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SHAKESPEARE'S

MACBETH

with (in alphabetical order)

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INTRODUCTION

Macbeth is a tale told by a genius, full of soundness and fury, signifying many things.

JAMES THURBER; AMERICAN AUTHOR AND CARTOONIST

Welcome to the teacher resource guide for *Macbeth*, Shakespeare's classic tragedy about one man's rapid rise and fall from power, and the nightmare that ensues when his brilliant mind goes astray. Shakespeare's *Macbeth* is one of his darkest, powerful, and action-packed plays. Murder, betrayal, witches, battles, and blood, are all woven together by Shakespeare's rich language, evocative imagery, finely-drawn characterizations, and resonant themes. *Macbeth* asks probing questions about fate, the choices we make in life, and the consequences of unchecked ambition.

After returning from the battlefield victorious, *Macbeth* finds himself at the peak of success. When three witches prophesy his rise to greatness, he embarks on a path of destruction that holds a mirror to the ambitious, violent age we live in. With theater and film star Ethan Hawke in the title role, and Tony Award-winning director Jack O'Brien at the helm, Lincoln Center Theater's *Macbeth* promises to be an insightful and provocative theatrical experience for both Shakespeare-savvy students and those experiencing Shakespeare live on stage for the very first time.

This resource guide for *Macbeth* offers many thematic and theater learning opportunities for students in areas related to:

- William Shakespeare and Elizabethan England;
- the literary devices and thematic elements in *Macbeth*;
- the history and primary source material that shaped *Macbeth*;
- the process of interpreting *Macbeth* for a contemporary audience.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This resource guide has been created to provide you with information to help prepare your students to see *Macbeth*. We encourage you to photocopy and share pages of this guide with your students. In each section, look for resources, including links to materials and videos available online, as well as discussion questions and suggested classroom activities that you can use before or after seeing the production.

The overall goals of this guide are to:

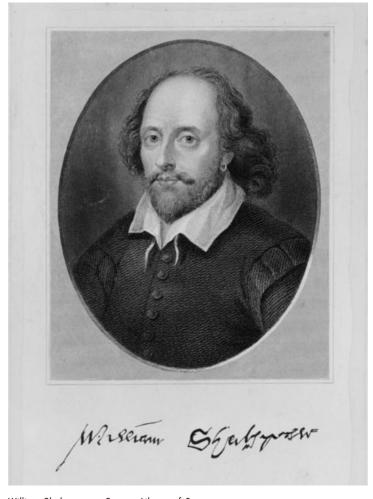
- connect to your curriculum with standards-based information and activities;
- provide classroom activities that promote critical and analytical thinking skills;
- and, to offer you background information to help frame your students' visit to the theater.

SHAKESPEARE'S LIFE AND TIMES

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

William Shakespeare was born on or around April 23, 1564 and grew up in a small town outside of London called Stratford-on-Avon. Although his father was a successful glove maker, at first he could only afford to send Shakespeare to grammar school. There, Shakespeare studied rhetoric, Latin, and the classics. Although his father was elected the High Bailiff of Stratford (what we would consider a mayor today), he accumulated a large amount of debt around the time Shakespeare was a teenager. Eventually Shakespeare had to join his father selling and making gloves, belts, and purses to keep the family business afloat. Shakespeare never attended university. When he was 18, he married Anne Hathaway, who was 26, and six months later they had their first daughter, Susannah. In 1585 they had twins, Judith and Hamnet.

The seven years after the birth of Judith and Hamnet are called Shakespeare's "lost years," because information about him is incomplete and contradictory. However, we know that Shakespeare travelled to London in his late twenties, around 1588, to begin pursuing a career as an actor and playwright. In just two years in London, Shakespeare premiered his first play, part one of the *Henry VI*



William Shakespeare. Source: Library of Congress.

series. Between 1590 and 1592, he would go on to see the remaining *Henry VI* plays, as well as *Richard III* and *The Comedy of Errors* performed. In 1593, the plague struck and all the theaters in London were shut down. Shakespeare spent this time writing the narrative poems *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece* and possibly the Sonnets.

In 1594, Shakespeare became a shareholder in the Lord Chamberlain's Men, one of the most popular London acting companies at that time. Shakespeare would work with the company throughout his lifetime, occasionally appearing in small roles, but mostly writing plays for the company to perform.

In his later years, Shakespeare returned to Stratford where he continued to write. During his 23 years as a playwright, Shakespeare authored 38 plays, two narrative poems, and 154 sonnets before his death on April 23, 1616 at the age of 52. He is the most performed and read playwright in the world.



LEARN MORE

Learn more about Shakespeare in this video conversation with scholar Jonathan Bate, author of *Soul of the Age: The Life, Mind, and World of William Shakespeare.* http://bit.ly/lo8lWP0

SHAKESPEARE'S WORLD

When Shakespeare arrived in London and began writing, England was a powerful nation ruled by Queen Elizabeth I. It was a time of exploration and international expansion. With Queen Elizabeth's support, this Golden Age in English history ushered in a flowering of poetry, music, literature, and theater. Elizabeth's successor, James I, was a supporter of the arts, and became a patron of Shakespeare's theater company (Lord Chamberlain's Men), which they renamed The King's Men in honor of James' patronage.

These were also dangerous times. Multiple outbreaks of the plague, also known as "the Black Death," closed down theaters and killed tens of thousands. On November 5, 1605, two years after King James I took the throne, a group of religious dissidents planned to blow up Parliament (the British equivalent of Congress) on the opening day of the legislative session.

Their plot was discovered just in time when Guy Fawkes, the man ready to ignite the explosives, was found and captured along with the other conspirators. They were all charged with treason, convicted, and publicly executed.

SHAKESPEARE'S THEATER

Theater was the main form of popular entertainment during Shakespeare's time. People of all classes attended the theater, from beggars to the nobility. Shakespeare's plays were performed in many different settings: his home theater, the Globe; the indoor Blackfriars Theatre; and for noble audiences, at court.

