

Macbeth Portfolio

Portfolios show a range of pieces that show your skill and understanding of a topic. Together, the 3 sections will be worth 100 points (a major grade). Each section has a range of assignments for you to choose from; you also have the option to design your own.

Art/Graphics/Design/Audio (40 points)

- **Macbeth Birthday Party.** Design a “theme” birthday party for Macbeth (or another character from the play). Decide on the theme, menu, and party games, all of which you will incorporate in a creatively designed **invitation**. Then on a separate sheet of paper, write the guest list and next to the name of each guest explain what gift the guest’s birthday gift to Macbeth is and why it is being given.
- **Children’s Book or Comic Book.** Write and illustrate a children’s book version of *Macbeth*, retelling the story in a way that would be understandable for children ages 6-10. The book should be neatly bound with a cover, inside front piece and page numbers. Or create a comic book version of the play.
- **Diary.** Suppose that Macbeth or Lady Macbeth had kept a diary. Write several entries in one of their diaries. Reveal thoughts, fears, hopes, and regrets through the entries. Do not merely retell events in the play. You might even consider entries from years before the play begins, inferring their earlier lives from the play.
- **Film Poster.** Imagine you are directing a new film version of *Macbeth*. Design the film poster to advertise it. You will need the names of key actors, a tagline, a striking image, careful use of colors as signifiers, positive quotes from reviewer, a release date, and credits. Look at some professional posters shown below for inspiration.
- **Memory Box or Scrapbook.** Create a memory box or scrapbook of objects that would be near and dear to a character in *Macbeth*. Include items from the play as well as items that you imagine the character would want to save. Include a written explanation of the significance of each item.
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- **Imagery Poster.** Choose one of the image cluster patterns in the play and create a poster that creatively lists and illustrates each quotation in the cluster, including Act, Scene and Line information. Include
- **Playbill.** Design a playbill for a production of *Macbeth*. The cover should be an exciting visual representation of the play with title. The inside should include the cast of characters and the actors playing them, the director for the production, and relevant information. This might include act summaries, historical/social context, costumes, staging, etc.
- **Resumé.** Prepare a resumé for a major character from the play. The resumé must be typed and should include a drawing or photograph. Fabricate information appropriately, but avoid anachronisms -- such as telephone number. Choose a person whose life is suited to the assignment.
- **Set Design.** Imagine you are the set designer for a new stage version of *Macbeth*. Create a set design for a significant scene in the play, showing scenery, props, costumes, positions of characters, special effects. You can do this as a drawing or an actual model, but it must be based on the original play. It can, however, be an interpretation (think Baz Luhrmann’s *Romeo and Juliet*).
- **Soundtrack CD.** Put together a soundtrack of songs for *Macbeth* including a design for the cover. Also include the lyrics for each song and an explanation of where the song

should go and why you would place it in this part of the play. Create an actual CD with an appropriate cover and liner notes.

- **Symbolic Recipe.** Write a symbolic recipe derived from *Macbeth*. For example, what ingredients go into making a Duncan? Use recipe format -- a pinch of this, a cup of that, stir well with ambition, cook in a war, etc. Illustrate.
- **Timeline.** Create a timeline of events for *Macbeth* either act by act or one complete timeline. The timeline should itself be a creative design and each event listed should be accompanied by a drawing or icon that illustrates the action.
- **Travel Brochure.** Design a travel brochure of the fascinating places mentioned in *Macbeth*. Make sure to include a map, an illustration of each of the settings and an explanation of why each place is a “must see” stop for *Macbeth* fans.
- **Your own idea**—needs to be cleared with me first

Creative Writing — (20 points) Poems need to be a minimum of 20 lines; prose needs to be a minimum of 200 words

