenes on shipboard, so you would not, as designers, want to invest too much on a fanciful setting for this opening – and yet, it must look good.

The touring production in a tent that I referred to earlier made this mercifully simple. There were lengths of canvas attached by ropes to some of the tent supports, which unfurled over the heads of the audience and flapped. Most of the cast, as temporary 'mariners,' surrounded the audience, hanging onto ropes which stretched over their heads. The action happened in and around the audience, as if they were passengers in that ship.

You may want to have actors moving as if on a deck that tips violently first one way then another. **Try this out movement-wise, as a group exercise. Does it help to hang onto someone? Will some slip and fall and hang onto others who, despite all, remain standing?**

What happens if you have a rope, or a ladder, the side of the boat or a mast to hang onto? Experiment with this using whatever you have in your props cupboard, ropes, canes, chairs – whatever comes to hand.

Now, again as a whole group, try with your own voices and some percussion instruments if you can, to make the sound of the storm. Be inventive. Use your voices to whoop, whoosh, groan and howl. Try building to a crescendo and dipping the sound until it is just background noise. You could use: drums, cymbals, thunder sheets, rain sticks [easy to make out of empty tubular biscuit tins filled with lentils or dry peas], and other hand shaken instruments that most music departments have in abundance.

Have a group director, or the teacher, 'conducting' the level of sound, so that as one you can raise or dip the noise.

Would you plunge the whole audience into the storm from the outset, or might you show how the storm is created?

Discuss whether you think it important for the audience to think that the storm is real or should they realise from the beginning that it is a work of magic, carried out by Prospero and Ariel. What differences would be made as to how

the scene is viewed?

If you decide to show the magic working, here are some ideas to discuss and try out if you are able:

a] Prospero stands on a high part of the setting, as if above everything. He holds a mirror in his hand. As the musicians around the auditorium begin a hum, in a discord, very softly, Ariel, also high up somewhere in the auditorium, lifts a mirror too. Scattered around the auditorium are other 'spirits' with mirrors. A single directional light is turned on and Prospero, with some ceremony, catches the light in his mirror and reflects it until Ariel catches it in his mirror, and passes it to the next mirror, etc. Strong torches with the mirrors might work as well. Throughout, the hum rises, becoming more and more sinister and discordant, until on a thunderclap, the fitful stage lighting for the storm takes over and we are on the boat...

b] Prospero is lit on high, Ariel at his feet, facing outwards, stooped and quivering with tension like a runner at the beginning of a race. With a powerful gesture, Prospero points the direction and Ariel leaps away, or swings down, gathering other spirits on his way. With arms, or cloths, or planks of wood [light wood, painted] representing the outer shape of the ship, they surround the actors, their bodies and/or props, rising and falling throughout the scene to show the progress of the storm and the boat splitting.

c] A terrifyingly loud storm assaults the audience's ears in total darkness, with occasional lightning flashes. This gives way onto a dimly lit first scene and fades behind the words. For this you could choose moments in the text where there could be a crash, or where the sound rises.

Working with these ideas, or discussing them, you will begin to see what fun you can have with this play. It is a play about magic, after all, which is simply handing you a licence to use your imaginations. The most important thing is to decide whether the whole thing should be done as 'poor theatre', that is with minimum props and effects, relying on the actor's bodies and voices to do the work, or as a piece of technical wonder. And there are many possibilities in between these two extremes.

The one thing I would counsel you with is to be certain you can back your creative ideas with 'hows' and 'whys'. You need to know how things can be achieved and be able to justify your choices. Experiment as much as you can.

Your discussions and your explorations into what will work will have given you more ideas about setting too. Make sure you jot all these ideas down in your notebooks, for finalising later.

As far as you can, put on a performance of this scene now before moving on to the next.

ACT ONE, SCENE TWO

The first, lengthy part of the scene is a duologue between Prospero and his daughter Miranda. It starts with her distress at having seen the sinking of a ship in the storm and the drowning of all its passengers. Already she wonders if her father, who she knows is a magician, has anything to do with it. Prospero tells her that this is indeed so, and that no one has been hurt. Everything has been done for her sake, and to explain further he must tell her who she is and how the pair of them came to the island.

