



## ONE-UPMANSHIP

### INTRODUCTION

Shrek and Fiona feel sorry for themselves. They meet and talk about how hard their lives have been. When Fiona tells Shrek her sad story, he seems to feel the need to top her story by telling his own. This kind of behaviour has an element of power in it. One person gains power over the other by saying, "oh, your life may be hard, but mine is much harder." Why do people do this? And what do they hope to gain from it?

### THAT WAS A SAD STORY, BUT...

Explain to the students that this sort of behaviour is called 'one-upmanship'. It's about gaining power by gaining sympathy.

Provide students with the lyrics to "I Think I Got You Beat", from **SHREK THE MUSICAL** (see resource section). Using the structure of Shrek's verse, ask them to create a follow-on verse in which Princess Fiona tries to top Shrek's story, but making hers sound even more awful. The verse must end with the refrain "So, I think I got you beat."

As this is an exercise in one-upmanship, Princess Fiona's claims in the new verse must be even more outrageous than her claims in her original verses.

As an extension exercise for more able students, ask them to create an additional verse for Shrek, to follow their new verse for Princess Fiona. How far can they go on before the stories become just too crazy?

### WORD ASSOCIATIONS

Divide your students into pairs and ask them to label themselves A and B. Explain to them that A will be given a word. When the game starts, they will say their word to B, who will try to come up with another word, which must be related to the word that A has said. There must be a clear and obvious relationship between the two words (the teacher may need to be the arbiter of this, depending on the age of the students). The game must proceed quickly, with minimum thinking time and there are extra points available for anyone who can come up with a word that also directly relates to **SHREK THE MUSICAL**.

### RESOURCES

REPEATED ON PAGE 20

#### FIONA

I had nothing in that tower  
Fighting boredom by the hour.  
Princess lonely, walking circles  
I had only...

Bare essentials - army cot a  
hot plate and chamber pot, and every morning I  
would boil it.  
No choice I had no toilet.

Just a view of devastation  
out one window. Isolation  
in my bedroom.  
And very little headroom

Twenty years I sat and waited  
I'm very dedicated  
On the walls the days were added  
Luckily those walls were padded!  
So...  
I think I got you beat...

#### SHREK

Oh ya think so? That was a sad story, but...

I've heard better, I'm just sayin'.  
A for effort. Thanks for playin'.  
Sad to see a princess suffer,  
but I had it rougher

Like that time a mob with torches  
burned my britches. See the scorches?  
You're just whiny...  
I had a flaming heiney

So, I think I got you beat...

from "I Think I Got You Beat"  
Music by Jeanine Tesori  
Lyrics by David Lindsay-Abaire