- **Ending Extension.** Write a new ending for play that either shows an alternate ending or extends the events of the play. For example, what kind of king does Malcolm prove to be? What happens to Fleance or Donalbain? How might the witches react to the events of the play?
- **Found Poem.** Write an original poem using 5-10 words from one of the play’s famous speeches or soliloquies. The poem should reflect one or more themes of the play and be no less than 20 lines long. Indicate the act, scene and line numbers of the speech you are using and either underline or boldface the words you are borrowing from Shakespeare.
- **Interview.** Write the transcript of an interview that one character might be involved in, either in a magazine or as a guest on a TV show. For example, if Oprah interviewed Lady Macbeth, what would Lady Macbeth say?
- **Last Will and Testament.** Macbeth had no time to write his last will and testament. Write a symbolic one for him. Since he is a sensitive, imaginative poet, he would concentrate on something more meaningful (and maybe more abstract) than who gets his father’s watch.
- **Lost Soliloquy.** Write an original soliloquy for one of the characters that fills in gaps from the play. For example, you might write a soliloquy for Lady Macbeth explaining her emotions after the banquet scene or what she’s doing during Act IV or one for Fleance reflecting on the murder of his father.
- **Newspaper Article.** Prepare a newspaper article derived from *Macbeth*. Follow news style -- 5 W’s and H, inverted pyramid. Include quotes from experts and witnesses, but stick to the facts.
- **Postcards from the Edge.** Write a series of postcards that characters might send or receive at various points in the play. You should write at least 6 postcards with messages of at least 40 words. Include the writer, the receiver and where the postcard is being sent from.
- **Sleepwalking Scene.** In Act V, Scene i, Lady Macbeth sleepwalks and makes rambling comments about key moments in her life. If Macbeth had a sleepwalking scene, what would he say during it? Write that scene.
- **Translation.** Rewrite one of the scenes of the play in a different time, place or genre. Change the language accordingly. For example how might a “Macbeth in the Hood” version sound? A “Mafia Macbeth”?
- **Your own idea**—needs to be cleared with me first.

Analytical Writing – (40 points) must be 300 words

- **Ethics Application.** Choose one of the ideas in *Macbeth* that centers on a moral issue (ambition, deceitful use of language, manipulation, ruthless use of power, keeping silent about an evil, revenge, putting on a “false face,” etc. Explain how the idea is developed in *Macbeth*, and then apply what Shakespeare says about this issue to a similar situation that exists in today’s world.
- **Foil Face-Off.** Choose a pair of opposing characters in the play and explain how the foil highlights important characteristics of the opposing character. For example, Malcolm vs. Macbeth, Banquo vs. Macbeth, Lady Macduff vs. Macbeth.
- **Legends about *Macbeth*.** People involved in productions of *Macbeth* never refer to it by name; instead, they always refer to it as “The Scottish Play.” It is considered extremely bad luck to break this taboo. Why? Use the web or print materials to research some of the weird stories and legends that have grown up about Macbeth over the years. Write up the results of your research, making sure to list all of your sources.
- **Machiavellian Analysis.** Imagine that you are Machiavelli and you have been called upon to evaluate Macbeth on the basis of *The Prince*. Present your report as a letter of advice, a diplomatic report to the Borgias, or a new chapter for *The Prince*.
- **Most Important Lines.** Choose a scene from *Macbeth* and from that choose the 3 lines that you feel are the most important in terms of theme, motivation, dramatic significance, comment about life, etc. Justify your choice.
- **Research Witchcraft.** Design a leaflet about witchcraft in Shakespeare’s day for students your age. You can use the questions below to help you:
 - What new witchcraft law did King James introduce in 1604?
 - What powers did people believe witches had?
 - Who were the North Berwick witches?
 - Why was King James I particularly interested in witchcraft?
 - What was the title and content of the book he pushed?
 - What was the “swimming of witches”?
 - How were witches tortured in order to confess?
 - What was the Devil’s Mark (also called the Witch’s Mark)?
 - Who was Matthew Hopkins?
 - Who was Maary Sutton?
 - When were the witchcraft laws repealed?
- **Scene Analysis.** Choose any scene from the play except I.i and explain how it functions in terms of the rest of the play. Does it provide foreshadowing, motivation, important information, or arouse sympathy, anger, laughter, fear, etc? Does it parallel any other scene in the play and how?
- **Yes/No Alternative.** Answer one of the following questions either affirmatively or negatively and then provide evidence from the play for your answer:
 - A) Is Macbeth evil from the very beginning of the play?
 - B) Does Lady Macbeth deserve her fate?
 - C) Is Banquo a “silent accomplice”?
 - D) Is Banquo’s ghost real?
 - E) Are the witches responsible for what happens to Macbeth?
 - F) Is Malcolm as good as he claims to be?
- **Your own idea**—needs to be cleared with me first.