

Imaginative Ways to Approach the Text

KING LEAR – KENT’S RANT

Lesson Overview:

In this lesson the students will explore a speech that expresses one idea, using colourful, energetic and expressive language.

Grade Level(s)	7-12
Subject Area(s)	English, Drama
Curriculum Expectations & Learning Outcomes	<p>By the end of the lesson students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Identify a variety of characteristics of literary forms and explain how they help communicate meaning;<ul style="list-style-type: none">□ English<ul style="list-style-type: none">⇒ (Oral Communication): 1.6, 1.8, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5⇒ (Reading & Literature Studies): 1.4, 2.1, 3.1⇒ (Writing): 1.5, 2.3□ Drama: C1.1● Evaluate the effectiveness of the speech using evidence from the text to support their opinions;<ul style="list-style-type: none">□ English<ul style="list-style-type: none">⇒ (Oral Communication): 1.9, 3.2⇒ (Reading & Literature Studies): 1.7, 2.3, 4.1⇒ (Writing): 2.2, 2.3, 2.4□ Drama: C2.1● Creatively use the elements of drama to achieve a common purpose in ensemble presentation.<ul style="list-style-type: none">□ English<ul style="list-style-type: none">⇒ (Oral Communication): 1.5, 2.2⇒ (Reading & Literature Studies): 1.5, 3.3⇒ (Writing): 2.5□ Drama: A2.1, B2.2
Time Needed	1 class period
Space	Open spaces for exploring the text
Materials	Handout: Kent’s Rant

The Activity:

- Distribute the handout to each student.
- Upon meeting Oswald (Goneril’s servant), Kent, disguised as Caius, goes into a blind rage and insults Oswald with much ferocity and vigour. Read the text several times and keep in mind the following:
 - It is one single sentence.
 - It is in prose, not verse.
 - Find out the meaning of “plosives” and how they are used in this text.
 - Find out the meaning of “fricatives” and how they are used in this text.
- Form a big circle and each person will take one word or phrase insult (if there are more than 24 people, share some of the longer phrases, if there are fewer than 24 people, take more than one word or phrase). Start slowly at first, then repeat, going a bit faster, establishing a rhythmic form when expressing the words. Listen closely to what comes before and jump in. Be creative!

- Repeat this several times with students experimenting with volume, projection, clarity, pitch and various ways to express their word or phrases.

Post-Activity:

- After performing the rant, discuss the following:
 - Why did Shakespeare write this as one single sentence?
 - Why is this written in prose and not verse? What purpose does it serve?
 - What did you notice when you were listening to the “b,” “p,” “f” and “s” sounds in the text? What were Shakespeare’s intentions in using plosives and fricatives?

Extension:

- Have the students create their own single-sentence rant (without resorting to actual swear words), utilizing plosives and fricatives, wherever possible. Have them explore the thesaurus to help them come up with colourful words.