The Tempest: Story Whoosh!

DURATION: 20 mins

OBJECTIVE: To understand the plot of The Tempest.

KEY LEARNING POINTS:
• An understanding of the plot of The Tempest.
• An understanding of the characters and how they relate to each other.

YOU WILL NEED:
• A large clear space.
• A copy of The Story Whoosh! script - see below

IT’S NICE TO HAVE:
• The An Introduction to The Tempest video.
• Some props and costumes like a crown, a staff and a wedding veil.
• The Tempest: Character Descriptions

ACTIVITY:
• This activity will help participants understand the plot of The Tempest. It might be nice to do this, or The Tempest: Plot Points exercise, before the participants watch the film so that they can follow the story. It would also be useful to watch An Introduction to The Tempest to give participants an insight into the vision and context of this production.
• Ask participants to sit in a circle.
• Explain that you are going to tell the story of The Tempest but that you are going to need some help. When you call out a character the first person next to you in the circle should enter the circle and play that character. They can choose a prop or piece of costume to help with this. The next person should play the next character. They should act out the story as you read it as a mime, as much as possible, trying to show us how characters are related.
• As well as characters, you could ask participants to enter and make bits of the setting that are described, or the whole group to make sound effects or to play a crowd from around the edge of the circle. You can be as playful with this as you want.
• At the end of the scene you will raise your hand in the air. The participants should all do the same, shout “Whoosh!” and do a swiping gesture. Any participants in the circle clear the space and return to sit down, leaving behind any costumes.
• Continue reading the next scene with the next person in the circle getting up to play the next character.
• Start with a demonstration story:
  “Once upon a time there was a really cute puppy (identity one participant to play the puppy) left home alone in their kennel (identify two participants to create the kennel). The puppy’s owner (identify one participant) was stuck in a really boring meeting on the other side of town (ask the participant to show being stuck in a boring meeting). Then – ‘Whoosh!’” Thank the participants and begin the story.
• In the text, characters you need participants to play are highlighted in bold text. Some play-text is highlighted in bold italics, which can be quietly said to the participant playing that character who repeats it loudly to the group.
• You might choose to stop after certain scenes to recap what has happened so far and reflect on the plot and character relationships. Perhaps you might ask participants what they think might happen next.
• Ask participants to reflect on the story. What characters or themes stood out to them? What could they remember? Where were the moments of conflict? How do they feel about the events and the characters behaviour and choices?
• Reflect on what it was like to perform in-the-round? What were the challenges? What was it like to perform and watch? Why might the company have chosen to perform in-the-round, what effect does it have on the audience?

EXTENSION ACTIVITY:
• You can develop this by giving each participant a copy of the The Tempest: Story Whoosh! and splitting them into small groups. Each group should create a list of events for one of the characters in the play. What do these events tell us about the character? Participants could then use this to write a diary entry for one of the characters. Giving participants The Tempest: Character Descriptions could be helpful.

KEYWORDS:
In-the-round - a performance where the audience are placed all around the action.
The Tempest - Story Whoosh!

Twelve years before the play begins, PROSPERO, the Duke of Milan was overthrown by ANTONIO, his brother. Along with ALONSO, King of Naples, and his brother SEBASTIAN, they exiled Prospero, casting him and his baby daughter MIRANDA adrift on the roaring sea in a boat that was no more than a rotten carcass.

WHOOSH!

PROSPERO and MIRANDA eventually landed on an enchanted island inhabited by CALIBAN, son of the witch SYCORAX, and ARIEL who SYCORAX had imprisoned in a pine tree until released by Prospero.

WHOOSH!

Since then, PROSPERO has ruled over the island and its three occupants, CALIBAN, ARIEL and MIRANDA, by the use of the magic arts. His daughter MIRANDA has grown up seeing no other human being. CALIBAN and ARIEL are forced to obey PROSPERO’S commands otherwise they are punished.

WHOOSH!

Now, as the play begins, PROSPERO discovers that ANTONIO, his wicked brother, is at sea near the island with ALONSO, King of Naples, FERDINAND, Alonso’s son, SEBASTIAN Alonso’s brother and close ally of ANTONIO, and GONZALO who serves ANTONIO but used to serve PROSPERO and who made sure PROSPERO and MIRANDA had had enough food and water when they were banished which meant they survived and made it to the island. PROSPERO sees an opportunity to work his revenge, and with ARIEL’S help, PROSPERO uses his magic powers to raise a terrible storm, which shipwrecks the noblemen on the island, and separates them from their ship and sailors.

WHOOSH!

PROSPERO makes ARIEL torment the new arrivals. ALONSO searches for his son, though he believes him to be drowned, whilst SEBASTIAN plots with ANTONIO to murder ALONSO and become King of Naples himself.

WHOOSH!

FERDINAND, meanwhile, in another part of the island, meets MIRANDA and they fall in love.

WHOOSH!

TRINCULO and STEPHANO - a jester and a butler – also washed up from the ship, meet CALIBAN. Together they get drunk and CALIBAN persuades them to join him to kill PROSPERO and thus rule the island.

WHOOSH!
PROSPERO, having tested FERDINAND, accepts him as MIRANDA’s future husband, and presents the couple with a wedding masque.

WHOOSH!

PROSPERO discovers CALIBAN’S conspiracy with TRINCULO and STEPHANO to kill him, and breaks it off.

WHOOSH!

As PROSPERO’S plan reaches its climax he vows that upon completion he will abandon his magic arts. He will break his staff and drown his book.

WHOOSH!

PROSPERO, once again helped by ARIEL, gathers ANTONIO, ALONSO, GONZALO and SEBASTIAN on the island together, confronts his enemies and forgives them. ANTONIO learns that his son FERDINAND is alive and is now married to MIRANDA. They all get ready to leave the island.

WHOOSH!

Finally PROSPERO grants ARIEL his freedom. Only CALIBAN and PROSPERO are left on the island.

WHOOSH!