

USING THE DRAMA TECHNIQUE WHOOSH!

Whoosh is an activity we regularly use here at the Globe in our *Lively Action* workshops or during our outreach work in schools. The aim is to introduce participants quickly to the whole plot of a Shakespeare play and can be adapted to work online or in a classroom working under social distancing. It's an interactive storytelling technique and enables any kind of plot, regardless of complexity, to come alive, even without participants having any prior knowledge. Students physically tell the story in response to small, narrated sections of plot, thereby generating a high degree of engagement & ownership. The teacher facilitates the shared storytelling, bringing individuals, groups and sometimes the whole class, in and out of the action. Participants use physical theatre – their bodies and voices. They play characters, objects, places or events in the story, for example, a servant, a bad thought, a ship, a baby or a bear in response to each section of plot.

To set *Whoosh* up, explain that everybody will have an opportunity to participate in the telling of a story by becoming characters or even objects in the tale. If at any time you say "Whoosh!", they should quickly return to their 'places', whether physically in the space or online. The teacher begins the narrative and as soon as a key character, event or object is mentioned, indicate the first student to step into the circle, in a classroom, (or online, call their name), to make a shape or pose to represent what you have just narrated. If two or more characters are introduced, then they can create their pose at the same time.

Share the story around the group, so that different pupils get to play the same character at various times and everyone gets a chance at trying several roles, regardless of gender. If appropriate, the whole group can take part at once – for example, as a forest, a storm, a crowd!



**SHAKESPEARE'S
GLOBE**

THE WINTER'S TALE STORY WHOOSH

King Polixenes of Bohemia has been visiting his best friend King Leontes of Sicilia, for nine months and it is time for him to go home.

WHOOSH

Leontes is sad that his friend Polixenes is leaving, so he asks his wife Queen Hermione of Sicilia, to persuade him to stay.

WHOOSH

When Polixenes agrees to Hermione's request Leontes becomes possessed with jealousy—convinced that his wife his best friend are in love.

WHOOSH

Leontes orders his loyal servant, Camillo, to poison the Polixenes. Instead, Camillo warns Polixenes of what is afoot, and the two men flee immediately and go to Bohemia.

WHOOSH

Furious at their escape, Leontes now publicly accuses Hermione of infidelity, and declares that the child she is bearing is not his so he throws her in prison, over the protests of his nobles.

WHOOSH

Meanwhile, Hermione gives birth to a girl, and her loyal friend Paulina brings the baby to Leontes, in the hopes that the sight of the child will soften his heart. He only grows angrier, however, and orders Paulina's husband, Lord Antigonus, to take the child and abandon it in some desolate place.

WHOOSH

Leontes puts Hermione on trial. A message is received from the Oracle of Delphi that Hermione and Polixenes are innocent, and Leontes will have no heir until his lost daughter is found.

WHOOSH

Leontes tears up the message from the Oracle. Hermione, falls in a swoon, and is carried away by Paulina, who subsequently reports the queen's death to her heartbroken and repentant husband.

WHOOSH

Antigonus, meanwhile abandons the baby on the Bohemian coast, reporting that Hermione appeared to him in a dream and bade him name the girl Perdita and leave gold and other tokens on her person.

WHOOSH

Shortly thereafter, Antigonus is killed by a bear.

WHOOSH

Perdita is raised by a kindly Shepherd.

WHOOSH

Sixteen years pass, and the son of Polixenes, Prince Florizel, falls in love with Perdita.

WHOOSH

His father Polixenes and Camillo attend a sheepshearing in disguise and watch as Florizel and Perdita are betrothed—then, tearing off the disguise, Polixenes intervenes and orders his son never to see the Shepherd's daughter again.

WHOOSH

Camillo, advices Florizel and Perdita to take ship for Sicilia and Florizel and Perdita flee.

WHOOSH

In Sicilia, Leontes—still in mourning after all this time—greet's Florizel and Perdita effusively. Polixenes and Camillo arrive. Leontes realizes that Perdita is his daughter, leading to general rejoicing.

WHOOSH

The entire company then goes to Paulina's house, where a statue of Hermione has been recently finished. The sight of his wife's form makes Leontes distraught, but then, to everyone's amazement, the statue comes to life. Hermione is reunited with her daughter.

WHOOSH

As the play ends, Paulina and Camillo are engaged, and the whole company celebrates the miracle.

WHOOSH