

# Shakespeare

## STANDARD DEVIANTS SCHOOL

### Macbeth Basics

- Lesson Plan
- Viewing Guide
- Worksheet
- Activity
- Check Your Knowledge

Module

9



# Macbeth Basics Lesson Plan



**Video: 15 minutes    Lesson: 35 minutes**

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### Pre-viewing

- :00 Warm-up: Have the students think of any “scary stories” or ghost stories they know. What are their main story elements? Prompt them with categories like mysterious characters, dark places, gruesome endings, and the supernatural.

**2 minutes**

- :02 Pre-test: Introduce *Macbeth*, a Shakespearean “scary story.” Go over the learning objectives.

**2 minutes**

### Viewing

- :04 Playing Video: Hand out the Viewing Guide. Go over Viewing Questions and expectations. Tell the students to answer the questions while watching the program. Don’t hesitate to stop the program and review if the students seem confused.

**15 minutes**

### Post-viewing

- :19 Question & Answer Session: Ask the class the Viewing Questions. See if any parts of the program were difficult or confusing for the students. Ask a few questions to check their understanding of the key topics.

**5 minutes**

#### Sample Questions

1. Which character in the play was an ancestor of King James I?
2. Why does Macbeth become the Thane of Cawdor?
3. How does Lady Macbeth speak? What kind of words does she use?

### Handouts

- :24 Practicing Material: Hand out the Worksheet and give the class 6-8 minutes to complete it. Students are allowed to use their Viewing Guides. Monitor the students’ progress, helping where needed. Go over Worksheet as a class.

**10 minutes**

- :34 Applying Material: Hand out the Activity and go over the instructions. Emphasize that the Activity is designed to highlight awareness of how characters and scenes combine to create the play. Give students 6-8 minutes to complete it have a few students read their “under-budget” versions. Have the students vote on which solution they like the best. Which scenes and/or characters do they think are the most important? The least?

**14 minutes**

- :48 Wrap-up: Briefly sum up what has been covered in class by prompting students to list the main points covered. Assign any homework.

**2 minutes**

### Viewing Questions Answer Key

1. What is a thane? **a Scottish lord or baron**
2. What kind of poetry is blank verse? **unrhymed iambic pentameter**
3. What is Macbeth’s worldview like? **bleak...“it is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing”**

Teacher Notes:



# Macbeth Basics

## Teacher's Reference Guide



*Video: 15 minutes    Lesson: 35 minutes*

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### Learning Objectives

At the end of the module, students will be able to:

- describe the major characters and events of *Macbeth*
- analyze *Macbeth* as a tragedy
- evaluate Shakespeare's use of language

### Materials

- *Video: Macbeth* background, the plot, use of language, *Macbeth* as a tragedy; 15 minutes
- *Viewing Guide*: plot summary, tragic figure checklist, character list, use of language; 3 Viewing Questions
- *Worksheet*: reordering plot points, translating prophecies, attributing quotes
- *Activity*: MacBudget
- *Check Your Knowledge*: true/false plot events, tragic figure checklist, quotes; 50 points

### Background

None required.

### Preparation

None required.

### Extension

Shakespeare didn't get to use lots of special effects for his plays—he only had words. Take one scene from *Macbeth* and have the students look for words that help establish the atmosphere and setting. How many times does Shakespeare use certain words and images? Are they spoken by all of the characters or only certain ones? What kind of picture do they paint for the audience?

# Macbeth Basics Viewing Guide

## Plot Points

### ACT ONE

- A messenger tells King Duncan that Macbeth fought heroically in a battle against a rebellious thane.
- Macbeth and Banquo meet 3 witches, who tell Macbeth that he will become Thane of Cawdor and King of Scotland. They tell Banquo his descendents will be kings.
- King Duncan makes Macbeth the Thane of Cawdor and plans to visit Macbeth at his castle.

### ACT TWO

- Macbeth thinks of murdering Duncan, but has doubts. Lady Macbeth pushes him to do it.
- Macbeth kills King Duncan and blames the murder on two guards who his wife drugged.
- The Porter has a darkly comic scene.
- Duncan's two sons flee Macbeth's castle, afraid everyone thinks they killed their father.

### ACT THREE

- Macbeth becomes king. Macbeth has Banquo killed, but Banquo's son, Fleance, escapes.
- Macbeth sees Banquo's ghost at a banquet and freaks out. Lady Macbeth faints to cover his outburst.
- Malcolm raises an army to attack Macbeth; Macduff joins him.

### ACT FOUR

- Macbeth consults the witches for advice. They give him 3 ambiguous prophecies, which lead him to believe he's invulnerable.
- Macbeth hears of Macduff's defection and orders his family killed.

