



TEMPEST

Teaching resource (Secondary Schools)

Year: 2012. Certificate: 12A. Duration: 78 minutes. Genre: Drama/Documentary

This study guide suggests cross-curricular activities based on the film TEMPEST. It is designed to support teaching and learning in accordance with the national curriculum at Key Stage 3, GCSE and A-Level. The resource demonstrates how this film can be used as a basis for teaching and learning of specific study units and national strategy learning objectives in:

- **English (KS3, GCSE,AS,A2)**
- **Citizenship (KS3)**
- **Drama (KS3, GCSE, AS)**
- **Media Studies (GCSE, AS – OCR, A2)**
- **Film Studies (AS –WJEC)**

The Film has been screened at selected festivals including Galway Film Fleadh, East End Film Festival, Nantes Film Festival, National Schools Film Week and the Barbican's Framed Film Festival. Its UK cinema release date is 26th October 2012.



TEMPEST TEACHING RESOURCE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABOUT THE FILM	3
SYNOPSIS	3
The concept.....	3
The story unfolds.....	4
South London as the magical island	4
Finale	5
ENGLISH.....	6
KS3	6
AS/A2.....	8
MEDIA STUDIES	9
GCSE	9
AS (OCR)	9
A2.....	10
FILM STUDIES	11
AS (WJEC).....	11
DRAMA.....	12
KS3	12
GCSE.....	12
AS/A2.....	12
CITIZENSHIP.....	14
KS3	14



TEMPEST TEACHING RESOURCE

ABOUT THE FILM

TEMPEST is a filmed version of Shakespeare's last play, *The Tempest*. It's a drama documentary. As well as telling the story of *The Tempest* itself, it also charts the progress of a group of young people from South London as they stage a production of the play. In the end drama and documentary are merged. The local environment of the young people, their parks and streets, become Shakespeare's magical island where the exiled Duke of Milan, Prospero, waits to take his revenge on his betrayers.

Set during the time of the 2011 riots, the film uses Shakespeare's last play, *The Tempest*, to look at the way in which culture can play a role in young people's lives. It looks at how Shakespeare still has resonance. It also investigates the way in which the nascent colonial empire he describes in *The Tempest* has come to affect the way in which we think in modern day Britain.

SYNOPSIS

The concept

Tempest effectively tells three stories.

Firstly it tells the story of Shakespeare's play, which is acted out by a group of young people from South London. The scenes take place in the rehearsal room, in the park and finally in the theatre. The actors' personal struggle to come to terms with the play, bridging the culture gap which exists between 17th Century and 21st Century London is instructive in helping to make sure Shakespeare's text comes through as clearly and distinctively as it has ever done.



The second story is the story of the production itself. This is far more than a filmed version of a play. The story of the production is filmed over the course of nine months, from the earliest rehearsals to the final production and its aftermath. As the process is traced we get to know the third story, which is that of the kids who are acting in the play. Gradually, often through the surprising ways in which their personality is revealed through the prism of the characters they are playing, we get to know the 17 actors, with all their crazy energy and youthful enthusiasm.



TEMPEST TEACHING RESOURCE

The final strand is the play itself. Prospero's story opens on his enchanted island as he summons up a storm in order to shipwreck the scheming Italian dukes, Antonio and Alonso, who displaced him as Duke of Naples. Antonio was his brother, and this betrayal has haunted Prospero through the long years of isolation on the island with his daughter, Miranda. After the shipwreck, the lords find themselves mysteriously unharmed when they land on dry land. Alonso fears that his son, Ferdinand, has been drowned. Prospero (played with unerring maturity by the young Zephyryn) narrates the back story and events to Miranda. Miranda is played by Paris, who struggles to come to terms with Shakespeare's verse and vision. Both come from a deprived inner city background and this is their first encounter with Shakespeare. Early rehearsals are painstaking and drawn out.

