



EXPLORING POWER IN A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

The struggle between order and disorder is a central theme of William Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. This exercise has been designed to help students understand their relationships to power and how power informs the order of their lives.

Power Activity

1. Working in pairs, ask students to discuss a time when they felt confident and able to express themselves. Then, ask them to describe a time when they felt insecure and unable to be themselves. Once students have had time to discuss with their partners, ask for volunteers to share with the class two or three examples of both experiences.
2. Once students have had time to discuss with their partners, ask for volunteers to share with the class two or three examples. Choose the most "playable" example to stage as a tableau, or frozen picture, with volunteer actors from the class. Working as directors, the rest of the class will shape an image from the example that depicts the idea of empowerment. Repeat this process with an example that shows oppression or a lack of power.
3. When creating the contrasting images, ask students to pay particular attention to the main character. Ask students to think about the body language used in the contrasting situations.