### ACT FIVE

- Lady Macbeth goes mad with guilt and kills herself. Malcolm's army attacks Macbeth's castle, camouflaged by the forest.
- Macbeth is killed by Macduff on the battlefield.

### *The Tragic Figure Checklist*

#### Macbeth

- A mighty figure? *Yes*  
 Suffers a reversal of fortune? *Yes*  
 Endures uncommon suffering? *No*  
 Recognizes the consequences of his actions? *Yes*  
 Does his plight ennoble us? *No*

## Characters

Macbeth—Thane of Glamis

Lady Macbeth—wife of Macbeth

Duncan—King of Scotland

Duncan's sons:

Malcolm—flees to England after King's death

Donalbain—flees to Ireland after King's death

Banquo—thane, and friend of Macbeth's

Macduff—Thane of Fife, loyal to Duncan

3 Witches—weird!

the Porter—doorkeeper, a dark comic character

## Use of Language

Macbeth—voice of a poet

Lady Macbeth—savagely vocabulary

the Porter—descriptive prose

"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." – Macbeth **II.i**

"If it were done, when 'tis done, then 'twere well it were done quickly." – Macbeth **I.vii**

"Whence is that knocking? How is't with me, when every noise appalls me? What hands are here? Hah! They pluck out mine eyes! Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood clean from my hand? No: this my hand will rather the multitudinous seas incarnadine; making the green one red." – Macbeth **II.ii**

"My hands are of your color, but I shame to wear a heart so white. I hear a knocking at the south entry. Retire we to our chamber. A little water clears us of this deed: How easy is it then!" – Lady Macbeth **II.ii**

"Here's a knocking indeed! If a man were porter of Hell Gate, he should have old turning the key. Knock, knock, knock! Who's there, i' the name of Beelzebub? Here's a farmer, that hang'd himself on th' expectation of plenty." – the Porter **II.iii**

## Viewing Questions

1. What is a thane?
2. What kind of poetry is blank verse?
3. What is Macbeth's worldview like?



# Macbeth Basics Worksheet



## A. What Happens Next?

Number the plot points from 1-10, according to the order in which they occur in the play.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Macbeth becomes king. Macbeth sends assassins after Banquo. Banquo dies, but his son Fleance escapes.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Macduff kills Macbeth on the battlefield.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Duncan’s sons flee the castle for England and for Ireland.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Macbeth fights heroically in a battle against a rebellious thane and his followers.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Macbeth returns to the witches for advice and receives a set of puzzling prophecies.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Duncan, the King of Scotland, tells Macbeth he is now the Thane of Cawdor and goes to visit Macbeth’s castle.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Macbeth and Banquo meet three witches, who tell them prophecies.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Lady Macbeth kills herself. Macduff’s army attacks the castle, camouflaged as a forest.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Macbeth, with the help of his wife, kills King Duncan and places the blame on two bodyguards.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Banquo appears before Macbeth at a banquet. Macbeth freaks out. Lady Macbeth faints to cover his outburst.

## B. Three of a Kind

The witches tell Macbeth and Banquo some mysterious prophecies. Explain what each set of prophecies means.

### To Macbeth

- “All hail, Macbeth, hail to thee, Thane of Glamis!”
- “All hail, Macbeth, hail to thee, Thane of Cawdor!”
- “All hail, Macbeth, that shalt be King hereafter! “

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### To Banquo

- “Lesser than Macbeth, yet greater.”
- “Not so happy, yet happier.”
- “Thou shalt get kings, though thou be none.”

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### To Macbeth in Act IV

- “Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth! Beware Macduff”
- “...for none of woman born shall harm Macbeth”
- “Macbeth shall never vanquish’d be until Great Birnan wood to high Dunsinane hill shall come against him.”

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# Macbeth Basics Worksheet



## C. Can I Quote You on That?

Write the name of the character who says each quote.

"Is this a dagger which I see before me, the handle toward my hand?"

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"A little water clears us of this deed. How easy is it then!"

---

"Whence is that knocking? How is't with me, when every noise appalls me!"

---

"If it were done, when 'tis done, then t'were well it were done quickly."

---

"Here's a knocking indeed! If a man were porter of Hell Gate,  
he should have old turning the key."

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# Macbeth Basics Worksheet Answer Key

## A. What Happens Next?

Number the plot points from 1-10, according to the order in which they occur in the play.

