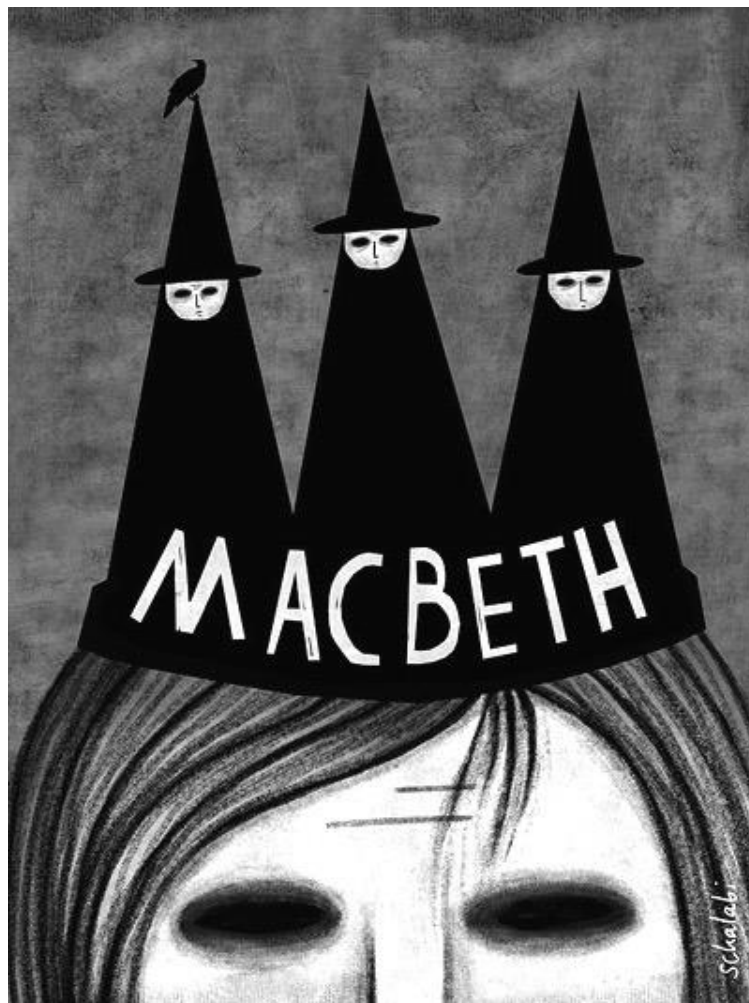


Literature Paper 1:

Macbeth

by William Shakespeare



Name:

Class:

How to use this pack:

In order to prepare for your **GCSE English Literature** exams, you will need to revise the texts of **Jekyll and Hyde**, **Macbeth** and **An Inspector Calls**. To give you time to do this you will receive a work pack like this each term including a copy of the text, along with activities, quote banks and model exam questions.

You should focus on one theme a week in order to do sufficient revision. Once you have revised the context, you will then work through key extracts, before practicing a mock exam question.

You will have the opportunity to discuss and plan answers to model exam questions, to compare your ideas with other students and to practise writing the start of some responses.

Your **English teacher** will expect you to complete at least three of the **practice exam questions** in this pack as full essays over the coming half term and submit them as homework.

If you have any questions about how to use these packs, please speak to your English teacher for further guidance.

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Act 1 Revision

DNA: How is Macbeth viewed at the beginning of the play and why?

a) Reading the Act

Read pages 6-22 to remind yourself what happened in Act 1 of *Macbeth*.

b) Act 1 Cloze Activity

Fill in the blanks to test your knowledge on what happens in each chapter

King Duncan hears how _____ has been a brave warrior whilst fighting the Norwegians. Duncan gives Macbeth the title of Thane of _____ as reward for his valour. The old Thane is sentenced to death for being a traitor.

On their way back from battle, Macbeth and Banquo meet the _____ who tell Macbeth that he will become the new Thane of Cawdor and also the new _____ of Scotland. The weird sisters tell Banquo that his descendants will be the future _____ of Scotland. Macbeth is not sure whether this is true, but he is soon told by a messenger that he is now the new _____. This seems like the first part of the prophecy has come true.

Macbeth sends a letter to his wife, _____ about the witches' predictions. She is excited about becoming queen, but fears that Macbeth is not _____ enough to kill Duncan. When Macbeth arrives home she tries to _____ him to kill Duncan. Macbeth eventually agrees with her.

Duncan arrives at _____ castle and is greeted by the hosts. They hold a feast and most people get drunk. Macbeth is _____ about killing Duncan and decides to abandon his plan. Macbeth believes that Duncan is a _____ king and he comments that Duncan has often _____ Macbeth. Lady Macbeth is angry that Macbeth has abandoned his plan to kill Duncan and calls him a _____. Macbeth decides to go through with the plan to murder Duncan.

rulers	Lady Macbeth	king	coward
good	Macbeth	persuade	thane
weird sisters	unsure	Macbeth's	praised
			Cawdor

c) Act 1 Short Answer Questions:

1. What news does the blood-stained captain bring to the king at the beginning of the Act? What is the result of this news?

