

GCSE Coursework Assignment – *Macbeth*

King Duncan’s murder marks the beginning of Macbeth’s downfall. Who can be held mostly responsible for this?

Introduction

- Introduce the play and the main characters.
- Comment on why the play was written (Chain of being - murder of king leads to chaos. This idea would please James I. Why?)
- Introduce the main characters who can be held mostly to blame for Duncan’s murder.



Now take each in turn and discuss their role in the king’s death:

Lady Macbeth

- Describe her character and explain how she would not have represented a stereotypical woman in Shakespearian times.
- Explain the dramatic effect of her opening soliloquy on the audience.
- What is her role in Duncan’s murder?
- How does she contribute to Macbeth’s downfall after this?

The Witches

- Say that the Shakespearian audience would have believed in witches.
- Comment on the dramatic effect of these characters - appearance, characteristics etc.
- What part did they play in Duncan’s murder?
- How did they further contribute to Macbeth’s downfall in Act 4?
- Why do you think they told Macbeth the predictions in the first place?

Macbeth

- Comment on his character and how it changes throughout the course of the play.
- Consider the following:
 - how he is introduced at the beginning of the play - hero
 - his meeting with the witches
 - Lady Macbeth’s influence on him
 - the murder of Duncan / doubts
 - Banquo
 - revisits witches
 - Macduff’s family
- What makes Macbeth kill Duncan?
- Who influences him?
- To what extent can he be held responsible for
 - a) the murder of Duncan
 - b) his own downfall?



Conclusion

- Sum up Macbeth’s fate. Say why you think the play ends like this and who you think is mostly to blame for the murder of Duncan and Macbeth’s downfall.