

Making Meaning Out of *The Tempest*

*I can make a claim and state an underlying meaning found in *The Tempest*.*

I can provide evidence from the text to justify the underlying meaning I have stated.

You are to select an option for your *Tempest* project. This is your opportunity to involve some of the skills and talents that are your strengths: art, music, dance, drama, computers, etc. You may choose to work in a group of no more than three people or to work alone. If you choose to work in a group, match your strengths with others to achieve the maximum potential for synergy. For example, if you wish to concentrate on music, it will be to your advantage to work with other people who are musically inclined. In addition, the amount of time and effort devoted to group projects should equal one individual's time and effort multiplied by the number of persons in the group; group projects will be evaluated accordingly.

The following is a list of suggested project possibilities. You may select one of these options with no additional approval. If, however, you wish to complete a project other than one from the suggested list, you must obtain my permission before you begin.

It is imperative that you **know** the play well before you begin your project. I suggest that you list the major characters and the chronology of events first, then determine a clear statement of the underlying meaning of the play that you intend to emphasize in your project.

When reading to make meaning out of a work such as *The Tempest*, you should go through three basic steps. First you need to understand literal meaning of the play—what's happening to whom and in what order—then determine the underlying meaning and analyze how Shakespeare conveys this meaning, and finally interpret the play through your own medium OR go beyond the play as it is written to emphasize certain ideas that you have gleaned from your analysis. In other words the last step concentrates on delivering your interpretation of the underlying meaning to your audience through a particular medium. For example, last year three students choreographed and performed a ballet sequence based on the themes in the play. They videotaped their performance and prepared a program comparable to what you'd receive when attending the ballet to distribute to the class. **Please keep in mind that making meaning out of a work, even a comedy such as *The Tempest*, is serious business. You may have fun with this project. You may make us laugh. But you must not stray into the realms of the ridiculous, the profane, or the inconsequential; nor should you submit sloppy, shoddy, or hastily completed projects. You must be prepared to justify your interpretation with evidence from the text.**

Suggested Projects

1. Create original music and lyrics for a song based on the play, then create and produce a music video to show to the class. You must incorporate piano, keyboard, guitar, or other musical instruments in this project.
2. Create an interpretative dance sequence for *The Tempest* to perform for the class, either live or via videotape. This dance sequence may be ballet or modern, but it must directly relate to an underlying meaning found in *The Tempest*.
3. Create a play list of ten songs for the *The Tempest* that parallels the scene sequences in the actual play. This play list must replicate that of a CD in terms of titles, performers, play times, etc. Also compose and include the complete lyrics for at least one of the songs on your play list. These lyrics should directly relate to the themes and or plot events of the play. Finally, design and produce a compact disc jacket/cover that is representative of *The Tempest*.
4. Create and produce a comic book version of *The Tempest*. This should include a full-color cover and must be permanently bound, either in a three-ring folder or with the machine binder available in the Media Center. The comic book should include the characters from *The Tempest* and should follow the storyline of the play.
5. Compose and perform your own fifteen minute version of *The Tempest* complete with costumes, etc.—you may make the setting for your play contemporary.
6. Compose and perform a fifteen minute play based one or more of the more minor characters in *The Tempest*; Ariel, for example. Again, this should include costumes, etc.
7. Create and display an original work of art—watercolor, oil, sculpture, etc.—that represents one of the themes found in *The Tempest*.
8. Create a slide show, using PowerPoint or similar software, of major works of art from various periods and places that depict *The Tempest* or related themes and ideas. Prepare a script that can be used to narrate your slide show.
9. Trace the history of some element of *The Tempest* through various works of literature. For example, you might trace the history of the word “tempest,” as well as the use of this word, theme, or motif through literature. Or, you might do a detailed study of Miranda and look into the origin of this character type, the significance of the name, and the use other authors have made of the character type and name in other literary works.
10. Create a *Tempest* web page that focuses on at least one underlying meaning you find in the play. Include art/graphics, music, an overview of the play, and a specific analysis that emphasizes the underlying meaning you have discerned. Also include links to other related web sites, plus a detailed description, evaluation, and suggested use(s) for each link you list.