



ACT 3: PLOTS AND MAGIC – READING COMPREHENSION

A little way from Prospero's dwelling—a rough house of wood, sufficient to keep out the weather and keep in comfort and warmth—the King Of Naples' son was carrying logs. Back and forth he worked, pausing only to wipe the sweat from his brow. He had sworn that he would gladly be a slave if only he could see Miranda once a day; and Prospero had put him to the test. Suddenly the house door opened and Miranda, with a quick, backward glance, came running out. "Alas!" She cried, seeing Ferdinand bent under his heavy burden, "pray you, work not so hard!" She begged him to rest. "My father is hard at study" she promised, with another backward glance. "He's safe for these three hours"

A shadow stirred in the doorway. Prospero was indeed at study, but it was nearest, not books. He smiled at the innocence of his daughter's conspiracy. "If you'll sit down" urged Miranda, "I'll bear your logs the while."

Ferdinand shook his head. Though the work was heavy, there was a pleasure in it; it was not for a harsh master that he laboured, but for a mistress, as fair as the sun

Again, Prospero smiled. He had given the young man Caliban's task so that he might seem a Caliban in Miranda's eyes: but Ferdinand laboured willingly and the harsh toil, far from debasing him, had made him seem more noble than ever.

"The very instant that I saw you" panted Ferdinand, between logs, "did my heart fly to your service..."

"Do you love me" asked Miranda, more used to plainer speech and hoping she had understood. He did indeed, and told her so again and again, and she, weeping with happiness, confessed the same. Then she left him, for the endless space of half an hour; and he went on heaving logs that seemed as light and airy as dandelion clock. And Prospero, the hidden observer, shook his head, and sighed, and smiled.

Adapted from Shakespeare Stories by Leon Garfield and Michael Foreman



1. What is a 'dwelling'? Circle the word

A house

A shop

A beach

A ship

2. Who was carrying logs?

3. ***“Back and forth he worked, pausing only to wipe the sweat from his brow”***
How do we know he was working hard? Use evidence from the text to support your answer

4. Why was Ferdinand happy to be a slave?

5. Who came running out the house? Circle the right answer.

Prospero

Ariel

Caliban

Miranda

6. ***She begged him to rest. “My father is hard at study” she promised, with another backward glance. “He’s safe for these three hours”***

A. Circle two words which could be used instead of 'begged'

Threw

Asked

Sang

Urged

B. Why do you think she gives '*another backward glance*'. Explain your answer.

C. What do you think she means "He's safe for these three hours".

8. What is Prospero doing whilst Miranda and Ferdinand are talking?

9. Is Prospero cross? Give a reason for your answer

10. ***“he went on heaving logs that seemed as light and airy as dandelion clock”.***
Why do the logs seem light and airy to Ferdinand now?