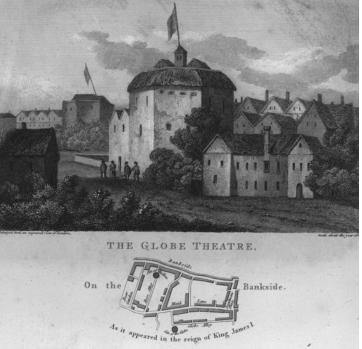
Most theaters at this time, including the Globe, were round open-air spaces that had seats surrounding the stage. The most expensive seats were in the two to three levels of galleries under a roof. Those with less to spend stood at the foot of the stage for the equivalent of a penny. Because they stood at the ground level they were called "groundlings." A theater like the Globe could be packed with as many as 3,000 people. The audiences were loud and unruly and it was not uncommon for audience members to shout and interact with the performers, comment loudly on the action to their fellow spectators, or throw things at the actors on the stage.

In 1608, Shakespeare's company began using the Blackfriars Theater during the winter; a smaller indoor space that was the first theater to use artificial lighting. Ticket prices started at six pence, six times the price of the cheapest seat at the Globe, but with artificial lighting and scenery, audiences gained enough spectacle to justify the higher ticket prices.

When performing at court, The King's Men would set up makeshift theaters at the home of a wealthy host and provide private entertainment for the invited noblemen and women.

In Shakespeare's time, women were forbidden to perform on the public stage, so all the roles in Shakespeare's plays were played by men and teenage boys!





TOP: Queen Elizabeth I, 1592. By permission of the Folger Shakespeare Library. BOTTOM: The Globe Theatre on the Bankside, 1810. Source: Horace Howard Furness Memorial Library, University of Pennsylvania.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY: SHAKESPEARE SCAVENGER HUNT

In this activity, middle school and high school students will enhance their research skills and make connections between the historical events that occurred during Shakespeare's time and his writing.

Have students reference the timeline of Shakespeare's life foundhere http://www.nosweatshakespeare.com/resources/timeline/ and provide them with the list of related events. Using the internet, have students find and identify as many of the items on the list as they can, define them, and identify where they would fit on the timeline. As a class, construct a bigger and more comprehensive timeline that includes all of the class' research.

SHAKESPEARE SCAVENGER HUNT LIST

- The coronation of Queen Elizabeth I
- The defeat of the Spanish Armada
- The first public playhouse ("The Theatre") is built in London
- King James I succeeds Queen Elizabeth I
- Shakespeare's *Macbeth* premieres
- · Sir Francis Drake's circumnavigation of the world
- Theaters are shut down by the Puritans and acting is banned

- Sir Walter Raleigh's first expedition to Roanoke
- The Gunpowder Plot
- Christopher Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus* premieres
- The North Berwick Witch Hunt
- The plague hits London, closing the theaters
- The Earl of Essex's attempted rebellion
- The founding of Jamestown, Virginia
- The King James Bible is published
- The Globe is destroyed by a fire

To Explore: Read a play by one of Shakespeare's contemporaries, such as: Christopher Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*, John Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi*, or Ben Jonson's *Every Man in His Humor*.

Watch a video about the Globe on the PBS Shakespeare Uncovered website: http://to.pbs.org/lhlGPpM

To Discuss: How does the time in which an artist creates his or her work affect that work? Why do you think Shake-speare's plays have remained popular for centuries?

Common Core Connection: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social science.

THE STORY

SYNOPSIS

ACT I

As the play begins, three witches gather to meet Macbeth who is returning from an important battle. When Macbeth and Banquo encounter the witches, they predict that Macbeth will be named Thane of Cawdor and King of Scotland, and that Banquo will be the father of kings. The witches disappear. Ross, a nobleman, enters and greets Macbeth as Thane of Cawdor, just as the witches predicted. Later, King Duncan tells Macbeth that he intends to make his son Malcolm his heir, and that he plans to visit Macbeth's castle. Macbeth's wife receives a letter from Macbeth describing the witches' prophesies. Lady Macbeth is ready to do whatever is necessary to ensure her husband becomes king. She devises a plan to get Duncan's guards drunk while Macbeth kills the king and then blames the crime on the guards. She convinces Macbeth that he must prove his manhood by following through with Duncan's murder.



Glamis castle in a 19th century engraving. By permission of the Folger Shakespeare Library.

ACT II

Macbeth follows what he believes is a bloody dagger leading him to Duncan's chamber and kills Duncan. When Duncan's murder is discovered by the Scottish thane Macduff, Lady Macbeth faints and Macbeth kills Duncan's guards for their supposed guilt. Duncan's sons Donalbain and Malcolm suspect foul play and realize they are in danger so they flee the country. In Malcolm's absence, Macbeth seizes the throne.

ACT III

Haunted by the witches' prediction that Banquo will be "the father of kings," Macbeth sends assassins to kill Banquo and his son, Fleance. The assassins partially succeed, killing Banquo, but Fleance escapes. Later, Macbeth hosts a banquet and is terrified when he sees the bloody ghost of Banquo. Suspicious of Macbeth, Macduff rejects his authority and flees to England to join Malcolm.



Miss Bateman as Lady Macbeth, 1875. By permission of the Folger Shakespeare Library.

ACT IV

Macbeth returns to the witches who offer three prophesies: he must beware of Macduff; "none of women born shall harm him;" and he will be safe until Birnam Forest moves to Dunsinane. They also show him a vision in which eight generations of Banquo's descendents occupy the Scottish throne. Hearing that Macduff has fled to England, Macbeth sends assassins to murder his wife and children. Macduff meets Malcolm in England and urges him to reclaim his throne. Macduff is told that his family has been slaughtered. He vows revenge.

