

***The Tempest* Excerpt and Sample Close Reading Questions**

Text from <i>The Tempest</i>	Sample Close Reading/ Discussion Questions
<p>PROSPERO Of the king's ship The mariners say how thou hast disposed And all the rest o' the fleet.</p> <p>ARIEL Safely in harbour Is the king's ship; in the deep nook, where once Thou call'dst me up at midnight to fetch dew From the still-vex'd Bermoothes, there she's hid: The mariners all under hatches stow'd; Who, with a charm join'd to their suffer'd labour, I have left asleep; and for the rest o' the fleet Which I dispersed, they all have met again And are upon the Mediterranean flote, Bound sadly home for Naples, Supposing that they saw the king's ship wreck'd And his great person perish.</p> <p>PROSPERO Ariel, thy charge Exactly is perform'd: but there's more work. What is the time o' the day?</p> <p>ARIEL Past the mid season.</p> <p>PROSPERO At least two glasses. The time 'twixt six and now Must by us both be spent most preciously.</p> <p>ARIEL Is there more toil? Since thou dost give me pains, Let me remember thee what thou hast promised, Which is not yet perform'd me.</p> <p>PROSPERO How now? moody? What is't thou canst demand?</p> <p>ARIEL My liberty.</p> <p>PROSPERO Before the time be out? no more!</p> <p>ARIEL I prithee, Remember I have done thee worthy service; Told thee no lies, made thee no mistakings, served Without or grudge or grumblings: thou didst promise To bate me a full year.</p> <p>PROSPERO</p>	

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Dost thou forget

From what a torment I did free thee?

ARIEL

No.

PROSPERO

Thou dost, and think'st it much to tread the ooze

Of the salt deep,

To run upon the sharp wind of the north,

To do me business in the veins o' the earth

When it is baked with frost.

ARIEL

I do not, sir.

PROSPERO

Thou liest, malignant thing! Hast thou forgot

The foul witch Sycorax, who with age and envy

Was grown into a hoop? hast thou forgot her?

ARIEL

No, sir.

PROSPERO

Thou hast. Where was she born? speak; tell me.

ARIEL

Sir, in Argier.

PROSPERO

O, was she so? I must

Once in a month recount what thou hast been,

Which thou forget'st. This damn'd witch Sycorax,

For mischiefs manifold and sorceries terrible

To enter human hearing, from Argier,

Thou know'st, was banish'd: for one thing she did

They would not take her life. Is not this true?

ARIEL

Ay, sir.

PROSPERO

This blue-eyed hag was hither brought with child

And here was left by the sailors. Thou, my slave,

As thou report'st thyself, wast then her servant;

And, for thou wast a spirit too delicate

To act her earthy and abhorr'd commands,

Refusing her grand hests, she did confine thee,

By help of her more potent ministers

And in her most unmitigable rage,

Into a cloven pine; within which rift

Imprison'd thou didst painfully remain

A dozen years; within which space she died

And left thee there; where thou didst vent thy

groans

As fast as mill-wheels strike. Then was this island-

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Save for the son that she did litter here,
A freckled whelp hag-born--not honour'd with
A human shape.

ARIEL

Yes, Caliban her son.

PROSPERO

Dull thing, I say so; he, that Caliban
Whom now I keep in service. Thou best know'st
What torment I did find thee in; thy groans
Did make wolves howl and penetrate the breasts
Of ever angry bears: it was a torment
To lay upon the damn'd, which Sycorax
Could not again undo: it was mine art,
When I arrived and heard thee, that made gape
The pine and let thee out.

ARIEL

I thank thee, master.

PROSPERO

If thou more murmur'st, I will rend an oak
And peg thee in his knotty entrails till
Thou hast howl'd away twelve winters.

ARIEL

Pardon, master;
I will be correspondent to command
And do my spiriting gently.

PROSPERO

Do so, and after two days
I will discharge thee.

ARIEL

That's my noble master!
What shall I do? say what; what shall I do?

PROSPERO

Go make thyself like a nymph o' the sea: be
subject
To no sight but thine and mine, invisible
To every eyeball else. Go take this shape
And hither come in't: go, hence with diligence!

Exit ARIEL

Awake, dear heart, awake! thou hast slept well;
Awake!