The story unfolds

As the play develops, more characters are introduced, including Ariel, Caliban and the two comedic characters, Stephano the butler and Trinculo. Caliban is the strange beast who inhabited the island before Prospero arrived. Caliban is played by two actors, Roy and Emily, who between them form a single multiracial Caliban. Together they go through the process of learning to act as a single person. Ariel is played by seven different girls, whose motivation levels fluctuate. There is something in the seven girls' maverick energy which seems perfect for the part of Shakespeare's mischievous sprite, Ariel, something they themselves acknowledge.

The play itself develops rapidly as Miranda meets and falls for Ferdinand, who has not drowned. Ferdinand is played by Nathan, whose discomfort at having to play the young lover is evident and something he has to overcome if he's going to carry the part off with any conviction. Step by step, the scenes between the young lovers develop from being gauche and awkward to possessing a natural fluency, which emerges in the final production.

South London as the magical island



Part of the film's concept is to establish the island and Prospero's domain as being this corner of South London. The Ariels and Prospero are seen in Kennington Park, where most of the action of Act three in the play takes place, with the Lords wandering around lost and Stephano and Trinculo declaring Caliban king of the island over Prospero. The feisty Steph, who plays Stephano, has



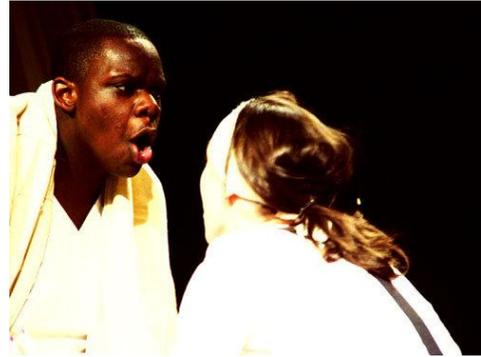
TEMPEST TEACHING RESOURCE

problems with the way in which her character is being developed, struggling with the cross-gender casting and the fact she has to sing. It almost feels as though she channels this resentment into the part of her rebellious character as once again art imitates life.

The play comes towards its classical dénouement. Ferdinand declares his love for Miranda. This is all part of Prospero's plan and he looks on approvingly. The Lords are bewitched by the Ariels and delivered to Prospero. Zephyryn increasingly inhabits the role of the Island's maverick ruler. Fact and fiction start to intertwine as he shows the camera around his Kennington estate.

Finale

The final act is prefaced by the actors' preparations for the stage play itself, to be presented at Oval House Theatre. The mood of the cast has risen with the goal of the production now in sight. The final act is taken from footage of the play itself. Prospero brings harmony, pardoning Alonso for his betrayal. Trinculo and Stephano are apprehended, with their mission to depose Prospero exposed. Ferdinand is revealed to his father, Alonso, as being alive and in love with Miranda. The Bosun, played by the erratic Tom, appears to say the boat is ready. Prospero forgives his treacherous brother, Antonio. Harmony is restored to a world which betrayal had destroyed. At the same time, harmony is achieved by the actors through their successful achievement in pulling off the performance. At the end, as the characters head back to Italy, Prospero is the last to leave, exiting the theatre and the domain of his park for the final time. Left behind in the park are Emily and Roy, the double-headed Caliban.



This is a moving, magical ending. The film is Shakespeare for people who don't like Shakespeare. It brings the classic text to life in a way that a version with more established actors cannot. It is the struggle of the young performers to overcome their issues and problems with the text which helps to make the play's meaning clear. At the same time this gives the play a new relevance. The Tempest was written at the beginning of Britain's colonial adventures. Now we live in a multi-racial society shaped by the country's history. This version of The Tempest reveals and explores the thread that links Shakespeare's world with our own.



TEMPEST TEACHING RESOURCE

ENGLISH

KS3

Tempest takes a unique approach to the play rarely seen by students that still holds very true to the original text. The film could be viewed either during or after the play has been read in full; most usefully the film dramatises the relationship of the cast to the 'archaic' text in ways that young people will be able to understand; overcoming initial reluctance over the difficulties of the language to understand the universality of the emotion underneath.