Prospero tells her how he is really the Duke of Milan, who was usurped from his throne by his own brother, Antonio. More interested in his books, Prospero had allowed his brother more and more power, leaving the real ruling of the dukedom to him. Finally, Antonio asked for help in deposing his brother,

from the King of Naples, Alonso. In return for paying tribute to Naples, Alonso agreed, and one night, Prospero was seized along with his baby daughter Miranda, and the two were cast away in a small boat. Secretly, distressed at the way Prospero was being treated, Gonzalo crept down with food and drink for them, and the most treasured books out of Prospero's beloved library. For these kindnesses, Prospero still blesses Gonzalo.

Eventually the tiny boat was cast up on this island and now, through his magic, Prospero has discovered that, on a ship close by, all his enemies are sailing, on their way back from the wedding of Alonso's daughter, Claribel. So the magician has created a magical storm to bring them to him.

Perhaps unable to decide what to do with these enemies yet, Prospero casts a spell to make Miranda asleep while he consults with Ariel. Ariel tells him that he has saved all on board, but separated them and scattered the ships that were accompanying that of the King Alonso. The rest of the fleet has left to go home, convinced they have witnessed the death of all aboard the king's ship. Ferdinand, Alonso's son, has been cast up on the island alone.

Having done everything Prospero asked, Ariel demands his freedom. But this is denied him as there is yet more to do. To bring Ariel to heel, Prospero reminds the spirit that he was captured inside a tree-trunk by the witch Sycorax, who once ruled the island. Prospero released Ariel from this torture, otherwise he would still be there, since Sycorax is long dead.

Promising that Ariel will in the end be free, Prospero sends him away to be an invisible sea spirit, in a shape ready to do more mischief on Prospero's ship-wrecked enemies.

Miranda is woken from her magic-induced sleep. She thinks it is the weight of the story about their arrival on the island that made her doze off.

Ariel returns in spirit-form and his disguise is approved by Prospero, who whispers instructions in his ear.

Caliban, whom Prospero has been calling, reluctantly appears. It is clear that Miranda does not like Caliban, who is the son of that same witch Sycorax, and thus a true inhabitant of the island, but Prospero has made him their servant, and instructs her that they both have need of him.

Caliban complains that the island used to be his and now he is made a slave. At first Prospero was kind to him, but now he uses force and punishment to keep Caliban under. Miranda, too, used to be kind to Caliban and taught him to speak. It becomes clear that both father and daughter intended kindness to Caliban, but he abused their softness by trying to rape Miranda. Accompanied by threats, Prospero sends Caliban off for firewood.

Now Ariel, invisible, comes in leading a bewildered Ferdinand, son of King Alonso of Naples. Prospero steers Miranda to a place from which both can see the boy but not be seen.

Ferdinand is convinced he is the sole survivor of the shipwreck and laments his drowned father. Miranda is enchanted by the sight of this young man, the first she has seen. This, it appears is what Prospero intended – that the two young people should fall for each other. Nonetheless, he is afraid of things happening too fast and being too easy, afraid too of Miranda's own innocence, so he resolves to test Ferdinand by pretending he thinks him a traitor and forcing him to work as a captive.

This is a very long scene, the longest in the play. By the end of it, all the seeds of the rest of the play are in place, and all the themes are introduced:

1. Art and Nature, Nature and Nurture and Innocence and Experience
2. Servitude and Freedom
3. We have the beginnings of discussion about what it is to be a good ruler and what a bad.
4. We have the beginnings of a discussion about learning and its ennobling power. Through the grace of learning and understanding man can be taught restraint. Caliban is unable to learn, has no restraint – hence his attempted

violation of Miranda – whereas already in this scene Ferdinand and Miranda, both, are learning, with prompting from Prospero, to restrain their inclinations. By inference, and because we have evidence in this scene of how great is Prospero's magic, we can see that Prospero could have finished all his enemies off in the storm, but he has restrained himself. There must then be another reason for him separating the passengers and scattering them over the island, which we have yet to discover. His plan for Ferdinand and his own daughter is the beginning of this greater plan. Nobody in the play is out of the reach of learning's ennobling power, even Prospero himself, as we will see by the end. Linked to this idea is the theme of:
5. Forgiveness