- 6 Macbeth becomes king. Macbeth sends assassins after Banquo. Banquo dies, but his son Fleance escapes.
- 10 Macduff kills Macbeth on the battlefield.
- 5 Duncan's sons flee the castle for England and for Ireland.
- 1 Macbeth fights heroically in a battle against a rebellious thane and his followers.
- 8 Macbeth returns to the witches for advice and receives a set of puzzling prophecies.
- 3 Duncan, the King of Scotland, tells Macbeth he is now the Thane of Cawdor and goes to visit Macbeth's castle.
- 2 Macbeth and Banquo meet three witches who tell them prophecies.
- 9 Lady Macbeth kills herself. Macduff's army attacks the castle, camouflaged as a forest.
- 4 Macbeth, with the help of his wife, kills King Duncan and places the blame on two bodyguards.
- 7 Banquo appears before Macbeth at a banquet. Macbeth freaks out. Lady Macbeth faints to cover his outburst.

## B. Three of a Kind

The witches tell Macbeth and Banquo some mysterious prophecies. Explain what each set of prophecies means.

### To Macbeth

- "All hail, Macbeth, hail to thee, Thane of Glamis!"
- "All hail, Macbeth, hail to thee, Thane of Cawdor!"
- "All hail, Macbeth, that shalt be King hereafter! "

Macbeth is currently the Thane of Glamis and the witches foretell that he will become Thane of Cawdor, (title awarded by Duncan) and that he will become King of Scotland.

### To Banquo

- "Lesser than Macbeth, yet greater."
- "Not so happy, yet happier."
- "Thou shalt get kings, though thou be none."

Banquo will not become king. In fact, he won't live long at all. But, through his son, Fleance, there will be a line of kings stretching through to King James I. So in a way, his legacy is greater and happier than Macbeth's.

### To Macbeth in Act IV

- "Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth! Beware Macduff"
- "...for none of woman born shall harm Macbeth"
- "Macbeth shall never vanquish'd be until Great Birnan wood to high Dunsinane hill shall come against him."

Macbeth will die when Macduff's army attacks his castle, camouflaged as a forest. Macduff, who was born by a Caesarean section ("untimely ripped"), will kill Macbeth in single combat.



# Macbeth Basics Worksheet *Answer Key*



## C. Can I Quote You on That?

*Write the name of the character who says each quote.*

"Is this a dagger which I see before me, the handle toward my hand?"

"A little water clears us of this deed. How easy is it then!"

"Whence is that knocking? How is't with me, when every noise appalls me!"

"If it were done, when 'tis done, then t'were well it were done quickly."

"Here's a knocking indeed! If a man were porter of Hell Gate,  
he should have old turning the key."

**Macbeth**

**Lady Macbeth**

**Macbeth**

**Macbeth**

**the Porter**





# Macbeth Basics Activity



## MacBudget

*Macbeth* is a tightly constructed play. Every element in the play is necessary either to complete the story line or to demonstrate the themes of the play. What would happen if you had to eliminate scenes, cut characters, or rearrange the plot? Would it still be a great tragedy? Would it even work? Well, fortunately, you'll never have to find out, right?

Wrong.

You are a Hollywood producer attempting to complete a movie version of *Macbeth*. It's budgeted at a meager \$20 million. Actors have been cast, locations have been found, crew has been hired and shooting is about to begin. Then the hammer falls. Your biggest backer pulls out his investment. Now you have only \$17 million dollars. You've got to make \$3 million in cuts. Can you do it and still make one of Shakespeare's greatest tragedies into a decent movie?

Look at the list on the right and cross out the items you decide to cut to keep the film under budget.

When you're finished, be prepared to justify your cuts to the class. What will they think of your new story, Hollywood Producer?

CUT OUT	<b>The Budget List</b>	SAVE
<b>Lady Macbeth</b> (Macbeth murders Duncan without any help)		1.5 million
<b>Macduff</b> (Duncan's son Malcom kills Macbeth instead)		.5 million
Banquo (Witches have prophecies only for Macbeth. Macbeth doesn't send murderers, doesn't see Banquo's ghost)		1.5 million
<b>the Porter</b> (no creepy comic scene)		.25 million
<b>the murderers</b> (Macbeth kills Banquo himself)		.25 million
<b>the Macduff family</b> (Macduff has less of a reason to hate Macbeth)		.25 million
<b>the banquet scene (III.iv)</b> (Macbeth never goes crazy; less insight to his character)		.25 million
<b>Lady Macbeth's sleepwalking scene (V.i)</b> (audience doesn't see her go crazy)		.25 million
<b>the bloody dagger scene (II.i)</b> (audience doesn't have insight into Macbeth's thoughts)		.25 million
<b>Malcolm testing Macduff's loyalty (IV.iii)</b> (Macduff no longer is a contrast to Macbeth)		.25 million
<b>Macbeth's second visit to the witches (IV.i)</b> (no more prophecies. We don't see Macbeth degenerating further into evil)		.5 million
<b>Malcolm's army disguised as trees (Act V)</b> (prophecies don't make sense; need to change the ending.)		1 million
<b>Duncan awards Macbeth the Thane of Cawdor and plans to visit Macbeth's castle (I.iv)</b> (audience is confused)		.25 million
<b>Macbeth murders Duncan without talking to Lady Macbeth (I.v, I.vii)</b> (audience has no insight into the Macbeth's feelings or their relationship)		.25 million