Topics/Areas of Study	Assessments <i>Tempest</i> could be used with	Assessment Foci
Research of artists, writers, context Creative writing – Poetry/Drama Structure and form of Drama Revision of Poetic Techniques	<p>Writing to explore and explain - Poetic Techniques; using Prospero's speech as the basis for analysis and commentary</p> <p>Reading <i>Additional APP Assessment:</i> Taking the performances in <i>Tempest</i> as a jumping-off point, translate the play into Modern 'Slang' English, and discuss what effect this has on the 'meaning' as understood by the audience</p>	Writing AF1, AF2, AF3, AF7 Reading AF4, AF5, AF6 <i>Understanding Author's craft</i>
Narrative structure Character development Writing under word constraints Research into author Layers of meaning		
<p>Analysis of a Drama Text Characters and relationships</p> <p>Focus on way magic is used</p> <p>Dramatic devices</p> <p>Performance of key</p>	<p>Speaking and Listening – group drama/ role play Reading – analyse/ review key scenes in <i>Tempest</i>, comparing text and DVD - Consider the effects of staging and performance on the way a Drama text is understood by its audience</p> <p>Reading - Devices used by Shakespeare</p>	Speaking and Listening Reading AF5, AF6, AF7 <i>Writing AF5, AF6, AF4,</i>



TEMPEST TEACHING RESOURCE

scenes Focus: Key Scenes (Text/DVD)	Assessment can be written or spoken. <i>Additional APP Assessment: Creative writing</i>	
Media Unit Analysis of visual images Storyboarding a Short Film sequence as part of a Group Deconstructing Media Language Formal presentations	Speaking and Listening - Pitching Film Production - Storyboarding and Presenting Scenes - Discussing the effect of Media Language Sample Topics for Discussion: <i>Why is some of the film in colour and some in Black and White? Does the film feel like film or a play? What difference does the audience POV give?</i>	Speaking and Listening <i>Writing AF5, AF2, AF7</i>

KEY POINTS FOR TEACHING

Media Language, Cinematography and Mise-en-scène

- Tempest is using a wide range of styles in order to convey different moods and messages.
- All the rehearsal footage is in black and white. This helps to mute it, ensuring that the colour footage of the performance of the actual performance and the park scenes are even more vivid.
- The park scenes are all filmed using hand-held camera, in order to get right into the action and bring it alive.
- In contrast, the performance is filmed on fixed cameras. This helps to reflect the experience of watching a play, which is always from a fixed position.
- The contrast helps to emphasise the differing points of view of audiences in cinema and theatre.
- In addition, the film uses certain camera styles for particular characters; Caliban has his own Cali-cam, as the camera seems to glide across the park, accessing the natural surroundings in ways the other characters cannot.
- The contrast here is with Ariel, whose ethereal, weightless nature is revealed as the camera soars up and into the trees.



TEMPEST TEACHING RESOURCE

Music

When is the music noticeable and why?
 What does Shakespeare say about music?
 How does the film interpret this?

Music is a key component of the play and the film. Shakespeare makes several references to the music which seems to appear out of thin air on the island. Ariel's activity is connected to this. When Ferdinand meets Ariel, her song contributes to the unlikeliness of meeting this bewitching creature. When Ariel attacks, firstly in the scene with Alonso, Antonio and Sebastian and later Trinculo and Stephano, this is signalled by a dramatic shift in the music. In the scene where Ariel attacks Alonso and Antonio in the park, moving over to the theatre, the sound mix layers in sounds from the park, Ariel's natural habitat, with the music and sound acting almost as a weapon which Ariel employs.

AS/A2

Tempest explores a variety of approaches to the text in a manner that encourages debate and discussion; though the film does not focus on 'analysis' but rather on the approach to the performance taken by the actors, the focus on character in particular would make for an excellent jumping off point in considering the text as a 'live' piece of drama, encouraging students to consider the response of contemporary audiences and how this might differ from the original Elizabethan crowd.

