

Comprehension Activity Booklet

Macbeth

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE



My name.....

My class.....

KEY STAGE 4

What will these activities help me to be able to do?

By the end of Key Stage 4, we would like you to be able to:

- ♣ Choose and read books independently for challenge, interest and enjoyment;
- Understand and critically evaluate texts through:
 - ♣ Reading in different ways for different purposes, summarising and synthesising ideas and information, and evaluating their usefulness for particular purposes;
 - ♣ Drawing on knowledge of the purpose, audience for and context of the writing, including its social, historical and cultural context and the literary tradition to which it belongs, to inform evaluation;
 - ♣ Identifying and interpreting themes, ideas and information;
 - ♣ Exploring aspects of plot, characterisation, events and settings, the relationships between them and their effects;
 - ♣ Seeking evidence in the text to support a point of view, including justifying inferences with evidence;
 - ♣ Distinguishing between statements that are supported by evidence and those that are not, and identifying bias and misuse of evidence;
 - ♣ Analysing a writer's choice of vocabulary, form, grammatical and structural features, and evaluating their effectiveness and impact;
 - ♣ Making critical comparisons, referring to the contexts, themes, characterisation, style and literary quality of texts, and drawing on knowledge and skills from wider reading;

Make an informed personal response, recognising that other responses to a text are possible and evaluating these.



The Play Opening



Focus: Making inferences and referring to evidence in the text.

Read the opening to the play below, and then answer the questions on the next page:

ACT I

SCENE I. A desert place.

Thunder and lightning. Enter three Witches

First Witch

When shall we three meet again
In thunder, lightning, or in rain?

Second Witch

When the hurlyburly's done,
When the battle's lost and won.

Third Witch

That will be ere the set of sun.

First Witch

Where the place?

Second Witch

Upon the heath.

Third Witch

There to meet with Macbeth.

First Witch

I come, Graymalkin!

Second Witch

Paddock calls.

Third Witch

Anon.

ALL

Fair is foul, and foul is fair:
Hover through the fog and filthy air.

Exeunt



Then complete these tasks:

List two things that the witches plan about their next meeting. Back each point with evidence from the play.

Point 1:

Evidence:

Point 2:

Evidence:

What do we learn about the witches from the line 'Fair is foul and foul is fair?'

What do we learn about the witches from the line 'hover through the fog and filthy air?'

Character Profiles



Focus: Exploring aspects of plot, characterisation, events and settings, the relationships between them and their effects.

Create character profiles for each of the main characters in the play, using appropriate evidence. Then answer the questions below.

Character 1	Character 2
Image	Image
Name:	Name:
Age:	Age:
Physical Description:	Physical Description:
Personality Description:	Personality Description:
Best Quote:	Best Quote:

Character 3	Character 4
Image	Image
Name:	Name:
Age:	Age:
Physical Description:	Physical Description:
Personality Description:	Personality Description:
Best Quote:	Best Quote:

1. Which of the four characters is the main protagonist of the play? Explain how you know.

2. What techniques does the writer use to present the characteristics of the characters? Give an example and explain.

3. Which of the characters is your own personal favourite? Explain why.

The Battle!

Focus: Exploring aspects of plot, characterisation, events and settings, the relationships between them and their effects.

Read the passage below and then complete the information tables about the setting on the next page



A Camp Near Forres

DUNCAN

What bloody man is that? He can report,
As seemeth by his plight, of the revolt
The newest state.

MALCOLM

This is the sergeant
Who like a good and hardy soldier fought
'Gainst my captivity. Hail, brave friend!
Say to the king the knowledge of the broil
As thou didst leave it.

Sergeant

Doubtful it stood;
As two spent swimmers, that do cling
together
And choke their art. The merciless
Macdonwald--
Worthy to be a rebel, for to that
The multiplying villanies of nature
Do swarm upon him--from the western isles
Of kerns and gallowglasses is supplied;
And fortune, on his damned quarrel smiling,
Show'd like a rebel's whore: but all's too
weak:
For brave Macbeth--well he deserves that
name--
Disdaining fortune, with his brandish'd steel,

Which smoked with bloody execution,
Like valour's minion carved out his passage
Till he faced the slave;
Which ne'er shook hands, nor bade farewell
to him,
Till he unseam'd him from the nave to the
chaps,
And fix'd his head upon our battlements.