ACT V

Lady Macbeth is seen sleepwalking and re-enacting Duncan's murder each night. Malcolm raises an army and invades Scotland. Malcolm's soldiers are ordered to camouflage themselves with branches from the trees of Birnam Forest, fulfilling one of the witches' prophesies. Lady Macbeth commits suicide and Macbeth charges into battle. As Macbeth attacks, he learns that Macduff was "untimely ripped" from his mother's womb (born via caesarean section) and so was "not of woman born." They fight and Macduff slays and beheads Macbeth. Malcolm takes the throne of Scotland.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY: MACBETH IN MINUTES

In this activity, high school students will have the opportunity to engage with the story of *Macbeth*, as well as with Shakespeare's language.

Divide the class into five groups. Give them the synopsis from pages 6 and 7 and assign each group to an Act. (Since Act 1 is longer then the others, you may want to split it in half and expand the number of groups to six.) Working with their group, students will present an abridged performance of their Act for the class.

- Using the description of their Act in the synopsis, have students find one to three lines of text from the script that correspond to each plot event. For example, to correspond to "Macbeth follows what he believes is a bloody dagger leading him to Duncan's chamber and kills Duncan," they might use the line: "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."
- After they have identified their corresponding lines, have students create an abridged "script" for their Act in the following way:

Narrator: Macbeth follows what he believes is a bloody dagger leading him to Duncan's chamber and kills Duncan.

Macbeth: 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.

Narrator: When Duncan's murder is discovered by the Scottish general Macduff, Lady Macbeth faints and

Macbeth kills Duncan's guards for their supposed guilt. Macduff is horrified.

Macduff: O, horror, horror! Tongue nor heart cannot conceive nor name thee!

• After they have completed their scripts, have students divide up and assign the lines and narration, and then perform their abridged Act for the class. Advanced students can add staging and movement to their presentations.

FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

A simplified version of this activity called "32-second Macbeth" can found in the Folger Shakespeare Library's *Macbeth Study Guide* http://www.folger.edu/documents/Folger_Macbeth_cg.pdf on pages 9-11.

THE CHARACTERS

THE ROYAL FAMILY

DUNCAN, the King of Scotland who is murdered by Macbeth

MALCOLM, Duncan's oldest son, and rightful heir to the throne

DONALBAIN, Duncan's second son

KING DUNCAN'S ARMY

MACBETH, a celebrated general in the Scottish army who murders Duncan and becomes king

MACDUFF, the Thane of Fife who murders Macbeth

BANQUO, a general in the Scottish army and Macbeth's close friend

THE SUPERNATURAL

THE WITCHES, also called the "weird sisters;" three supernatural creatures who make prophesies about Macbeth and Banquo

HECATE, the goddess of witchcraft

BANQUO'S GHOST, an apparition that appears to Macbeth at the banquet he hosts with his wife

COMMANDERS

ROSS, a Scottish nobleman

LENNOX, a Scottish nobleman

CAITHNESS, a Scottish nobleman

SOLDIERS

MENTEITH, a Scottish soldier

SARGEANT, a Scottish soldier

THE ENGLISH ARMY

SIWARD, an English general

YOUNG SIWARD, Siward's son

THE MACBETH CASTLE

LADY MACBETH, Macbeth's wife who conspires with him to murder Duncan

SEYTON. servant to Macbeth

ANGUS, Macbeth's attendant

GENTLEWOMAN, lady of the castle who first sees Lady Macbeth sleepwalking

DOCTOR, observes Lady Macbeth's sleepwalking and strange behavior

THE MURDERERS, assassins hired by Macbeth to kill Banquo and Fleance

PORTER, the drunken doorman of Macbeth's castle

EXTENDED FAMILY MEMBERS

FLEANCE, Banquo's son who escapes from Macbeth's assassins

LADY MACDUFF, Macduff's wife who is slaughtered by Macbeth's hired assassins

BOY, Macduff's son who is slaughtered by Macbeth's hired assassins

OTHERS

OLD MAN, FAMILIARS, SOLDIERS, ATTENDANTS, LORDS, and MESSENGERS

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY: CHARACTER CONNECTIONS

In this activity, middle school and high school students will use their creativity, artistic abilities, and imaginations to explore the character relationships in *Macbeth*.

After students have seen the performance or read the play, give them the following list of key characters: Macbeth, Lady Macbeth, Banquo, Macduff, Lady Macduff, Duncan, Malcolm, Donalbain, Ross, Lennox, Hecate, the Witches, Fleance, the Murderers, the Porter, and Siward. Ask students to choose ten characters and create a visual project that illustrates the characters and their relationships to each other. This can be done using a character web, a diagram, in the style of a family tree or photo album, or abstractly. Students can use different colors, textures, craft materials, magazine images, cartoons or symbols, to represent the characters and how they are interconnected. For example, one student might choose to construct a giant spider's web, with each character being represented by a different type of spider. Each visual project should be accompanied by an "Artist's Essay," a brief written summary that explains what inspired their artistic choices.

To Explore: Watch a film version of *Macbeth* or a film inspired by *Macbeth* such as: Roman Polanski's *Macbeth*, the PBS Great Performances *Macbeth* starring Patrick Stewart http://www.pbs.org/wnet/gperf/episodes/macbeth/watch-the-full-program/1030/, Orson Welles classic version, or the Akira Kurosawa Kabuki-inspired version, *Throne of Blood*.

To Discuss: How would you describe the relationship between Macbeth and Lady Macbeth? How does their relationship evolve over the course of the play? Compare the portrayal of Lady Macbeth in one of the aforementioned versions to Lincoln Center Theater's Lady Macbeth played by Anne-Marie Duff.

Common Core Connection:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1 Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.



Costume designs by Catherine Zuber for Lincoln Center Theater's production of Macbeth.