Sample topic for discussing the film in context of Specification:

COLONIALISM

Roy, who plays Caliban, talks about how he sees the film as being about colonialism. He does so from the point of view of a Londoner whose presence here is indirectly a result of colonialism, something Shakespeare's play and depiction of Caliban alludes to. In this sense the film seems to be bringing the play up to date, commenting on the way in which Shakespeare's vision of Englishness has been affected by the colonial actions which began in his lifetime.

Discussion Questions:

What is the effect of performing the play in a modern setting, with a younger cast?
 Does this transform the audience's response to it?
 Are there parallels between the social context of the time and that of contemporary England?
 How does the film's representation of Race and Culture fit with the play's? Are there any significant differences?



TEMPEST TEACHING RESOURCE

MEDIA STUDIES

GCSE

As students begin their first analyses of visual language, *Tempest* can serve as a case study for each of the key concepts: as a **genre** text, the film challenges students to go beyond obvious denotation as it plays with the 'normal' conventions documentary.

Representation is clearly central throughout; of youth, of ethnicity and of London itself. The **audience** for the film is similarly fluid, and the way in which audiences will respond to the text can be considered through various theoretical frameworks. As an independently produced film, the **institutional** background of the text could also be explored, as could the marketing and distribution implication of producing such a film within the UK marketplace. Finally, though the **narrative** of the film does not obviously adhere to the structures of Propp or Todorov, the way the Directors construct a satisfying and 'complete' experience could certainly be considered alongside more traditional forms of plot.

Sample topic for discussing the film in context of Specification:

Media Language and Audience

Who is the film for? Though the 'subject' of the film would traditionally appeal to an older ABC1 audience, the media language used throughout fits in with more 'youth-oriented' texts. Is there a way that film could be said to fit the conventions of an Urban Teen Film - particularly in the Narrative sections taken directly from the play, set within urban spaces? What is the effect of these location shifts - and what is ultimately more 'important'; the subject or the media language used to portray it?

AS (OCR)

G322: Representation

Tempest would make a fascinating case study in its representation of both youth and ethnicity; the use of a variety of documentary techniques alongside performance of the play itself subverts many common stereotypes in its celebration of youth and London culture. Moreover the comparison between archetypal 'youth' characters found among the film's 'cast' and their roles within the film would fit in nicely with any discussion of genre boundaries and the characterisations commonly found within specific areas of film or television.



TEMPEST TEACHING RESOURCE

Sample topic for discussing the film in context of Specification:

Representation

What is the film's approach to the Representation of Youth and Culture? Though the actors being interviewed are real people, they are filmed and portrayed in a very specific way, which at times reinforces and at times subverts common stereotypes.

Discussion Questions:

What are the significant Media language choices that are made in the construction of the film that affect representation?

What is the effect of the use of black and white photography on this? Location shooting? Live performance from the Theatre?

A2

G325: Advanced Production

Students taking on 'documentary' for their final production piece will find *Tempest* utilises a vast range of documentary techniques, comprehensively exploring every aspect of an appropriately narrow subject-matter. Talking heads, 'Verité' footage of live performance, behind-the-scenes footage, fictionalised 'hot-seated' monologues from actors in-role and many more beside. Moreover the film's construction of a satisfying narrative demonstrates appropriately the importance of editing and the role it plays in the documentary process.

Sample topic for discussing the film in context of Specification:

Drama versus Documentary

CHARACTER- The line between the characters from Shakespeare's play and the characters of the actors slowly seem to blur. This comes across most clearly when Steph says: "He's called Stephano and I'm called Stephanie" as she talks about her role. This blurring helps to muddle up the distinction between what is drama and what is documentary.

Discussion Questions:

- What is the effect of the 'fictional' sections on the narrative of the rehearsals? What techniques are used to differentiate these sections visually?
- How is the representation of young people constructed in the film? What techniques are used? Does it conform to stereotypes?



FILM STUDIES

AS (WJEC)

FM2: Section B - Genre

The construction of archetypal 'youth' characters common in Teen Films can be found among the film's 'cast' and how these distinctions are created. The film would also form a fine basis for a discussion of the significance of mise-en-scene and the audience's prior film knowledge and experience in how audiences respond to 'real' characters in a documentary.

