

## Creating Group Performances

This system is designed to help children get away from staring at a page and standing still while reading out lines, and encourage them to look up and respond to words by interacting with one another. This is why I use one large text per group, rather than giving each child a copy.

- Some of these passages are more difficult than others. Select according to the age and abilities of your groups.
- Groups of 3 or 4 are a comfortable size, 5 can be managed.
- Print the passages out on A3 paper. Laminating will make them last longer.
- Give only one copy to each group, and leave them to develop their performance. The group members must divide up the speaking of the lines between themselves, and devise movement to accompany them. Be available to help with tricky words.
- These are the rules:
  1. Anyone who wants to speak gets to speak
  2. Anyone who doesn't want to speak doesn't have to
  3. If you are not speaking, you have to be moving/doing (no standing around waiting for your turn to read)
  4. Passing the written page from one speaker to the next should be part of the performance
- Groups present their work to one another, and practice being good audience members.
- Discuss what made the most effective parts of each performance. Talk about the new words, and what kind of world was being described and depicted.

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)*

Now the hungry lion roars,  
And the wolf behowls the moon;  
Whilst the heavy ploughman snores,  
All with weary task fordone.  
Now the wasted brands do glow,  
Whilst the screech-owl, screeching loud,  
Puts the wretch that lies in woe  
In remembrance of a shroud.  
Now it is the time of night  
That the graves all gaping wide,  
Every one lets forth his sprite,  
In the church-way paths to glide:  
And we fairies, that do run  
By the triple Hecate's team,  
From the presence of the sun,  
Following darkness like a dream,  
Now are frolic. Not a mouse  
Shall disturb this hallow'd house:  
I am sent with broom before,  
To sweep the dust behind the door.

*(A Midsummer Night's Dream)*



And never, since the middle summer's spring,  
Met we on hill, in dale, forest or mead,  
By paved fountain or by rushy brook,  
Or on the beached margin of the sea,  
To dance our ringlets to the whistling wind,  
But with thy brawls thou hast disturb'd our sport.  
Therefore the winds, piping to us in vain,  
As in revenge, have suck'd up from the sea  
Contagious fogs; which falling in the land  
Have every pelting river made so proud  
That they have overborne their continents:  
The fold stands empty in the drowned field,  
Therefore the moon, the governess of floods,  
Pale in her anger, washes all the air,  
And thorough this distemperature we see  
The seasons alter: hoary-headed frosts  
Lie in the fresh lap of the crimson rose,  
And as in mockery, set: the spring, the summer,  
The childing autumn, angry winter, change  
Their wonted liveries, and the mazed world,  
By their increase, now knows not which is which:  
And this same progeny of evils comes  
From our debate, from our dissension;  
We are their parents and original. (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*)

Flying between the cold moon and the earth,  
Was Cupid arm'd: a certain aim he took  
At a fair vestal throned by the west,  
And loosed his love-shaft smartly from his bow,  
As it should pierce a hundred thousand hearts;  
But I did see young Cupid's fiery shaft  
Quench'd in the chaste beams of the watery moon,  
And the imperial votaress passed on,  
In maiden meditation, fancy-free.  
Yet mark'd I where the bolt of Cupid fell:  
It fell upon a little western flower,  
Before milk-white, now purple with love's wound,  
And maidens call it love-in-idleness.  
Fetch me that flower; the herb I shew'd thee once:  
The juice of it on sleeping eye-lids laid  
Will make or man or woman madly dote  
Upon the next live creature that it sees.  
Fetch me this herb; and be thou here again.

*(A Midsummer Night's Dream)*

OBERON

Through the house give gathering light,  
By the dead and drowsy fire:  
Every elf and fairy sprite  
Hop as light as bird from brier;  
And this ditty, after me,  
Sing, and dance it trippingly.

TITANIA

First, rehearse your song by rote  
To each word a warbling note:  
Hand in hand, with fairy grace,  
Will we sing, and bless this place.

*(A Midsummer Night's Dream)*

Hast thou the flower there?  
I pray thee give it me.  
I know a bank where the wild thyme blows,  
Where oxlips and the nodding violet grows,  
Quite over-canopied with luscious woodbine,  
With sweet musk-roses and with eglantine:  
There sleeps Titania sometime of the night,  
Lull'd in these flowers with dances and delight;  
And there the snake throws her enamell'd skin,  
Weed wide enough to wrap a fairy in.  
I'll watch Titania when she is asleep,  
And with the juice of this I'll streak her eyes,  
And make her full of hateful fantasies.  
The next thing then she waking looks upon,  
Be it on lion, bear, or wolf, or bull,  
On meddling monkey, or on busy ape,  
She shall pursue it with the soul of love.