DUNCAN

O valiant cousin! worthy gentleman!

Sergeant

As whence the sun 'gins his reflection
Shipwrecking storms and direful thunders
break,
So from that spring whence comfort seem'd
to come
Discomfort swells. Mark, king of Scotland,
mark:
No sooner justice had with valour arm'd
Compell'd these skipping kerns to trust their
heels,
But the Norwegian lord surveying vantage,
With furbish'd arms and new supplies of men
Began a fresh assault.

Now retrieve the following information about the battle.

Adjectives used to describe the sergeant	Verbs used to describe the battle	Names of those involved in the battle
How did Macbeth fight in the battle?	What was the result of the battle – how do you know?	How does Duncan react to news of the battle?

Now draw an annotated image of the battle, using the description from the play.

FORM, AUDIENCE, AND PURPOSE

Focus: Drawing on knowledge of the purpose, audience for and context of the writing, including its social, historical and cultural context and the literary tradition to which it belongs, to inform evaluation.

Task: Identify the form, audience, and purpose features of *Macbeth* on this page, and then retrieve information from the text to back up your ideas on the next page.

Form

When was the play published and what do you know about that time?

Audience

Who would have been watching this play at the time, and how may they have reacted to this play?

What do you know about the playwright?

MACBETH

Purpose

Give one example.

What do you think Shakespeare's messages are throughout this play?

Now complete these tasks related to form, audience, and purpose:

FORM: Find two ways in which the historical context of Shakespearean Britain is evident throughout *Macbeth*.

Feature of context 1:

Feature of context 2:

AUDIENCE – How is it anticipated the audience at the time would react towards the character of Macbeth?

PURPOSE - What do you think Shakespeare's views are towards divine right?

What do you think Shakespeare's attitudes are towards the supernatural?



LADY MACBETH!

Focus: Seeking evidence in the text to support a point of view, including justifying inferences with evidence;

Find quotations from within the text to back up the following statements about Lady Macbeth.



DUNCAN!

Focus: Seeking evidence in the text to support a point of view, including justifying inferences with evidence;

Find quotations from within the text to back up the following statements about Duncan.

Diary Entry...

Focus: Exploring aspects of plot, characterisation, events and settings, the relationships between them and their effects;

Read the extract below from *Macbeth*. Then, complete Macbeth's diary entry from that evening, on the next page.

MACBETH

Speak, if you can: what are you?

First Witch

All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, thane of Glamis!

Second Witch

All hail, Macbeth, hail to thee, thane of Cawdor!

Third Witch

All hail, Macbeth, thou shalt be king hereafter!

BANquo

Good sir, why do you start; and seem to fear Things that do sound so fair? I' the name of truth,

Are ye fantastical, or that indeed Which outwardly ye show? My noble partner You greet with present grace and great prediction

Of noble having and of royal hope, That he seems rapt withal: to me you speak not.

If you can look into the seeds of time, And say which grain will grow and which will not,

Speak then to me, who neither beg nor fear Your favours nor your hate.

First Witch

Hail!

Second Witch

Hail!

Third Witch

Hail!

First Witch

Lesser than Macbeth, and greater.

Second Witch

Not so happy, yet much happier.

Third Witch

Thou shalt get kings, though thou be none: So all hail, Macbeth and Banquo!

First Witch

Banquo and Macbeth, all hail!