ACT ONE, SCENE TWO: Part one:
PROSPERO TELLS MIRANDA WHO THEY ARE AND WHY THEY ARE HERE

The scene opens with a distraught Miranda rushing on, having witnessed the shipwreck. This follows on nicely from Scene One. Depending on how and, especially, where you place that scene, there need be no break between the two.

Even if you have decided to conceal the magical element of the storm from the audience, this is the time where the lights can pan out and include the sight of Prospero watching. Perhaps you could have Miranda 'wading' in from the forestage, or a place in the audience near where you had the ship. Might she have her skirts hitched up to allow her to wade out? Might she be reaching her arms towards the drowning passengers?

Try a physical theatre embodiment of this idea. Use part of the group as passengers, part as spirits of the sea and one as Miranda. If you have cloths, use them, or ropes, or planks of wood. Revisit one of the ideas for the last scene where passengers were hanging onto masts, furniture, the sides of the ship and where the ship itself was made by the spirits holding planks, or canes, even cloths alone, to create the outer shape. Have the spirits overwhelming the passengers with their cloths/ropes/ planks [chairs could be used for this practice if you have nothing else] and steering them off in different directions. Miranda wades out and tries to reach one, then another. She clutches a hand and then has it wrested from her.

Add to this the climax of sound you worked on for the end of the last scene, when the ship breaks up. The noise is tremendous. Gradually, as the passengers are forced off by the spirits/ waves, the sound decreases, the rising and falling motion of the actors, mimicking the action and destruction of the waves, quietens and Miranda, weeping her distress, wades out of the ocean and onto the shore - where she spots her father, calmly viewing the destruction.

She could, of course, enter in a more traditional [and much simpler] way, from elsewhere on the stage. **Try this too:**

a. distressed, as if she is still seeing the remains of the ship and has been following its progress, blown by the wind and waves, along the shoreline

b. angry, as if she has come for the sole purpose of accusing her father of this act of destruction

The first entrance assumes that Miranda too thinks the storm is natural; the second assumes that, for whatever reason – in the spirit of playfulness perhaps – Prospero has created the storm and does not realise the consequences of his spell.

Your decision will affect the tone of the whole of this speech. Even if she thinks the storm is natural, she is aware that her father has the art to be able to

quieten it. But if he did not cause it, then it may still not be too late to save something out of the wreckage – she hopes. Option a, above: would plead with him for what can be salvaged. Option b, above: would rage at the suffering he has caused.

In each case, how would '[my dearest father]' be said? **Try:**
sarcastic
with utter faith in his ability to make things better
trembling with exhausted anger

Using the same options, now try the last four lines of her speech: 'Had I been any god of power... the fraughting souls within her.'

Does this clarify how you see this first entry of Miranda? What is the most likely option from what you already know of the rest of the scene and the relationship between father and daughter?

From the director's point of view, and the actors, the scene is full of problems. After this opening, we are confronted with a long monologue from Prospero, only slightly broken up by little comments from Miranda. It needs a Prospero with great variety of pace and intonation to retain audience interest. But it is important that the facts are made clear too; nothing of this can be skimmed.

First, Prospero seeks to calm his distraught daughter. It takes two attempts; she is wound up enough for this to be a difficult task. Take it up to the second 'No harm...'
Try:

physically restraining her, holding her wrapped in his arms, with her facing outward towards the sea/ the audience, he behind her; she is straining at the leash, trying still to rush into the sea. She breaks away on 'O woe, the day.' And is caught again, and soothed on the second 'No harm.' Prospero's voice remains calm and soothing throughout. In this option there is no magic but the power of his love, which she recognises and which pacifies her enough to listen to his explanation.