THE INFLUENCES

HOLINSHED'S CHRONICLES

Shakespeare's primary source for *Macbeth* was a hugely popular 16th-century book written by Raphael Holinshed in 1577 (and revised in 1587) called *Chronicles of England, Scotland and Ireland*. This collection of historic events and popular legends included the story of an 11th-century Scottish king named Macbeth. Like many writers, Shakespeare used Holinshed's stories as source material, but then engaged his imagination to create his own dramatic re-telling. Some of the changes included:

- The real Duncan was a young, weak king, while Shakespeare's Duncan is an old, wise, and popular king.
- The real Macbeth had the support of Scottish chieftains and Banquo when he murdered Duncan, whereas Shakespeare's Macbeth has only Lady Macbeth supporting him.
- The real Macbeth was a successful king for ten years before he was overthrown, unlike Shakespeare's Macbeth who is overthrown and beheaded soon after taking the throne.

PRIMARY SOURCE: View excerpts from *Holinshed's Chronicles* that correspond to *Macbeth* here: http://bit.ly/18wa9WY.



Raphael Holinshed. Chronicles of England, Scotlande, and Irelande. London, 1577. By permission of the Folger Shakespeare Library.

JAMES I

During the middle of Shakespeare's career as a playwright, and three years before he wrote *Macbeth*, James I became King of England. Scholars have noted the following connections:

- Before James I inherited the throne of England he was the King of Scotland. When James took the crown, Shakespeare's London became passionately interested in all things Scottish. Also, many Scots followed their king to London, where they often attended the theater.
- James I became a patron of Shakespeare's theater company and they often staged plays for him.
- Banquo was generally thought to be an ancestor of James I. It is believed that Shakespeare might have been paying a compliment to the new king with his flattering portrayal of Banquo.
- James I authored a treatise called *Basilikon Doron* that defends the idea that rulers are given the right to reign by God, an idea echoed in Macbeth's speeches about kingship.

PRIMARY SOURCE: View excerpts from the $Basilikon\ Doron$ here: http://bit.ly/laVDgca .

WITCHCRAFT AND THE SUPERNATURAL

The witches in *Macbeth* were influenced by three strange women described in *Holinshed's Chronicles*, as "nymphs," "fairies," and "goddesses of destiny." Scholars believe that Shakespeare might have included witches in *Macbeth* because of the following:



TOP: James I. Source: Library of Congress. BOTTOM: Pocahontas at the court of King James. Source: Library of Congress.

- Belief in witches was common in Shakespeare's day. During Queen Elizabeth's reign, there were 247 witch trials.
- James I had an avid interest in witchcraft and was thought to be the instigator of a witch hunt during his reign in Scotland.
- James I wrote a book on supernatural creatures and demons called *Daemonologie*.
- By calling them the "Weird Sisters," Shakespeare seemed to be tying them to the Wyrd, the goddess of fate in Anglo-Saxon literature. Fate is a significant theme in *Macbeth*.

PRIMARY SOURCE: View excerpts from *Daemonologie* here: http://bit.ly/19nh8kB.



THE MACBETH CURSE

Mention "Macbeth" in a theater and it will surely elicit gasps of horror from all those "in the know." As the legend goes, the spells that *Macbeth*'s witches use came from an authentic black-magic ritual that Shakespeare observed. When the witches found out that he had used their sacred incantations, they put a curse on the play. Beginning with the first performance in 1606, when Hal Berridge, the boy playing Lady Macbeth suddenly died backstage, there have been disaster stories galore about productions of *Macbeth* that have felt the impact of the "curse."

Next time you are in a theater, make sure to call *Macbeth* "the Scottish play." If the actual title happens to slip out, be sure to run out of the theater, spin around three times, spit, and ask to be let back in. And then just hope that the curse has been reversed!

TO EXPLORE: Watch the following videos with the star of Lincoln Center Theater's Production, Ethan Hawke, speak about witchcraft in *Macbeth* on the PBS Shakespeare Uncovered website:

http://www.pbs.org/wnet/shakespeare-uncovered/education/lesson-overview/supernatural-shakespeare-and-macbeth-video-segments/

Also see: "Macbeth! Macbeth! Is the Cast of "The Scottish Play" Superstitious?" http://www.theatermania.com/video/macbeth-macbeth-macbeth-is-the-cast-of-the-scottis_482.html?cid=homepage_news

TO DISCUSS: What are your thoughts and beliefs about the supernatural and superstitions? How much do you let them guide or affect your choices?

COMMON CORE CONNECTION: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.2 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.

THE LANGUAGE

The Elizabethans were an audience of listeners. They would say, 'I'm going to hear a play,' not 'I'm going to see a play.' The Elizabethan audience would pick up on words and their various meanings that we wouldn't.

MARJORIE GARBER, SHAKESPEAREAN SCHOLAR

Shakespeare was a master wordsmith who had an unrivaled command over the English language. Shakespeare used at least 15,000 different words in his plays and poems (and some attest, close to 30,000), compared to the King James Bible, which used only 8,000. In addition, as Michael Macrone, author of the book *Brush Up Your Shakespeare!* explains, it's difficult to figure out who first coined a word or phrase, but the Oxford English Dictionary credits Shakespeare with coming up with over 500 original words.

You can find a great list of Shakespeare's "Frequently Encountered Words" at the Shakespeare's Words website: http://www.shakespeareswords.com/FEW

SHAKESPEARE'S STYLE

Understanding the way Shakespeare structured his verse can be a great tool when trying to unlock more about a character's emotional state, mood, and intentions. Also, like a musical score, the structural choices Shakespeare made help the reader and/or speaker to naturally feel the tempos and rhythms of the language. There was very little time to rehearse in Shakespeare's days, so this was a quick way for actors to get inside the minds and hearts of his characters.