MACBETH

Stay, you imperfect speakers, tell me more: By Sinel's death I know I am thane of Glamis;

But how of Cawdor? the thane of Cawdor lives,

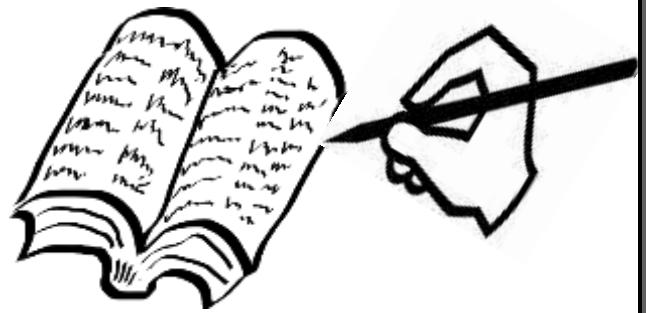
A prosperous gentleman; and to be king Stands not within the prospect of belief, No more than to be Cawdor. Say from whence

You owe this strange intelligence? or why Upon this blasted heath you stop our way With such prophetic greeting? Speak, I charge you.

Witches vanish

Remember the following when writing your diary entry:

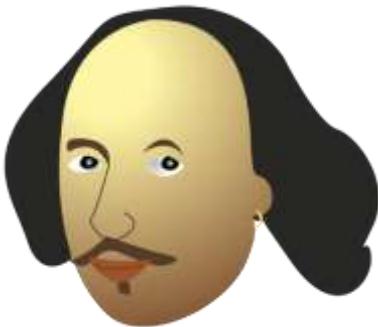
- Share the character's deepest thoughts and feelings and what happened;
- Write in the first person;
- Base your ideas in what you read in the extract



Dear Diary,

Signed Macbeth

SHAKESPEARE'S LANGUAGE



King Duncan's Murder

Focus: Analysing a writer's choice of vocabulary, form, grammatical and structural features, and evaluating their effectiveness and impact;

Read the extract below, and then answer the questions about Shakespeare's language on the next page.

MACBETH

Go bid thy mistress, when my drink is ready,
She strike upon the bell. Get thee to bed.

Exit Servant

Is this a dagger which I see before me,
The handle toward my hand? Come, let me
clutch thee.
I have thee not, and yet I see thee still.
Art thou not, fatal vision, sensible
To feeling as to sight? or art thou but
A dagger of the mind, a false creation,
Proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain?
I see thee yet, in form as palpable
As this which now I draw.
Thou marshall'st me the way that I was
going;
And such an instrument I was to use.
Mine eyes are made the fools o' the other
senses,
Or else worth all the rest; I see thee still,
And on thy blade and dudgeon gouts of
blood,
Which was not so before. There's no such
thing:
It is the bloody business which informs
Thus to mine eyes. Now o'er the one

Nature seems dead, and wicked dreams abuse
The curtain'd sleep; witchcraft celebrates
Pale Hecate's offerings, and wither'd murder,
Alarum'd by his sentinel, the wolf,
Whose howl's his watch, thus with his
stealthy pace.

With Tarquin's ravishing strides, towards his
design
Moves like a ghost. Thou sure and firm-set
earth,
Hear not my steps, which way they walk, for
fear
Thy very stones prate of my whereabout,
And take the present horror from the time,
Which now suits with it. Whilst I threat, he
lives:
Words to the heat of deeds too cold breath
gives.

A bell rings

I go, and it is done; the bell invites me.
Hear it not, Duncan; for it is a knell
That summons thee to heaven or to hell.

Exit

Now answer these questions about Shakespeare's use of language:

1. How does Shakespeare describe the dagger that Macbeth sees before him?

2. What does this dagger represent?

3. What is meant by the line 'Nature seems dead, and wicked dreams abuse?

4. Find a simile within the extract. What effect does it have?

MY POINT OF VIEW



Focus: Distinguishing between statements that are supported by evidence and those that are not, and identifying bias and misuse of evidence.

Do you think the events that occurred were more a result of fate, or the witches' interventions? List the arguments for each, before explaining your point of view in the space provided at the bottom of the page.

Fate	The Witches Interventions

YOUR DECISION: What is your point of view?

EDITING THE PLAY

Focus: Make an informed personal response, recognising that other responses to a text are possible and evaluating these.

How would you change *Macbeth*? What do you think would make the play even better? Explain how you would consider editing the novel to introduce a new/ revised plot element, character, and setting.



