

Macbeth Knowledge Organiser (GCSE English Literature AQA)

Characters and writer	Prior Knowledge: Gothic traits (Year 7 & 8); Knowledge of Shakespeare (Yr7, introduction to Shakespeare, Year 8 – the Tempest; Year 9 – Romeo and Juliet) Knowledge of the tragic genre (Year 9 – Romeo and Juliet) Witchcraft					
	Macbeth A “brave” and loyal warrior whose vaulting ambition leads him to commit regicide: courageous, tormented. Lady Macbeth Macbeth’s wife. Coerces Macbeth into committing regicide. Loses control and commits suicide at end of play: ambitious, manipulative, guilt ridden. Banquo Scottish nobleman; close friend of Macbeth. Betrayed and killed. Ghost haunts Macbeth at a feast: loyal, astute, shrewd. King Duncan A fair and generous ruler who is butchered by Macbeth: respected, naïve.				Cross Curricular Links	
	The Witches Presented by Shakespeare as supernatural beings who can foretell the future: trouble-making, prophetic, evil. Macduff A Scottish nobleman, loyal to Duncan. Kills Macbeth to restore order to Scotland: Emotional, courageous, heroic. Malcolm Duncan’s eldest son, the Prince of Cumberland. Lady Macduff a victim of Macbeth’s malevolence Fleance Banquo’s son				Shakespeare: By 1606, a famous and popular playwright. Was paid by the King who believed in witches and did not like them. Used historical events (Macbeth’s real life murder of Duncan, the encounter with the witches) but changed crucial details (Banquo is <i>not</i> involved in Duncan’s murder in the play) to please the new king	
Act 1	Plot - Three witches plan to meet Macbeth - The Captain reports Macbeth’s bravery to King Duncan who declares him Thane of Cawdor - The Witches say Macbeth will be Thane of Cawdor, and King. Banquo’s sons will be kings - Lady Macbeth reads Macbeth’s letter about the witches’ premonitions - Lady Macbeth welcomes King Duncan to their castle - Macbeth decides he does not want to kill King Duncan but Lady Macbeth persuades him to go ahead with their murderous plan		Quotations “Fair is foul and Foul is Fair...” ‘Brave Macbeth’ “So foul and fair a day I have not seen” “All hail Macbeth, That shalt be king hereafter” “Thou shalt get kings, though thou be none” “And yet I do fear thy nature; it is too full of the milk of human kindness” “the raven himself is hoarse, That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan Under my battlements” “You would be so much more the man”		Methods (AO2) Juxtaposition oxymoron adjectives showing bravery exclamatives imperatives internal rhyme metaphor animal references simile <i>metaphor</i>	Themes Supernatural Kingship ambition Guilt violence role of women

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Act 2	- Macbeth hallucinates a dagger which leads him to King Duncan's room - Macbeth kills King Duncan off stage - Lady Macbeth returns the daggers - Macduff discovers King Duncan's body - Malcolm flees to England so Macbeth becomes king	"Is this a dagger which I see before me?" "Macbeth hath murdered sleep" "My hands are of your colour, but I shame to wear a heart so white." "A little water clears us of this deed" "there's daggers in men's smiles"	Darkness hallucinations motif metaphor	Supernatural masculinity Kingship guilt
Act 3	- Macbeth plots to kill Banquo and Fleance - Macbeth does not share his plan with Lady Macbeth - Banquo is murdered. Fleance escapes - Macbeth sees Banquo's ghost	"I fear thou playd'st most foully for't" "Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest chuck, til thou applaud the deed" 'Oh, treachery! Fly, good Fleance, fly, fly, fly!' "Thou canst not say I did it; never shake thy gory locks at me!"	terms of address exclamatives; imperatives; symbolism; repetition	guilt violence isolation/ independence treachery
Act 4	- Macbeth seeks out the witches and sees: 1stA an armed head 2ndA a bloody child 3rdA crowned child with tree 8 kings with Banquo carrying a mirror - Macduff's castle is attacked and everyone killed - Malcolm tests Macduff - Macduff learns of the murder of his family - Lady Macbeth is sleepwalking	"beware Macduff" "none of woman born shall harm Macbeth" "Macbeth shall never vanquished be until Great Birnam Wood to high Dunsinane Hill shall come against him" "I grant him bloody, Luxurious, avaricious, false, deceitful, Sudden, malicious, smacking of every sin that has a name" "Out, damned spot. Out I say!" "Hell is Murky"	exclamatives superlatives lists	kingship violence loyalty madness
Act 5	- Macbeth calls for his armour - Lady Macbeth dies by suicide - Macbeth is killed by Macduff - Malcolm is hailed as the rightful king	"Bring me no more reports; let them fly all" "Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow..." "I bear a charmed life..." "Despair thy charm... Macduff was from his mother's womb untimely ripp'd" "Be these juggling fiends no more believed"	imperatives repetition metaphor	Heroism tyranny despair supernatural justice

Assessment writing skills (AO1, AO4)

Sentence starters: Shakespeare presents... Initially, In the extract, When (Macbeth) is..., However, It could be argued that... It is almost as if...	Beginning explanations (after quotations): This shows... This demonstrates... This implies... This suggests... This refers to... This emphasises...	Beginning contextual ideas: In 1606, ... When... During the Jacobean era,... At the time of writing,...	Concluding / summarising: Therefore,... Overall,... In conclusion,... To conclude,... In summary,... To summarise,...	Future learning: Concepts of guilt in '<i>Remains</i>' Ideas concerning securing one's position in '<i>Jekyll and Hyde</i>' ('A' Level: Principles of tragedy; notions of love and its representation in 'Macbeth' vs 'Othello'; ideas about rhyme etc)
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