Today we speak in what is called **prose**, ordinary speech that doesn't have a specific pattern or rhythm to it. While Shake-speare sometimes wrote in prose (Macbeth's letter to Lady Macbeth is in prose), most of *Macbeth* is written in a specific type of **verse** (poetry), called **blank verse**. Blank verse is **unrhymed iambic pentameter**—a line of ten syllables that has a rhythm like a heartbeat. The first syllable/beat is unstressed and the second is stressed (the stressed one is called the "iamb.") Here's a line of unrhymed iambic pentameter from Act 1, Scene 7 of *Macbeth*:

False face must hide what the false heart doth know.

Here's how you would read it aloud:

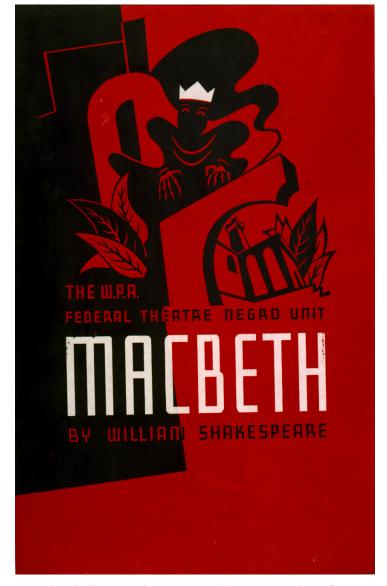
False **face** must **hide** what **the** false **heart** doth **know**.

While this is the basic structure of unrhymed iambic pentameter, Shakespeare loved to break his own "rules," and did so intentionally to create different emotional affects. For example, in Macbeth's famous speech from Act 5, Scene 5, he adds a syllable to the first line giving it what is called a "feminine ending" (eleven beats instead of ten):

Tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow.

Some questions to consider when analyzing a line like this with students could be:

- Why do you think Shakespeare chose to end the line with an unstressed syllable? (A "feminine ending?")
 What does that tells us about how Macbeth feels about "tomorrow?"
- Shakespeare also ends the first line of Hamlet's "To be or not to be" speech from Act 3, Scene 1 with a feminine ending. How are these two speeches similar?
- How would the meaning be different if the "ands" were not stressed?
- What has happened the moment before Macbeth begins this speech, and how might that influence how it is spoken?
- Why does Shakespeare have Macbeth repeat the word "tomorrow" three times?
- If iambic pentameter represents a normal heartbeat, how do you think Shakespeare's language changes when a character is terrified, excited, depressed, an-



New York: Federal Art Project, between 1936 and 1938. Source: Library of Congress.

gry, etc. (Helpful hint: have students imagine what happens to their heartbeat when they experience these emotions.)

See actor Patrick Stewart discuss this famous speech here: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HZnaXDRwu84 . Watch him perform it here: http://bit.ly/5fCSGi .

LITERARY DEVICES

The majority of Shakespeare's plays were performed at the Globe, an open-spaced stage that was lit by sunlight, and had no curtain and little scenery. It was up to Shakespeare to use his words to "paint a picture." Shakespeare's language, rich with literary devices like similes, metaphors, foreshadowing, dramatic irony, and imagery, offer numerous Common Core entry-points for an in-depth analysis of the text.

A SAMPLING OF LITERARY DEVICES FOUND IN MACBETH

Simile: a comparison of two different things that often uses like, than, or as.

Look like the innocent flower, But be the serpent under it. (LADY MACBETH; ACT 1, SCENE 5)

Metaphor: a "condensed" comparison that expresses a complex idea in a precise way.

O full of scorpions is my mind, dear wife. (MACBETH; ACT 3, SCENE 2)

Foreshadowing: an indication of what is to come in the future.

Fair is foul and foul is fair. (WITCHES; ACT 1, SCENE 1)

Dramatic Irony: irony that occurs when the meaning of the situation is understood by the audience but not by the characters in the play.

For none of woman born shall harm Macbeth. (We find out that Macduff was born via caesarean.)
(WITCHES; ACT 4, SCENE 1)

Alliteration: The repetition of the same sounds or of the same kinds of sounds (often consonants) in a series of words.

But now I am cabined, cribbed, confined, bound in To saucy doubts and fears.
(MACBETH; ACT. 3, SCENE 4)

Personification: giving human characteristics to an abstract idea or something which is not human.

Was the hope drunk

Wherein you dressed yourself? Hath it slept since? (LADY MACBETH; ACT 1, SCENE 7)

Imagery

Macbeth is rich with imagery! Challenge students to find examples of the following imagery in Macbeth:

Nature

Night/Darkness

Blood

Sleep

Clothing





LEFT: Macbeth. London: J.& J. Boydell, 1799. Source: Horace Howard Furness Memorial Library, University of Pennsylvania. RIGHT: Macbeth, Act 5, scene 1, Lady Macbeth sleepwalking, 1797. By permission of the Folger Shakespeare Library.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY: DIGGING INTO THE DAGGER SPEECH

In this activity, middle school and high school students will explore Macbeth's famous "Dagger Speech" from both a scholarly and theatrical perspective (as an actor/director). This soliloquy can be found in Act 2, Scene 1 of *Macbeth*. It is also available online here: http://bit.ly/la9qnsQ

HELPFUL VOCABULARY

Soliloquy: a speech delivered to the audience rather than to other characters, in which the speaker explores their thoughts and feelings

Speech excerpt:

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?

Independently, have students:

- 1. Read the speech aloud.
- 2. Circle any words or lines they don't understand.

Working in small groups, have students:

- $1. \ \ In groups of four, identify and unpack any words and lines that have been circled.$
- 2. Have each group member take a turn reading the speech excerpt above to their peers while doing the following: First person taking a slight pause each time they reach a punctuation mark

Second person – pacing back and forth throughout the whole speech

Third person – staying completely still

Fourth person – shouting one line of the speech while doing the rest in a whisper

3. Discuss how these different vocal and physical choices affect the meaning and rhythm of the speech.

Either working independently or in small groups, have students answer the following questions:

- What is happening in the speech? (Describe in one or two sentences.)
- What has happened in the previous Act that influences this speech? In the previous scene?
- What is Macbeth trying to work out in the speech? What does he decide? What discoveries does he make?

