



Macbeth

ACTIVITY ONE: Plot

Create a Ten Point Summary of the plot of *Macbeth*

Watch [this video](#) and read the plot summary on the next slide before deciding on the ten key plot points.

1. Scotland is at war with Norway.
2. The play begins with three witches talking about Macbeth.
3. King Duncan praises Macbeth's prowess on the battlefield.
4. Macbeth and Banquo meet the witches after the battle. They predict he will become King and Banquo's descendants will be kings in the future. They say Macbeth will first be made Thane of Cawdor.
5. Duncan makes Macbeth Thane of Cawdor.
6. Duncan stays at Macbeth's castle. Lady Macbeth persuades her husband to kill Duncan.
7. Macbeth becomes King. He then kills Banquo.
8. Macbeth asks the witches for further information. They show him apparitions who make predictions. They tell him to beware Macduff.
9. Macbeth kills Lady Macduff and her children.
10. Lady Macbeth kills herself. Duncan's sons, Macduff and the English army attack Macbeth's castle. Macduff kills Macbeth.

Scotland is at war with Norway. King Duncan's generals, Macbeth and Banquo, encounter three strange women on a bleak Scottish moorland on their way home from quelling a rebellion. The women prophesy that Macbeth will be given the title of Thane of Cawdor and then become King of Scotland, while Banquo's heirs shall be kings. The generals want to hear more but the weird sisters disappear. Duncan creates Macbeth Thane of Cawdor in thanks for his success in the recent battles and then proposes to make a brief visit to Macbeth's castle.

Lady Macbeth receives news from her husband of the prophecy and his new title and she vows to help him become king by any means she can. Macbeth's return is followed almost at once by Duncan's arrival. The Macbeths plot together and later that night, while all are sleeping and after his wife has given the guards drugged wine, Macbeth kills the King and his guards. Lady Macbeth leaves the bloody daggers beside the dead king. Macduff arrives and when the murder is discovered Duncan's sons, Malcolm and Donalbain flee, fearing for their lives, but they are nevertheless blamed for the murder.

Macbeth is elected King of Scotland, but is plagued by feelings of guilt and insecurity. He arranges for Banquo and his son, Fleance to be killed, but the boy escapes the murderers. At a celebratory banquet Macbeth sees the ghost of Banquo and disconcerts the courtiers with his strange manner. Lady Macbeth tries to calm him but is rejected.

Macbeth seeks out the witches and learns from them that he will be safe until Birnam Wood comes to his castle, Dunsinane. They tell him that he need fear no-one born of woman, but also that the Scottish succession will come from Banquo's son. Macbeth embarks on a reign of terror and many, including Macduff's family are murdered, while Macduff himself has gone to join Malcolm at the court of the English king, Edward. Malcolm and Macduff decide to lead an army against Macbeth.

Macbeth feels safe in his remote castle at Dunsinane until he is told that Birnam Wood is moving towards him. The situation is that Malcolm's army is carrying branches from the forest as camouflage for their assault on the castle. Meanwhile Lady Macbeth, paralysed with guilt, walks in her sleep and gives away her secrets to a listening doctor. She kills herself as the final battle commences.

Macduff challenges Macbeth who, on learning his adversary is the child of a Caesarian birth, realises he is doomed. Macduff triumphs and brings the head of the traitor to Malcolm who declares peace and is crowned king.

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Create a Ten Point Summary of the plot of Macbeth

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

ACTIVITY TWO: Character of Macbeth

Learn up to 12 key quotes which show how he develops

Who said this? When and why did they say it?

1. 'brave Macbeth--well he deserves that name'
2. 'All hail, Macbeth, thou shalt be king hereafter!'
3. 'I have no spur to prick the sides of my intent, but only vaulting ambition'
4. 'When you durst do it, then you were a man'
5. 'Hear it not, Duncan; for it is a knell
That summons thee to heaven or to hell.'
6. 'Wake Duncan with thy knocking! I would thou couldst!'

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7. 'Thou play'dst most foully for't'

8. 'To be thus is nothing; But to be safely thus'

9. 'O, full of scorpions is my mind, dear wife!'

10. 'I have supp'd full with horrors;
Direness, familiar to my slaughterous thoughts
Cannot once start me.'

11. 'Turn, hell-hound, turn!'

12. 'this dead butcher and his fiend-like queen'

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ACTIVITY FOUR: The Apparitions in Act IV



***What do the apparitions predict?
What does Macbeth ask and what is
the response?***

Read [this study guide](#) and record your notes below

What do the prophecies mean? How does Macbeth react to them?

The First Apparition

"Beware Macduff; Beware the Thane of Fife."

The Second Apparition

"none of women born Shall harm Macbeth."