Moreover the ways in which the film shoots various real South London locations would also fit within a lesson on the concept of 'Britishness' and how it is portrayed on screen. In particular it could make for an interesting comparison with other recent portrayals of South London on screen, which tend to focus on negative framings of council blocks and concrete spaces rather than the 'green' spaces explored by the film.

Sample topic for discussing the film in context of Specification:

NATURE FOOTAGE - linked to 'Britishness', Section B of FM2 Exam

The footage from the park shows both the environment the actors come from, but also the world of the island itself. When we see a leaf or an insect or a bird, do they represent South London or do they represent the mythical island? These things help to blur the distinction between the two spaces, helping to develop the film's underlying thesis that Shakespeare's imaginary island has somehow come to exist in the here and now.



TEMPEST TEACHING RESOURCE

DRAMA

KS3

An exceptional set of performances from the young cast as 'cosmetically different' characters provides an excellent gateway to explore the notion of performance at its core. The power of voice, body language and blocking are all evident in the various stagings explored in the film as a whole.

Discussion questions:

- Looking at the final performance, what is the effect of the way the play is staged, and the costumes used?
- What is it that makes the performances of the young actors effective? Do they effectively embody characters that are usually played by older actors? How?

GCSE

Tempest explores a variety of staging options for the Elizabethan text; though the film uses a range of cinematic techniques the essential theatricality of the text remains. The importance of blocking, set design and costume can also be investigated through an assessment of how the film and stage play have employed these factors.

Discussion questions:

- Discuss the body language and vocal choices made by actor playing 'Prospero'; contrast them with the way he moves and speaks when he is speaking as 'himself'.
- How important is it that the performance retains the original language of Shakespeare? Do you think that the actors could have communicated the story with the same power if they were speaking in modern English? How?

AS/A2

With its in-depth exploration of the way the actors 'find' their performances, and the different approaches each actor takes to the text, *Tempest* would suit any unit exploring approaches to an existing text.



TEMPEST TEACHING RESOURCE

Discussion questions:

- Discuss the different methods that the actors use to access their performances, and the way they each approach their roles. Though they don't address them by name, are any of them using specific techniques you have studied?
- In what ways do the actors explore the themes of the play through their performances? Can you link specific choices they have made to Shakespeare's ideas and concepts?



TEMPEST TEACHING RESOURCE

CITIZENSHIP

KS3

TEMPEST deals with issues that are at the core of the KS3 Citizenship agenda. It links issues within the text of the play with relatable youth issues, notably the interaction between young people and their understanding of universal concepts such as Power, Loyalty and Prejudice. It is also an interesting exploration of the issues surrounding 'behaviour' and the relationship of young people to education, particularly the study of 'old-fashioned' subjects such as Shakespeare.

Core concepts:

Diversity

TEMPEST is a fascinating example of challenging common stereotypes of both Race and Youth seen on film. It shows a group of 17 teenagers from diverse social and racial backgrounds collaborating to stage a production of a play. It is a real live case study of the collaboration and unification that is possible across class and racial boundaries. Set in the wake of the 2011 riots, it also deals with issues of youth engagement and alienation.

The Commonwealth

The Tempest was the first work in literature to respond to the discovery of the New World – and by association the birth of colonialism and the British Empire. One possible reading of the text, and one that is explored by our multi-racial cast – is that Prospero (played by a black man) is a colonial ruler who has enslaved the original inhabitants of the island. Analysis of the character of Caliban in particular can serve as a entryway to a discussion of Political and Historical issues such as Prejudice, Slavery and Racism.

Local communities

TEMPEST was filmed with a publicly funded youth theatre in South London. Participating in this has had a marked effect on the lives of those involved. For many of the cast such luxuries as drama classes would have otherwise been beyond their means, and during the film they reflect on what may have become of them had they not been given the opportunity to participate in this communal activity. The film is an ideal jumping off point for discussions of how government can best serve the local community, and of the relative value of public services vs the voluntary sector.