*(A Midsummer Night's Dream)*

Be kind and courteous to this gentleman;  
Hop in his walks and gambol in his eyes;  
Feed him with apricots and dewberries,  
With purple grapes, green figs, and mulberries;  
The honey-bags steal from the humble-bees,  
And for night-tapers crop their waxen thighs  
And light them at the fiery glow-worm's eyes,  
To have my love to bed and to arise;  
And pluck the wings from Painted butterflies  
To fan the moonbeams from his sleeping eyes:  
Nod to him, elves, and do him courtesies.

*(A Midsummer Night's Dream)*

Methought I saw a thousand fearful wrecks;  
Ten thousand men that fishes gnaw'd upon;  
Wedges of gold, great anchors, heaps of pearl,  
Inestimable stones, unvalued jewels,  
All scatter'd in the bottom of the sea:  
Some lay in dead men's skulls; and, in those holes  
Where eyes did once inhabit, there were crept,  
As 'twere in scorn of eyes, reflecting gems,  
Which woo'd the slimy bottom of the deep,  
And mock'd the dead bones that lay scatter'd by.

*(Richard III)*

Oh then I see Queen Mab hath been with you,  
And in this state she gallops night by night  
Through lovers' brains, and then they dream of love;  
O'er courtiers' knees, that dream on court'sies straight,  
O'er lawyers' fingers, who straight dream on fees,  
O'er ladies' lips, who straight on kisses dream,  
Sometime she gallops o'er a courtier's nose,  
And then dreams he of smelling out a suit;  
And sometime comes she with a tithe-pig's tail  
Tickling a parson's nose as a' lies asleep,  
Then dreams, he of another benefice:  
Sometime she driveth o'er a soldier's neck,  
And then dreams he of cutting foreign throats,  
Of breaches, ambuscadoes, Spanish blades,  
Of healths five-fathom deep; and then anon  
Drums in his ear, at which he starts and wakes,  
And being thus frightened swears a prayer or two  
And sleeps again. This is that very Mab,  
This is the hag, when maids lie on their backs,  
That presses them and learns them first to bear,  
Making them women of good carriage:

This is she –

*(Romeo and Juliet)*

The night has been unruly: where we lay,  
Our chimneys were blown down; and, as they say,  
Lamentings heard i' the air; strange screams of death,  
And prophesying with accents terrible  
Of dire combustion and confused events  
New hatch'd to the woeful time: the obscure bird  
Clamour'd the livelong night: some say, the earth  
Was feverous and did shake.

*(Macbeth)*

Now, my fair'st friend,  
I would I had some flowers o' the spring that might  
Become your time of day; and yours, and yours,  
O Proserpina - daffodils,  
That come before the swallow dares, and take  
The winds of March with beauty; violets dim,  
But sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes  
Or Cytherea's breath; pale primroses  
That die unmarried, ere they can behold  
Bright Phoebus in his strength, bold oxlips and  
The crown imperial; lilies of all kinds,  
The flower-de-luce being one! O, these I lack,  
To make you garlands of, and my sweet friend,  
To strew him o'er and o'er!

*(The Winter's Tale)*

The barge she sat in, like a burnish'd throne,  
Burn'd on the water: the poop was beaten gold;  
Purple the sails, and so perfumed that  
The winds were love-sick with them; the oars were silver,  
Which to the tune of flutes kept stroke, and made  
The water which they beat to follow faster,  
As amorous of their strokes. For her own person,  
It beggar'd all description: she did lie  
In her pavilion - cloth-of-gold of tissue -  
O'er-picturing that Venus, on each side her  
Stood pretty dimpled boys, like smiling Cupids,  
With divers-colour'd fans. Her gentlewomen,  
So many mermaids, tended her  
And made their bends adornings: at the helm  
A seeming mermaid steers: the silken tackle  
Swell with the touches of those flower-soft hands,  
That yarely frame the office. From the barge  
A strange invisible perfume hits the sense  
Of the adjacent wharfs.

*(Antony and Cleopatra)*