The Third Apparition

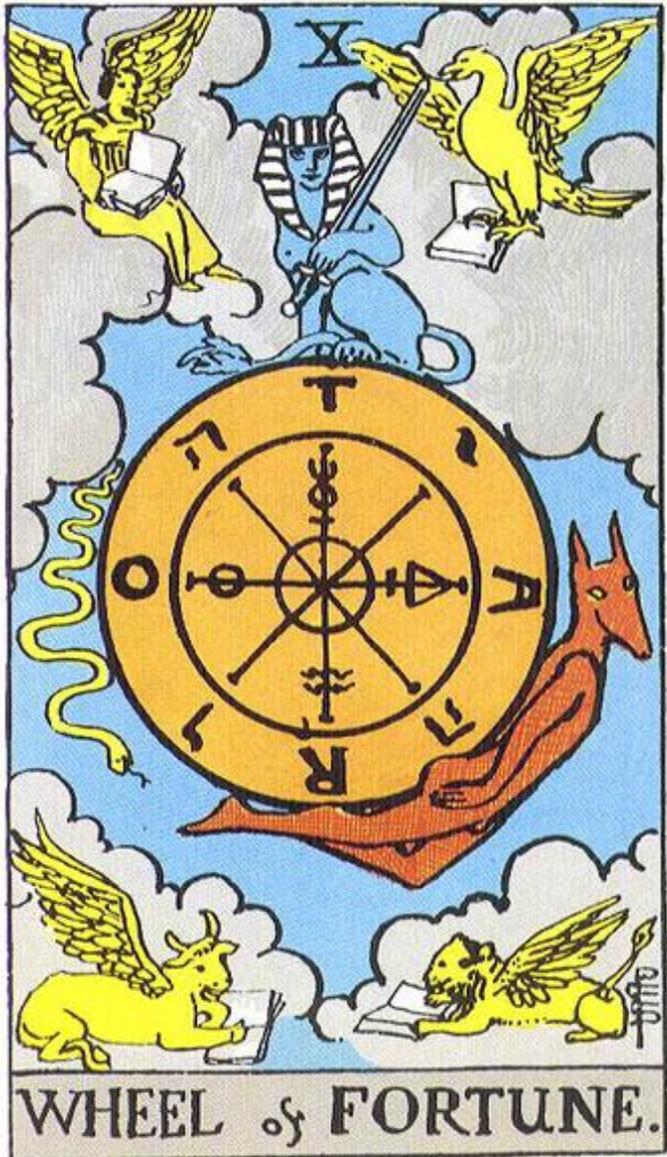
"be lion-mettled, proud, and take no care who chafes, who frets... until Great Birnam wood to high Dunsinane Hill /Shall come against him."

ACTIVITY FIVE: Macbeth, Tragic Hero?

Revise the genre of tragedy and its conventions

1. Revise the features of tragedy in 'Macbeth'
2. Use your knowledge of the play to complete the table adding reasons to both columns

Shakespearean Tragedy



- A tragedy is a play about the downfall of a central character.
- A tragic hero has a fatal flaw that leads to their death.
- The hero has free will and ignores warnings about their terrible fate.
- Aristotle said audiences watch tragedies to feel catharsis, and 'pity and fear'.
- Shakespeare also discusses the idea of fate and the wheel of fortune turning against the greedy or proud.

ACTIVITY FIVE:

Macbeth, Tragic Hero or Dead Butcher?

Tragic Hero	Dead Butcher

ACTIVITY SIX: Macbeth, Tragic Hero?

Revise the genre of tragedy and its conventions

Look at Macbeth's final lines to Macduff when he realises that Macduff fulfils all the prophecies:

*I will not yield,
To kiss the ground before young Malcolm's feet,
And to be baited with the rabble's curse.
Though Birnam wood be come to Dunsinane,
And thou opposed, being of no woman born,
Yet I will try the last. Before my body
I throw my warlike shield. Lay on, Macduff,
And damn'd be him that first cries, 'Hold, enough!'*

Why is it important that Macbeth defends himself at the end?

ACTIVITY SIX: Macbeth, Tragic Hero?

Revise the genre of tragedy and its conventions

Why is it important that Macbeth defends himself at the end?

FURTHER STUDY

Use these links to deepen your understanding:

[Spark Notes Study Guide](#)

[Shmoop Study Guide](#)

[BBC Bitesize Revision Guide](#)

[Macbeth: the animated tale](#)

[Flocabulary's rap video](#)

[Thug Notes](#)

Dramatic Devices

- irony
- dramatic irony
- juxtaposition
- contrast
- mirroring
- foreshadowing
- body language
- stage directions
- symbolism
- stagecraft
- characterisation
- dialogue
- monologue
- tension
- mystery
- suspense