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY: DIGGING INTO THE DAGGER SPEECH CONTINUED

- Is the dagger real or a projection of Macbeth's mind? Support your answer.
- What is the mood or tone of the speech?
- What examples of imagery, foreshadowing, and metaphor can be found in the speech?
- What could Macbeth be doing physically while he is delivering this speech?
- How would you stage this speech if you were the director?
- What direction would you give the actor playing Macbeth?

As a class, watch and discuss the video segment, "Exploring the Dagger Scene" with Ethan Hawke and Richard Easton (Duncan in Lincoln Center Theater's *Macbeth*) found here: http://to.pbs.org/le6n3zl

To Explore: Use the following lesson plan from the PBS Shakespeare Uncovered website to explore this scene further: http://to.pbs.org/1cZixWl

To Discuss: How does speaking Shakespeare or seeing it performed, as opposed to just reading it, change the experience? What are the challenges of each?

Common Core Connection: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.4 Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

THEMES TO INVESTIGATE

THEMES

Use the following discussion questions to explore these key themes from *Macbeth*, and encourage students to find examples from the text that correspond to them.

FATE VERSUS FREE WILL

"All hail, Macbeth, that shalt be King hereafter!" (Act 1, Scene 3)

Do the witches reveal a destiny to Macbeth that can't be avoided, or do they simply plant ideas in Macbeth's mind? Does Macbeth have control over his fate? When Macbeth delivers the "Tomorrow" speech in Act 5, Scene 5, what opinions does he express about fate? How might a belief that our lives are predestined by fate inform the way a person lives their life?

THE CORRUPTION OF POWER AND UNCHECKED AMBITION

"I have no spur
To prick the sides of my intent, but only
Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself
And falls on the other."
(Act 1, Scene 7)

What motivates Macbeth to murder King Duncan? What motivates Lady Macbeth to encourage her husband to murder the king? Once this initial murder has been committed, what happens to Macbeth? What actions does he take? What happens to Lady Macbeth? What examples can be found in the news, the entertainment industry, politics, and sports that illustrate the danger of unchecked ambition?

APPEARANCE VERSUS REALITY

"Fair is foul and foul is fair."
(Act 1, Scene 1)

What are some examples in Macbeth of things or characters that aren't what they seem? How does Macbeth's superstitious beliefs inform his choices? How might the director and the actor playing Macbeth approach the scenes with supernatural elements, such as the floating dagger that leads Macbeth to Duncan and the ghost of Banquo at the banquet? Are they real or projections of Macbeth's mind?

THE NATURE OF EVIL

"Stars, hide your fires, Let not light see my black and deep desires;" (Act 1, Scene 4)

What do we know about Macbeth's character at the beginning of the play? Is Macbeth inherently evil, or does he become evil as the play progresses? What happens when he commits himself to evil actions? What are the consequences for Scotland? Can people take actions that they know are evil and remain unaffected? How are Macbeth and Lady Macbeth affected by their evil actions? How do they express their guilt? Does all of human nature have the capacity for evil within them?

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY: WHO'S TO BLAME?

The following activities will allow high school and middle school students to grapple with Macbeth's key question in a dynamic way that includes forming an argument; closely examining the text; providing textual evidence to support that argument; and closing an argument using persuasive techniques.

HIGH SCHOOL

Provide students with the following list of arguments:

- Macbeth is a victim of fate who was simply following his prescribed destiny when he committed the crimes.
- Lady Macbeth made Macbeth murder King Duncan and set him down a path of crime and destruction. She is as much to blame as Macbeth.
- The witches are responsible for Macbeth's actions. They used their supernatural powers to make him do it.
- Macbeth is not an evil man; he is a good man who let his ambition get the best of him. He made a terrible mistake that any one of us could make.

Have students choose one of the arguments above that they connect with and feel is supported by the text, and then have them take on the role of Macbeth's defense attorney by writing an opening statement and closing argument. For a theater-related extension, have students present their work to the class in character, and let the class be the "jury."

OPENING STATEMENT TASKS:

- 1. Set the scene.
- Provide a brief overview of what happened.
- Describe Macbeth's relationship to the other character(s) implicated in the argument.
- **2**. Outline the facts.
- List at least three pieces of factual evidence that support the chosen opinion in the prompt.
- Provide lines from the text that correspond to each piece of factual evidence.

HELPFUL PROMPT: Ladies and gentlemen of the court, the evidence will show that [insert chosen argument]...

HELPFUL TIP: An opening statement sticks to the facts. Remind students to save any editorializing and persuasion for the closing statement.

CLOSING STATEMENT TASKS:

- 1. Recap the evidence.
- 2. Provide persuasive arguments that support the defense's theory.

HELPFUL PROMPT: Ladies and gentlemen of the court, as we've seen from the evidence it is clear that [insert chosen argument]...

HELPFUL TIP: Encourage students to use as many persuasive strategies as possible in their closing statement, such as: emotional appeal, fear, comparison, call to action, etc.

For a list of comprehensive list of persuasive strategies, visit the Media Literacy Project's website here: http://medialiteracyproject.org/language-persuasion

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY: WHO'S TO BLAME? CONTINUED

MIDDLE SCHOOL

Have students choose one of the arguments from the list on page 21. Using that argument, have students write a one-page confession from Macbeth's perspective in which he pleads for a lenient sentence. On the reverse side of the paper, have students list three examples from the text that support the statements in his confession.

HELPFUL PROMPT: It's not my fault! I may have committed the crimes, but...

HELPFUL TIP: Encourage students to use as many persuasive strategies as possible, such as: emotional appeal, fear, comparison, call to action, etc. See the link on page 21 for a comprehensive list of persuasive strategies.