# Macbeth Basics

## Check Your Knowledge



Total Score  
/ 50

### A. Who Dunsinane It?

True or false. (2 points each)

- Lady Macbeth kills the two bodyguards and Duncan. \_\_\_\_\_
- As a reward for Banquo's valor in battle, King Duncan makes him the Thane of Glamis. \_\_\_\_\_
- Macbeth stabs Banquo to death. \_\_\_\_\_
- The witches tell Macbeth he will be king and tell Banquo that his children will be kings. \_\_\_\_\_
- Duncan's sons flee Macbeth's castle, afraid that they will be blamed for the murder. \_\_\_\_\_
- Lady Macbeth isn't sure they should murder Duncan, but Macbeth is eager to do it. \_\_\_\_\_
- Fleance returns with an army, using a forest as cover, and kills Macbeth on the battlefield. \_\_\_\_\_
- In Act IV, Macbeth seeks out the witches to ask for more prophecies. \_\_\_\_\_
- Lady Macbeth sleepwalks, goes mad with guilt, and commits suicide. \_\_\_\_\_

### B. The Tragic Figure Checklist

For each of the tests, write "yes" or "no" and explain your answer. (4 points each)

#### Macbeth

- Is he a mighty figure? \_\_\_\_\_
- Does he suffer a reversal of fortune? \_\_\_\_\_
- Does he endure uncommon suffering? \_\_\_\_\_
- Does he recognize the consequences of his actions? \_\_\_\_\_
- Does his plight ennoble us? \_\_\_\_\_

### B. What Did You Say?

Fill in the blank with the name of the character who says each of these lines. (3 points each)

- "A little water clears us this deed: How easy is it then!" \_\_\_\_\_
- "Knock, knock, knock! Who's there, in the name of Beelzebub?" \_\_\_\_\_
- "Is this a dagger which I see before me?" \_\_\_\_\_
- "Whence is that knocking? How is't with me, when every noise appalls me?" \_\_\_\_\_



# Macbeth Basics

## Check Your Knowledge

### Answer Key



Total Score  
/ 50

#### A. Who Dunsinane It?

True or false. (2 points each)

- |   |       |
|---|-------|
| 1. Lady Macbeth kills the two bodyguards and Duncan.  | False |
| 2. As a reward for Banquo's valor in battle, King Duncan makes him the Thane of Glamis.         | False |
| 3. Macbeth stabs Banquo to death.   | False |
| 4. The witches tell Macbeth he will be king and tell Banquo that his children will be kings.    | True  |
| 5. Duncan's sons flee Macbeth's castle, afraid that they will be blamed for the murder.         | True  |
| 6. Lady Macbeth isn't sure they should murder Duncan, but Macbeth is eager to do it.            | False |
| 7. Fleance returns with an army, using a forest as cover, and kills Macbeth on the battlefield. | False |
| 8. In Act IV, Macbeth seeks out the witches to ask for more prophecies.                         | True  |
| 9. Lady Macbeth sleepwalks, goes mad with guilt, and commits suicide.                           | True  |

#### B. The Tragic Figure Checklist

For each of the tests, write "yes" or "no" and explain your answer. (4 points each)

##### Macbeth

1. Is he a mighty figure? **Yes. He is a brave and ambitious nobleman.**
2. Does he suffer a reversal of fortune? **Yes. He becomes king of Scotland, but loses his soul by the end of the play.**
3. Does he endure uncommon suffering? **No. He destroys his humanity, but doesn't seem to care.**
4. Does he recognize the consequences of his actions? **Yes. He is aware that he's becoming a murdering monster.**
5. Does his plight ennoble us? **No. We can't sympathize with his actions.**

#### C. What Did You Say?

Fill in the blank with the name of the character who says each of these lines. (3 points each)

- |  |              |
|--|--------------|
| 1. "A little water clears us this deed: How easy is it then!"                | Lady Macbeth |
| 2. "Knock, knock, knock! Who's there, in the name of Beelzebub?"             | the Porter   |
| 3. "Is this a dagger which I see before me?"                                 | Macbeth      |
| 4. "Whence is that knocking? How is't with me, when every noise appalls me?" | Macbeth      |



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