

# The Tempest

## The Tempest Soundscape

A soundscape describes the sound or variety of sounds that are found together in an environment.

Below is a speech spoken by Caliban in *The Tempest*. Read the passage out loud to the students and ask them to identify the noises that Caliban hears on the island where he lives. If the students have a copy of the passage, have them mark the different sounds using different coloured pens.

### CALIBAN

*Be not afeard. The isle is full of noises,  
Sounds and sweet airs that give delight and hurt not.  
Sometimes a thousand twangling instruments  
Will hum about mine ears, and sometime voices  
That, if I then had waked after long sleep,  
Will make me sleep again; and then, in dreaming,  
The clouds methought would open, and show riches  
Ready to drop upon me, that when I waked,  
I cried to dream again.*  
[*The Tempest* 3.2.148-156]



Think about the sounds that Caliban hears on the island: the twangling instruments, the voices, and the rain.

1. Working in groups or as a whole class, choose someone to be the conductor of the soundscape (this can be the teacher), this person will be reading the passage aloud.
2. Now, within each group or the whole class divide the students into three sections, representing each type of sound: the twangling instruments, the voices, and the rain.  
  
Each group will need to decide how to create their sound using their voices, bodies and possibly musical instruments if you have these available. They will need to think carefully about how they want Caliban to feel/respond when he hears them e.g. will the voices be soothing/screaming/whispers or a mixture.
3. After some practise in their groups, bring the soundscape together by having the conductor reading the speech aloud and indicating to each group when their sound should come in/go out/get louder/quieter etc.

This activity could also be carried out with the storm in the opening of the play.

With thanks to Aimee Coombs.

### Vocabulary

**delight (n)** - (something or someone that gives) great pleasure, satisfaction or happiness

**twangling (adj)** - describing instruments that have a piece of wire that is part of the instrument  
such as a guitar

**to hum (v)** - to sing without opening your mouth