POST-ACTIVITY REFLECTION: What have we learned about Macbeth's motives from this exercise? Is it possible that all of these motives factored into his fall? What do you think Shakespeare was trying to tell us about human nature through the character of Macbeth?

To Explore: Integrate civics into your *Macbeth* unit with the following educational resources from the U.S. Courts website http://www.uscourts.gov/educational-resources.aspx.

Share the article about persuasive closing arguments, "Closing Argument: Argue, Don't Summarize," found here: http://bit.ly/HPe3U1

To Discuss: All actors who play Macbeth, and all directors directing the play, have to make a decision about what motivates Macbeth's actions. Why do you think it's such an essential decision to make when doing this play?

Common Core Connection: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.1 Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

BEHIND THE SCENES

GETTING STARTED: AN INSIDE LOOK AT THE FIRST REHEARSAL

SEPTEMBER 12, 2013

Watch a short video of the first rehearsal here: http://bit.ly/17wMieS

11:15 AM Meet and greet

André Bishop, Producing Artistic Director of Lincoln Center Theater, greets a rehearsal room packed with actors, designers, and theater staff associated with the production of *Macbeth*, saying:

This is a mighty effort, and this is one of the great, great plays. One of the things all of us at Lincoln Center Theater take pride in is giving artists a home in which to work. We want you to have a wonderful experience and flex your muscles as artists.

11:30 AM Director's introduction

Director Jack O'Brien addresses the room:

Upstairs is one of the most unique theater spaces in the country. And those of you about to stand on it: realize your responsibility. It takes eight hours of sleep, it takes hydration, it takes diction, it takes breath control, it will eat everything you have, and ask you for more, so get ready. We will not waste this opportunity. We will take it, and make it something unbelievable.



André Bishop. Photo: Paul Kolnik



Jack O'Brien, Photo: Ari Mintz



Director Jack O'Brien with John Glover and Byron Jennings in rehearsal. Photo: T. Charles Frickson.

11:35 AM Staff introductions

One by one, actors, designers, casting directors, administrators, fight choreographers, vocal coaches, and close to sixty others, identify their role until every person who will contribute their talents to the production has introduced themselves.

12:00 PM Rehearsal begins

The room is cleared of everyone but the *Macbeth* actors and creative team. The director starts rehearsal off by assuring everyone that he is not afraid of the *Macbeth* curse (and they shouldn't be), and emphasizing something that will come up repeatedly that day:

We are going to respect and be in awe of the language. We are going to do everything in our power to make sure that the language is clearly, brilliantly, and intelligently spoken. When Shakespeare was writing, language was jazz. I think what people did was go to the theater to hear riffs, to hear the rhythm, to hear the way that he loved language ...There's something in the relationship of the language that speaks to the subconscious, which is the channel of poetry anyway. Prose goes through the ear to your brain; poetry goes through your ear to your soul: the rhythms, the incantations, the repetitions, all of those things work on where dreams come from.

Early in his career he [Shakespeare] created a psychopathic killer, Richard III, who is just mean. He starts out mean, he stays mean, he has fun being mean, he is mean straight through. There is no real exploration of how or why that happens. So that when he comes to *Macbeth*, having done that, he knows he wants to articulate evil. For me, this play is a great poem, great poetry, and as close as possible to what it must be like to be in a nightmare, because to contain those thoughts in our head, and have to work them out articulately, is to flirt with madness.

I decided this time that I wanted to start with a completely blank space, that I wouldn't put it anywhere, that I wouldn't put it in a period, that I wouldn't put it in a location, I would make it implicit that the audience understand the words, and nothing happens until then. Everything is going to come out of the language; it will not be imposed from the outside in. All of the imagery in the play will take on extraordinary dimension, as we reveal the words.

12:00 PM Scenic design presentation

Scenic designer Scott Pask invites everyone to gather around a wall covered with images that depict what the set looks like in each scene, and a model of the set (a miniature

version). He begins by explaining the main set piece—a huge patterned circle on the floor modeled after the Sigillum Dei Aemaeth—a magical diagram created by Dr. John Dee, one of Shakespeare's contemporaries. Director Jack O'Brien chimes in about John Dee:

Dr. John Dee was a contemporary of Shakespeare and Elizabeth I. He had a library that Shakespeare knew, and it is rumored that Dr. Dee was the prototype for Prospero and probably King Lear. Dr. Dee was an astrologer, astronomer, a scientist, poet, writer, questioner, and a madman, like the best men. He designed these extraordinary mandalas, in order to speak to the angels. And he was convinced he could do that.

Scenic Designer Scott Pask continues, explaining specific aspects of the set that include the colors used, the lighting, and projections.







TOP: Malcolm Gets, John Glover and Byron Jennings. MIDDLE: Anne-Marie Duff and Ethan Hawke. BOTTOM: Ethan Hawke. Rehearsal photos by T. Charles Erickson.



LEFT, TOP RIGHT: Set design models by Scott Pask for Lincoln Center Theater's production of Macbeth. BOTTOM RIGHT: Costume designer Catherine Zuber.

12:45 PM Costume design presentation

Costume designer Catherine Zuber asks the group to turn their attention to the costume design sketches laid out on the adjacent wall. She explains that because this production isn't set in a specific time or place, she has integrated fashion elements from different time periods.

PRE-PRODUCTION NOTES FROM THE DIRECTOR, JACK O'BRIEN

Macbeth contains some of the most exquisite and articulate language in Shakespeare's canon, coming, as it does, just before *Hamlet*. Like all masterpieces, the play is, or can be about more than one thing: in this present telling, we are looking at the script from, if not a contemporary point of view (it will not take place in Ottawa during the French and Indian War, for example!), surely from an abstract one. Because in this play one of Shakespeare's great heroes and one of his most brilliant minds goes astray and the result is a nightmare. And so "nightmare" will be the departure point of this production.