MIRANDA

The strangeness of your story put
Heaviness in me.

PROSPERO

Shake it off. Come on;
We'll visit Caliban my slave, who never

How does Prospero describe Caliban's mother and Caliban?

Why is it significant that Caliban was "not honour'd with / A human shape"? Is he a person? What is he?

How would you describe Ariel's attitude toward Prospero? What does this suggest about their relationship?

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Yields us kind answer.

MIRANDA

'Tis a villain, sir,
I do not love to look on.

PROSPERO

But, as 'tis,
We cannot miss him: he does make our fire,
Fetch in our wood and serves in offices
That profit us. What, ho! slave! Caliban!
Thou earth, thou! speak.

CALIBAN

[Within] There's wood enough within.

PROSPERO

Come forth, I say! there's other business for thee:
Come, thou tortoise! when?

Re-enter ARIEL like a water-nymph

Fine apparition! My quaint Ariel,
Hark in thine ear.

ARIEL

My lord it shall be done.

Exit

PROSPERO

Thou poisonous slave, got by the devil himself
Upon thy wicked dam, come forth!

Enter CALIBAN

CALIBAN

As wicked dew as e'er my mother brush'd
With raven's feather from unwholesome fen
Drop on you both! a south-west blow on ye
And blister you all o'er!

PROSPERO

For this, be sure, to-night thou shalt have cramps,
Side-stitches that shall pen thy breath up; urchins
Shall, for that vast of night that they may work,
All exercise on thee; thou shalt be pinch'd
As thick as honeycomb, each pinch more stinging
Than bees that made 'em.

CALIBAN

I must eat my dinner.
This island's mine, by Sycorax my mother,
Which thou takest from me. When thou camest

What words/phrases does Prospero use to describe Caliban?

What is Caliban saying to Prospero? What kind of person is he?

What threats is Prospero making to Caliban?

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first,
Thou strokedst me and madest much of me,
wouldst give me
Water with berries in't, and teach me how
To name the bigger light, and how the less,
That burn by day and night: and then I loved thee
And show'd thee all the qualities o' the isle,
The fresh springs, brine-pits, barren place and
fertile:
Cursed be I that did so! All the charms
Of Sycorax, toads, beetles, bats, light on you!
For I am all the subjects that you have,
Which first was mine own king: and here you sty
me
In this hard rock, whiles you do keep from me
The rest o' the island.

PROSPERO

Thou most lying slave,
Whom stripes may move, not kindness! I have
used thee,
Filth as thou art, with human care, and lodged
thee
In mine own cell, till thou didst seek to violate
The honour of my child.

CALIBAN

O ho, O ho! would't had been done!
Thou didst prevent me; I had peopled else
This isle with Calibans.

PROSPERO

Abhorred slave,
Which any print of goodness wilt not take,
Being capable of all ill! I pitied thee,
Took pains to make thee speak, taught thee each
hour

One thing or other: when thou didst not, savage,
Know thine own meaning, but wouldst gabble like
A thing most brutish, I endow'd thy purposes
With words that made them known. But thy vile
race,

Though thou didst learn, had that in't which
good natures
Could not abide to be with; therefore wast thou
Deservedly confined into this rock,
Who hadst deserved more than a prison.

CALIBAN

You taught me language; and my profit on't
Is, I know how to curse. The red plague rid you
For learning me your language!

How did Prospero take the island, according to Caliban?

What did Caliban do to Prospero's daughter? If Prospero has to use "stripes" (whipping) because kindness won't work, what does that suggest about Caliban?

What does Prospero mean when he says he "took pains to make thee speak"?

What language is Caliban speaking now? Why didn't Caliban have language before?

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PROSPERO

Hag-seed, hence!
Fetch us in fuel; and be quick, thou'rt best,
To answer other business. Shrug'st thou, malice?
If thou neglect'st or dost unwillingly
What I command, I'll rack thee with old cramps,
Fill all thy bones with aches, make thee roar
That beasts shall tremble at thy din.

CALIBAN

No, pray thee.

Aside

I must obey: his art is of such power,
It would control my dam's god, Setebos,
and make a vassal of him.

PROSPERO

So, slave; hence!

Exit CALIBAN