Prospero's voice is more commanding, matching her tension with a tension of his own. He is ordering her to get a grip. We see her gradually obeying. She keeps her distance from him; perhaps he even has to follow until, reluctantly at first, she falls into line.

He casts a spell on her, which has immediate effect. Her 'O woe, the day' is blurry, speaking through the drug of magic. Only the strength of the spell, which throws a leash round Miranda, will put her in a listening frame of mind.

A fourth possibility would show Prospero's acknowledgement of his part in the storm, by him stilling it with a gesture, on or before 'Be collected'. As the sounds of the storm, still going until this moment, die down, Miranda's 'O woe, the day' is distress that her dear father has done this awful thing. And his 'No harm' becomes very strongly said, trying to convince her.

Which version do you prefer, and why?

It is important that Prospero's next lines are convincing enough to wake Miranda's interest. **Take the lines slowly; emphasise the love and caring of '[Of thee my dear one; thee my daughter]'; continue to rock her, or soothe her in whichever way you have chosen.**

Here is a paraphrase of the hard parts, so that you can speak the words with understanding: All I have done has been for your sake [my dear one, my daughter] for as yet you do not know from where I came, nor that I am any more than the Prospero you are familiar with, whose property is just the cave we live in, and whose position in life is no more than as your father.

Try out the tone of this and then match the same tone to the actual speech.

Miranda agrees that she accepted her life on the island as it appeared to be. The tone of her words here has a suggestion of a question perhaps, inviting explanation.

How would Miranda receive the news, clearly told, that not a hair of anyone's head, even though they appeared to go down with the ship, has been harmed? If you decide that this is the moment when she is finally convinced that nothing terrible has happened in the storm, there must be a residue of distress and tension in her acting up to this point.

Read through the next part in pairs, from 'sit down,/ For thou must now know farther...' to 'Miranda's 'O the heavens!'

Having read it through, jot down the facts that Miranda learns as the curtain of time is pulled back to her early childhood; there are not too many in this first section.

The only difficult section here is 'Thy mother was a piece of virtue...', which is clearly said with wry humour. Emphasise the 'said' of 'she said'. The 'Was' of 'Was the Duke...' and separate each word of 'no worse issued.' Take the whole thing, especially the last line, slowly. You are trying to drum it into her. She is 'no worse issued', in other words no less high-born, than both mother and father. Try this speech out now.

How does Miranda react to these pieces of news? All of that reaction goes into 'O the heavens!'

Finally improvise this short section in your own words, concentrating on communicating the love between the two of them and, especially Miranda's reaction.

Some ideas will be beginning to emerge about the character of Miranda. She is an innocent, wide-eyed in her wonder at the world, unspoiled by courts and the intrigues of courtiers. She is not used to covering up but speaks her mind. She should come over as naive, perhaps even child-like.

How can this be shown movement-wise? Later on, Miranda has a famous speech: 'O brave new world...' It sums up something about her attitude to the world, which is that of wonder and acceptance; there is no criticism in her. She sees the good in things and people. The exception is Caliban, and that is only because he has frightened her by trying to attack her sexually. Before this happened, she took trouble with him, teaching him to use her language. Until proved wrong, she will trust.

How do people with this attitude to life and the world about them move? **She may be clumsy, gangly, awkward but equally she could be graceful, though in an unselfconscious way, her movements eager, flung out, full of fits and starts, as enthusiasms take her. She has not learnt to fear much, so her head is held high, her chin up, her eyes wide and startled but intrigued by new things. She is an endearing child. Throughout the play, this is what she remains – endearing.**

Discuss and try out different versions of walking, sitting, running, hugging her father, seeing something new, reacting to the terror of the storm.

Bearing in mind all decisions you have made [and these can be altered, if necessary, as you progress further into the play] replay first your improvised version of this section, and then repeat with the words of the text.