Swollen with pride and gleaming with the adrenaline, the result of two separate and astounding victories, Macbeth arrives from his battles at the very point Fate warns us most to be vigilant about—the apex of success! And in this larger-than-life persona, he encounters the three witches, who, with wordplay and malevolence, begin to move his brilliance just a quarter turn to the left; and it is a direction from which he never recovers. A super-hero can do anything, right? He believes he alone is in possession of a kind of delirium of success that allows him to do virtually anything he wishes.

Just so tenderly, just so subtly do the witches work their magic upon him, Macbeth disappears further and further down the path to destruction and despair—the great and blinding difference being that he doesn't simply act out his blackened fantasies—he tells us about them, in some of the most probing, glorious, and revealing text ever penned.







Images from Lincoln Center Theater's production of *Macbeth*. Photos: T. Charles Erickson

In a production drenched in black, and glinting with blood red and dazzling white, *Macbeth* reveals itself to be Shakespeare's most powerful and darkest nightmare; a terrifying parable for our own time in which we, too, are urged to take more and more chances, whatever the consequences. Shakespeare has the answer: *Macbeth* is the consequence. We must beware!

To Discuss

- If you were directing *Macbeth*, how would you start off your first rehearsal? What themes and ideas from the play would you want to address with your cast and creative team?
- Why do you think the director and scenic designer chose John Dee's Signillum Dei Aemaeth as the centerpiece for the set? How does the text support this decision? How does this decision reinforce the supernatural elements at play in *Macbeth*? The themes?
- How do we use symbols and shapes today to project ideas, show our beliefs, and make meaning? (For example: jewelry, tattoos, graffiti tags, etc.)

To Notice

- In Act 1, Scene 1, notice what happens in the background as the soldiers discuss Macbeth's victory in battle. What information does this give us about Macbeth's character?
- Throughout the performance, notice how the set designer and director use distance and space on the stage, as well as the depth and width of the space. How does that heighten the story and themes?
- Notice what happens to the set when Lady Macbeth receives the letter from her husband. Who and what appear on the stage? How does that connect to the director's ideas expressed at the first rehearsal?
- Notice how color, projections, and music are used in the production.
- Notice how the production's lighting reinforces the theme of night/darkness. What scenes are in complete darkness?
- Notice what colors the costume designer uses most.
- Notice how the actors who play more than one character transform themselves. How do the costumes help?

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY: RESEARCH & COLLABORATION

In this activity, high school students will choose a role—director, costume designer, or scenic designer—and do individual research as well as collaborative group work to prepare for the first day of rehearsals for *Macbeth*. Students should read *Macbeth* and have a basic understanding of the play prior to beginning this activity.

PROCEDURE

Divide the students in your class into groups of three and review the collaborative team roles below that each group must contain.

Director: The person who leads the creative team and works directly with the actors. The director decides and executes the staging, the casting, and works closely with the full creative team overseeing the collaborative process and ensuring that the story and its themes are being fully realized through the many different artistic components.

Costume designer: The person responsible for envisioning and creating the look of each character by designing clothing and accessories that the actors will wear in performance.

Scenic designer: The person responsible for envisioning and creating the physical surroundings and visual aspects of a production—the scenery, furniture, props and other visual elements that create the environment of the play.

PART I: PRE-PRODUCTION RESEARCH

In their groups, have students divide the roles among them and individually complete the following tasks according to their roles:

Director: Compile a page of research notes that examine: what they believe the meaning or message of the play is, how they visualize the physical aspects of the play (set, costumes, actors), and why they think this play will matter to audiences today.

Costume designer: Create a page of sketches and notes detailing specific costume ideas for at least three of the main characters.

Scenic designer: Create a page of sketches and notes detailing ideas for the furniture, props, and scenic pieces in the play.

PART II: THE PRODUCTION MEETING

After the research segment of this activity has been completed, students will return to their groups for a Production Meeting. Each collaborator will have five minutes to share their research findings and creative ideas with the group and address any questions the other collaborators have. Teams must then work together to come up with a cohesive approach to the play that integrates their research findings, and incorporates any new ideas that have come up in the meeting.

PART III: THE FIRST REHEARSAL

Each collaborative group will do a brief class presentation that provides an overview of their approach to the play, as if it were the first rehearsal for *Macbeth*.

MIDDLE SCHOOL

Have students choose one of the following *Macbeth* collaborators and research what they do: director, scenic designer, costume designer, vocal coach, composer, casting director, fight choreographer, lighting designer, stage manager, hair and makeup designer, and projections designer.

COMMON CORE CONNECTION: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7 Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

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ONLINE RESOURCES

NEA Shakespeare in American Communities website: http://www.shakespeareinamericancommunities.org/

NEA Shakespeare in American Communities teacher's guide: http://www.shakespeareinamericancommunities.org/educational-resources/for-teachers

A Teacher's Guide to the Signet Classic Edition of Macbeth by Linda Neal Underwood

http://www.us.penguingroup.com/static/pdf/teachersguides/macbeth.pdf

Folger Shakespeare Library http://www.folger.edu/

Shakespeare Birthplace Trust http://www.shakespeare.org.uk/explore-shakespeare/about-shakespeare.html The Shakespeare Resource Center http://www.bardweb.net/

Royal Shakespeare Company

http://www.rsc.org.uk/explore/shakespeare/life-times.aspx

PBS Shakespeare Uncovered: *Macbeth* with Ethan Hawke http://www.pbs.org/wnet/shakespeare-uncovered/video/macbeth-with-ethan-hawke/

PBS Great Performances *Macbeth* http://www.pbs.org/wnet/gperf/episodes/macbeth/educators-guide/1023/

Shakespeare Navigators (*Macbeth*) http://www.shakespeare-navigators.com/macbeth/

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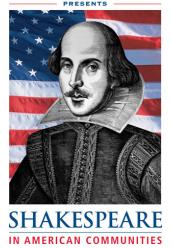
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