

Year 7 Macbeth Knowledge Organiser



Assessments:
 1. A biography of William Shakespeare.
 2. A review of the play.

Brief Plot Summary:
Act 1:

- Macbeth and Banquo meet three witches.
- Macbeth is made the Thane of Cawdor.
- Lady Macbeth reads the Macbeth's letter and taunts Macbeth.
- King Duncan arrives Inverness Castle.

Act 2:

- Macbeth kills Duncan.
- Duncan's sons flee.
- Macbeth is crowned King of Scotland.

Act 3:

- Banquo is suspicious of Macbeth.
- Banquo is murdered but his son escapes.
- Macbeth is haunted by Banquo's ghost at a banquet.

Act 4:

- The Witches show Macbeth that the future kings will be sons of Banquo.
- Macduff's family is murdered.
- Malcolm tests Macduff's loyalty.

Act 5:

- Lady Macbeth sleepwalks and dies.
- Macbeth is killed by MacDuff.
- Malcom is restored as king.

Creating a Character
 Given Circumstances: What we already know about the character from the text.

Objective: What the character wants in the play (this will influence how the character acts and reacts to get it).

Arc: The emotional journey of the character. How the character changes from the beginning of the play to the end.

Status: How much power and importance the character has (high or low).

Emotional Memory: Finding moments in the actors' life where he/she felt the same or similar to the character and trying to remember what it felt like.

Internal Monologue: The thoughts going through the characters mind. This can be very different from what they are actually saying and will make for a much more interesting performance.

Empathy: Being able to get inside the character to think and feel as they do.

Key Characters:

Macbeth: One of King Duncan's generals. He loves power; the witches tempt him into murder. Originally Thane of Glamis, he becomes the Thane of Cawdor, then King of Scotland.

Lady Macbeth: Macbeth's wife. She is ambitious and drives him to murder but is driven mad by conscience.

Three Witches: Sinister ladies of witchcraft who tempt Macbeth to do dark deeds.

Banquo: A general and friend of Macbeth. The prophecy does not corrupt him. He is murdered by Macbeth as he is considered a threat. His ghost haunts Macbeth.

King Duncan: The good and noble King of Scotland, murdered by Macbeth.

Macduff: Thane of Fife. He opposes Macbeth and supports Malcolm. He kills Macbeth in revenge for the murder of his family.

Malcolm: Duncan's son. He flees with his brother after the murder of Duncan but returns with English support to challenge Macbeth.

Fleance: Banquo's son. Macbeth tries and fails to murder him. He flees Scotland but it's implied he will return one day to fulfil the prophecy and become King.

Staging

Enter: To come onto the stage

Exit: To leave the stage

Levels: The height of the character or the positioning compared to others.

In the Round: The audience are seated in a circle facing in.

End On: The audience are seated facing the stage area straight on (as above).

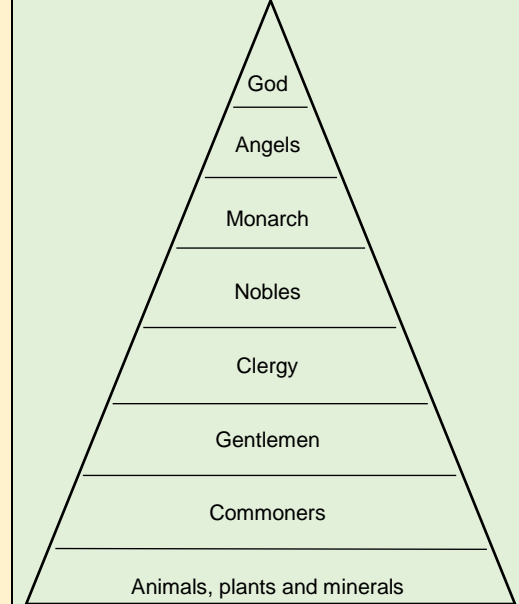
Traverse: The audience are either side of the stage area (like a catwalk).

Thrust: A combination of 'End On' and 'Traverse'.

Proscenium Arch: The stage has a frame that creates a picture effect.

Context

Philosophy: Everyone believed that they had his or her place in life. This hierarchy was known as the chain of being. The idea of Macbeth planning to kill the king would have shocked the Elizabethan audience.



Politics: Written in 1606. There is a strong political theme throughout, with the idea that excessive ambition has terrible consequences. Shakespeare was close to King James I and it is thought that in focusing on Macbeth as a figure from Scottish history he was paying homage to the King's lineage.

Order: A century earlier, England had experienced chaotic disorder during the War of the Roses. An underlying threat is evident throughout the play that treachery may once again bring disaster. Many events in the play challenge the idea of 'order'.

Supernatural: Witchcraft and supernatural were both of great interest and hugely feared. King James I was highly suspicious of the supernatural. The audience believed anything associated with the supernatural to be evil and menacing.

Religion: People were deeply religious. Belief in God and heaven and hell affected people's choice and the way they behaved.

Gender: It was a patriarchal society. Women were expected to be submissive to their husbands and a woman with an education was a rarity. The idea that a woman could challenge a man was unheard of and would have shocked audiences. Men were supposed to be strong, brave and masculine. To be called feminine was an insult to a man.

Themes

Ambition

- Affects both Macbeth and Lady Macbeth.
- Ambition is corrupting and leads to evil.

The Supernatural

- Idea that mysterious forces control us.
- Strong belief and fear of witchcraft at the time.

Appearance and Reality

- Lady Macbeth believes Macbeth is a poor actor.
- Macbeth sees powerful visions.
- Banquo appears as a 'vision'.
- Witches seem 'useful' to Macbeth but bring about his downfall.

Good and Evil

- Choices have consequences.
- The witches symbolise evil.

Order and Chaos

- A century earlier – War of the Roses.
- Civil disorder seen as perilous.
- Macbeth's restored 'order' is only an illusion.

Loyalty and Betrayal

- Cawdor punished for betrayal.
- Macbeth rewarded for loyalty at outset.
- Macbeth betrays Banquo and Duncan.
- Macbeth remains loyal to Lady Macbeth.

Key Vocabulary and Literary Techniques

alliteration	rhyming couplets
allude/allusion	similes
ambition/ambitious	sinister
apparition	soliloquy
contempt	supernatural
dramatic irony	surreal
feminine/femininity	symbols and motifs
greed	treachery
iambic pentameter	usurp
malevolent	valour
manipulate/manipulative	vile
masculine/masculinity	villain
metaphors	witchcraft
moral/immoral	
noble	
pathetic fallacy	
paradox	
patriarchal society	
personification	
power	
prophecy	
protagonist	
regicide	
rhetorical questions	



