

Bitesize KS3 English Literature – Shakespeare

The Tempest – Performance analysis – The banquet (Directors' Den) transcript

PRESENTER (OFF SCREEN)

Here are the directors. 12 divorces, nine lawsuits and three stints in rehab between them.

PRESENTER

These guys know what they want and they normally get it. Today they're looking for innovative ways of staging a notoriously tricky scene in the Tempest. It's act three, scene three and spirit Ariel makes an entire banquet appear and then disappear in front of the play's shipwrecked victims.

TITLE:

DIRECTORS' DEN

PRESENTER

First into the Director's Den is theatre designer Geraldine. She's hoping her idea for Ariel's feast will prove as tempting to the Directors as it does to the scene's noblemen.

GERALDINE

I'm representing one of the magical creatures that delivers Ariel's banquet. And as you can see the shipwrecked noblemen would be sorely tempted by this delicious spread.

DIRECTOR IN BLACK SUIT

Hi Geraldine. I think you look like an idiot but I think anyone is going to be tempted by that food. It looks delicious. There's one thing that still concerns me, well apart from the wings. The script clearly states that this banquet disappears by a quaint device. How are you going to get this beautiful food to vanish live on stage?

GERALDINE

Er...

DIRECTOR IN BLACK SUIT

It's meant to be an illusion Geraldine. You've failed to consider one of the vital elements of this scene and for that reason, I'm out.

GERALDINE

What about if the actors just ate the food really quickly without anyone noticing? Sort of like...

FEMALE DIRECTOR

Bitesize

Geraldine stop! Stop! Scoffing all that food down without anyone noticing is impossible, unfeasible and it's never going to happen and for those three reasons, I'm out.

PRESENTER

Geraldine's disappeared a lot faster than her tasty feast did there. Will lighting designer Barbara fare any better?

BARBARA

All it takes is a simple flick of the switch. And back on. The food is gone.

DIRECTOR IN RED TIE

Hi Barbara, it's Peter. Your idea is very dramatic. Affordable as well. It could be very effective on stage. Tell me how does this work?

BARBARA

Oh well ,my handpicked team use the brief cloak of darkness to remove the food. They've been training for weeks. And are incredibly fast and stealthy, as you can see.

Director Peter

Well whoop dee doo Barbara but I'm afraid our production will be staged outside and during the day, so this won't work for our audience. And your team's training has been for nought. For that reason, I'm out.

TEAM MEMBER

Come on.You've got to be kidding me.

BARBARA

I'm sorry.

TEAM MEMBER

Haven't seen my kids for a month.

TEAM MEMBER

Yeah.

PRESENTER

Young designer Walter seems to have left the Directors unsure if he has an exciting idea -or simply no idea at all.

WALTER

No matter, since they have left their viands behind for we have stomachs. Will it please you taste what is here?

DIRECTOR IN RED TIE

So Walter let me get this straight. There won't actually be a banquet at all? The audience has to use their imagination?

WALTER

That is correct. The noblemen are under the spell of Ariel so the banquet could be a product of their hungry imagination.

Bitesize

FEMALE DIRECTOR

Do you know what I think? I think it's cracking this imagination business. The audience can really concentrate on the actors' performances and it could save a fortune in the props department. Actually that's a point. How much does nothing cost?

WALTER

Five million pound.

DIRECTOR IN BLACK SUIT

How on earth did you come up with a figure like that?

WALTER

Just used my imagination.

DIRECTOR IN BLACK SUIT

Okay. Walter, imagine this, I'm out.

WALTER

Fair enough. Worth a try.