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# Introductory Lesson

## Before Reading

- ① Look at the cover. Where do you think the story takes place? What do you think it is about?
- ② Read the blurb on the back cover. How do you think the story ends?

William Shakespeare



William Shakespeare was born in Stratford-upon-Avon, England, in April, 1564. His father, John Shakespeare, was a successful tradesman, and his mother, Mary Arden, a descendant of a prominent family. We do not know much about Shakespeare's early life, but many people

- ③ Read the short biography of William Shakespeare, then look at the following statements and write True or False.
  - 1 Very little is known about Shakespeare's youth. ....
  - 2 Shakespeare got married in London. ....
  - 3 Shakespeare only wrote plays. ....
  - 4 Shakespeare's plays gained popularity only after his death. ....
  - 5 Shakespeare's works are still very influential. ....

*believe that he went to the King Edward VI Grammar School in Stratford-upon-Avon and studied Latin grammar and classics. When he was 18, he married Anne Hathaway. They had three children: Susanna, Hamnet and Judith.*

*Shakespeare later moved to London, where he became an actor and a writer. He wrote many plays and poems in his career. His most famous plays include 'Macbeth', 'Romeo and Juliet', 'A Midsummer Night's Dream', 'Hamlet', 'The Merchant of Venice' and 'Othello'. All of them involve many different characters with strong and interesting personalities. In his plays he portrayed a wide range of human activity and emotion from greed and revenge to kindness and love. Shakespeare's plays were very popular when he was alive, and even more so today. Actors still perform his works, and there are many films based on his plays. Shakespeare's writings have influenced a large number of novelists and poets over the years, and his language has, to a large extent, passed into everyday usage.*

*Shakespeare died on 23rd April, 1616. He was 52 years old. Today, we remember him as one of the greatest writers in history.*

④ *Read the biography again and answer the questions.*

- 1 When was Shakespeare born?
- 2 What was his father's job?
- 3 Where is he believed to have studied?
- 4 Who did he marry?
- 5 How many children did he have?
- 6 What are some Shakespeare's most famous plays?
- 7 What are his plays known for?
- 8 In what way are his plays popular today?
- 9 When did Shakespeare die?
- 10 How is Shakespeare remembered?



Prospero



Miranda



Ariel



Caliban



Gonzalo



Alonso



Sebastian



Antonio



Ferdinand



Stephano



Trinculo

## The Tempest

Thunder roared and rain fell hard and fast, mixing with the mountainous waves. The sky was dark and heavy. Sudden flashes of lightning split the clouds and lit up the wild ocean for just a second before everything plunged into darkness again. One of these flashes lit up a small ship, which was being thrown about by the powerful waves. The wind howled around the ship and tore at the sails, making the captain look around. He quickly spotted danger looming on the horizon: land—and rocks! Raising his voice, he turned to the boatswain.

“My good fellow, talk to the sailors. Urge them to work hard before we are shipwrecked. Hurry, hurry!”

The ship’s captain blew his whistle furiously from the quarter deck, frantically shouting orders, one after another, to the helmsman steering the ship and the crew handling the sails. The boatswain spurred on the men from the main deck.

“Come on, men! Harder, my men! Take in the topsail! Listen to the captain’s whistle! Blow till you burst your lungs, tempest, so long as we can manoeuvre!”

While the sailors battled against the towering waves and high winds, struggling to sail the ship away from the fast approaching shore, the passengers staggered up on deck.

Antonio, a man with a heavily lined face and a cold hard stare, looked around before he spoke.

“Boatswain! Where’s the captain?”

“Don’t you hear him? Get out of our way! Stay in your cabins! You’re helping the storm.”

When Gonzalo, an older nobleman with a kind face, noticed

the way Antonio pressed his lips into a thin line, he broke in and faced the angry seaman himself.

“Now, now, good fellow ... be patient.”

“I’ll be patient when the sea is. Go! Do you think these roaring waves care about a king? Go to your cabin and be silent! Don’t get in our way!”

Gonzalo did not falter at the boatswain’s forceful command.

“Remember whom you have on board.”

Despite the seriousness of the warning, the boatswain did not lose his nerve.

“There’s nobody on this ship who I care more about than myself. You’re in the King’s council; if you think you can command the tempest to stop, then we’ll stop our work right now. If you cannot, then be thankful you have lived so long, and prepare yourself in your cabin for the worst. Harder, my brave men! Out of our way, I say!”

Gonzalo took a step back and then urged his companions to return to their cabin. Taking another look at the boatswain, he murmured to himself.

“I take great comfort from this fellow. He looks like someone meant to hang, rather than drown. Let’s hope his fate will mean our salvation from this storm.”

As the menacing wind blew the ship closer to the rocky shore, the entire crew fought with all their might, trying to gather the sails and steer the ship away from the rocks. The howling winds and crashing waves created a blood-chilling symphony and, before long, some of the passengers staggered back up on deck. The boatswain was livid when he saw them.

“Again? What do you want this time? Will you let us do our job? Do you want us all to drown?”







The King's younger brother, a dark-haired man called Sebastian, couldn't stand being spoken to so rudely.

"How dare you talk like this, you wailing dog!"

Antonio, too, was outraged.

"You insolent fool! We are less afraid to be drowned than you are!"

Hearing the way the boatswain spoke to his betters, Gonzalo became certain of his first impression.

"I'll guarantee that man's fate is not to drown, even if the ship were no stronger than a nutshell and leaking water like a sieve."

The boatswain ignored the three noble passengers and kept shouting out orders to the sailors, who were still striving to turn the ship out to sea again. But the gale-force winds and the slippery rain pulled the ropes from their hands and threw them across the deck. Everyone searched for something to hold on to. The lengthy battle with the sea was taking a toll on both the men's energy and their morale though, so the ship was pushed closer to the rocks.

Suddenly there was a loud crash and a deafening sound of splitting wood, which spread panic on all decks. The ship had smashed onto the rocks and had split in half. Sailors started shouting and bidding farewell to their brothers, wives and children.

"We are sinking!"

"It's no use fighting the storm!"

"Pray for your lives!"

Despite the dire situation, Antonio and Sebastian were furious. Antonio blamed the crew.

"This is all because of a bunch of useless sailors! I wish the boatswain a much more painful death than ours!"

Gonzalo shook his head in doubt.

“Even though every drop of water swears I’m wrong, and the sea opens its mouth to swallow him, I’m still sure he’ll hang one day.”

Antonio shook his head and turned towards the cabins below.  
“Let’s all sink with the King.”

Everyone’s cries were swallowed by the thunder and the rain hammering against the drenched wood. Gonzalo raised his face to the sky once more before going below deck.

“Right now, I’d give a hundred miles of sea for an acre of barren ground. The will of God be done. But I’d rather die a dry death.”

