



The Tempest

Insults and Endearments

Shakespeare uses strong language to express strong feelings, both positive and negative. Complete the charts below to explore Shakespeare's insults and endearments in *The Tempest*. Some words on the chart are still used today but with different meanings, so make sure that your definition fits the context of the dialogue from the play.

Read these words and their context. Then write a definition for each word.

Word	Context	Definition in Context
hearts	Boatswain: Heigh, my hearts! Cheerly, cheerly, my hearts! (No Fear 1.1.4)	hearty, or strong, men
pox	Sebastian: A pox o' your throat, you bawling, / blasphemous, incharitable dog! (No Fear 1.1.21–22)	
quaint	Prospero: Fine apparition! My quaint Ariel, / Hark in thine ear. (No Fear 1.2.322–323)	

Now read these words and find their context in the play as you read. Write the act, scene, and line numbers where you found each word. Then write the definition of the word in context. Use a dictionary if you need help.

Word	Context	Definition in Context
care		
cherubim		
cur	(No Fear: 1.1.24)	good-for-nothing, low-life
grave		
hag-born		
monster		
mooncalf		

perdition		
scurvy		
wench		
worm		

RL.11-12.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (Include Shakespeare as well as other authors.)

L.11-12.4 Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on *grades 11-12 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

L.11-12.5 Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

Answer Key

Word	Context	Definition in Context
hearts	Boatswain: Heigh, my hearts! Cheerly, cheerly, my hearts! (No Fear 1.1.4)	<i>hearty, or strong, men</i>
pox	Sebastian: A pox o' your throat, you bawling, / blasphemous, incharitable dog! (No Fear 1.1.21–22)	<i>curse</i>
quaint	Prospero: Fine apparition! My quaint Ariel, / Hark in thine ear. (No Fear 1.2.322–323)	<i>ingenious</i>

Word	Context	Definition in Context
care	(No Fear 1.2.16–17)	<i>good, benefit, nurture, protection</i>
cherubim	(No Fear 1.2.152–153)	<i>cherub, little angel</i>
cur	(No Fear: 1.1.23)	<i>good-for-nothing, low-life</i>
grave	(No Fear 1.2.189–193)	<i>venerable, respected, worthy</i>
hag-born	(No Fear 1.2.285–286)	<i>born of a witch</i>
monster	(No Fear 2.2.50)	<i>wild creature</i>
mooncalf	(No Fear 2.2.86–87)	<i>monster, deformed being</i>
perdition	(No Fear 3.3.75–80)	<i>slow destruction, living hell</i>
scurvy	(No Fear 2.2.40)	<i>contemptible, rotten</i>
wench	(No Fear 1.2.139–140)	<i>girl or young woman</i>
worm	(No Fear 3.1.31)	<i>frail creature</i>