Plot Element
Character
Setting

THEMES INSPECTOR

Focus: Identifying and interpreting themes, ideas and information;

**Themes are ideas that run throughout a text.
Inspect the text to find evidence of each of the themes named below. Quote where you see the theme in the play, and then explain its relevance.**



Theme 1: Divine Right of Kings	Quote	Explanation
Theme 2: The Supernatural	Quote	Explanation
Theme 3: Ambition	Quote	Explanation

The Dunsinane

Times

Headline

Date: A long, long, time ago

Disclaimer: All stories printed in this newspaper may be entirely fictional.

SPECIAL OFFER: ONLY \$1.99!

MACBETH KILLED BY MACDUFF!

Sub-Heading 1

Image

Sub-Heading 2

Story

Task: Imagine that the local news have got hold of the details of Macbeth's death at the hands of Macduff. Write up the news report of the story.

Focus: Reading in different ways for different purposes, summarising and synthesising ideas and information, and evaluating their usefulness for particular purposes;

Context: Shakespearean Britain

Focus: Drawing on knowledge of the purpose, audience for and context of the writing, including its social, historical and cultural context and the literary tradition to which it belongs, to inform evaluation;

Task: Use your researching skills to find out more about 19th Century Britain. Then, link your findings to what you read in the play.

Key Context Fact - Example	Links to Macbeth
<i>Macbeth was written in 1606, in the reign of James I, who had been James VI of Scotland before he succeeded to the English throne in 1603</i>	<i>Shakespeare wrote the play about a Scottish King, as a homage to the king's Scottish lineage.</i>
Key Context Fact 1	Links to Macbeth
Key Context Fact 2	Links to Macbeth
Key Context Fact 3	Links to Macbeth
Key Context Fact 4	Links to Macbeth
Key Context Fact 5	Links to Macbeth
Key Context Fact 6	Links to Macbeth

Storyboard

Focus: Reading in different ways for different purposes, summarising and synthesising ideas and information, and evaluating their usefulness for particular purposes;

Describe the main plot events in *Macbeth* by completing a storyboard in the space below.

Main Action:	Main Action:	Main Action:
Narrative:	Narrative:	Narrative:
Characters:	Characters:	Characters:
Quote:	Quote:	Quote:
Main Action:	Main Action:	Main Action:
Narrative:	Narrative:	Narrative:
Characters:	Characters:	Characters:
Quote:	Quote:	Quote:

COMPARING AND CONTRASTING TEXTS

Focus: Making critical comparisons, referring to the contexts, themes, characterisation, style and literary quality of texts, and drawing on knowledge and skills from wider reading;

Task: Critically compare *Macbeth* with another text that you have read.



Macbeth



Book 2

Context	Context

Themes

Themes

Characters

Characters

Style

Style

Play Review!

Focus: Make an informed personal response, recognising that other responses to a text are possible and evaluating these.

Macbeth – by William Shakespeare

Image	Play Review  Playwright: Performed at: Similar to: Genre: Audience: Available from:
-------	--

Macbeth Essay Questions

Choose one of the essay questions below, and answer in the space provided on the following pages.

1. To what extent is Macbeth a tale warning of the dangers of unchecked ambition?

You should consider:

- Macbeth's reaction to the witches' prophecies;
- Macbeth's actions in killing King Duncan;
- Macbeth's actions after becoming king.

2. Compare and contrast the characters of Macbeth and King Duncan. How do they differ as kings?

You should consider:

- Their personalities;
- Their characteristics/mannerisms;
- Their treatment of others.

3. To what extent is Lady Macbeth to blame for the death of King Duncan?

You should consider:

- Her letters to Macbeth;
- Her conversations with Macbeth;
- Her actions on the night of Duncan's death.

4. Analyse the banquet scene. How does Shakespeare build a sense of dramatic tension throughout this scene?

You should consider:

- The appearance of Banquo's ghost;
- Macbeth's reactions and behaviour.

Write your essay responses in the space below.

Write your essay responses in the space below.

Reading Log

Log your reading of the story by filling out this reading log!