2. What is the witches' prophecy to Macbeth and Banquo?

3. How does Banquo's reaction to the witches differ from Macbeth's? What does this suggest about each man's character?

4. Describe the differences in the demeanour of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth. How does this relate to Elizabethan gender roles?

Plenary: Which theme is most prominent in this act (*ambition, supernatural, power and corruption, gender or fate and free will*)? Explain why below.

Act 2 Revision

DNA: What is Macbeth's state of mind at the end of Act 1 and why?

a) Reading the Act

Read pages 23-30 to remind yourself what happened in Act 2 of *Macbeth*.

b) Act 2 Cloze Activity

Fill in the blanks to test your knowledge on what happens in each chapter

Later that night, whilst approaching Duncan's room, Macbeth sees a _____ floating before his eyes. He follows the dagger to Duncan's room. Macbeth creeps inside and _____ him in cold blood. Lady Macbeth meets him in the hall and _____ him for showing fear. When she sees the _____ daggers in Macbeth's hands she _____ them to _____ the sleeping grooms with _____

Macduff arrives at the castle and discovers the _____ and raises the alarm. Duncan's sons, _____ and _____ quickly leave Scotland because they might be _____ of killing their father. Macduff does not _____ Macbeth and suspects that Macbeth might have something to do with it.

murders

Donalbain

accused

dead king

believe

mocks

smear

bloody

Malcolm

dagger

blood

snatches

Act 2 Short Answer Questions:

1. What vision does Macbeth have at the beginning of Act 2? Why do you think this hallucination occurs?

2. How does Lady Macbeth react to Macbeth after the murder? What does this reveal about their relationship?

3. How do Macbeth and Lady Macbeth cover up their guilt the following morning?

4. Where do Malcolm and Donalbain decide to go and why?

Plenary: Which theme is most prominent in this act (*ambition, supernatural, power and corruption, gender or fate and free will*)? Explain why below.

Act 3 Revision

DNA: What is the biggest threat to Macbeth as he becomes king and why?

a) Reading the Act

Read pages 31-38 to remind yourself what happened in Act 3 of *Macbeth*.

b) Act 3 Cloze Activity

Fill in the blanks to test your knowledge on what happens in each chapter

Macbeth is made _____ of Scotland. The witches' prophecy makes Macbeth believe that he must kill _____ and his son _____, because the witches _____ that Banquo's descendants would be _____. Macbeth orders two _____ to carry out the job. However, _____ escapes and this makes Macbeth very angry and concerned that the witches' predictions could come _____.

Macbeth has a banquet and sets a place at the table for _____ knowing full well that he is _____. However, he sees the _____ of Banquo in the seat left for him. Macbeth shouts in _____ at the ghost. His guests suspect that he has a guilty _____

kings	Banquo	murderers	Fleance	dead	
	Banquo	ghost	true	Fleance	king
		conscience	prophesied	horror	

c) Act 3 Short Answer Questions:

1. How and why does Macbeth arrange Banquo's murder?

2. What role does Lady Macbeth play in Banquo's murder? How does this suggest a change in their relationship? Why might this change have occurred?

3. How is Fleance's escape a turning point in the play? What impact do you think this has on Macbeth's state of mind and why?

4. After seeing Banquo's ghost, Macbeth says "Blood will have blood". What do you think this means and why is it significant to the play?

Plenary: Which theme is most prominent in this act (*ambition, supernatural, power and corruption, gender or fate and free will*)? Explain why below.

Act 4 Revision

DNA: Why do you think Macbeth saw Banquo's ghost at the banquet? What does this reveal about his state of mind?

a) Reading the Act

Read pages 39-47 to remind yourself what happened in Act 4 of *Macbeth*.

b) Act 4 Cloze Activity

Fill in the blanks to test your knowledge on what happens in each chapter

Macbeth decides to pay the witches another visit and they show him three _____. The first is an _____ (this represents Macbeth's own severed head, later), the second is a _____ (who is likely to be Macduff torn from his mother's womb), and the third is a _____ with a tree in its hand (this is meant to represent Malcolm and Birnam Wood). The first apparition tells Macbeth to beware _____, the second that he will never be defeated by anyone born of _____, and the third tells Macbeth that he will never be beaten until _____ comes to Dunsinane.

Macduff is sure that Macbeth has murdered Duncan and decides to join _____ in England. He raises an army of _____ Englishmen in order to kill Macbeth and reclaim the throne.

In rage that Macduff has fled the country, Macbeth orders his henchmen to kill Macduff's _____ and this act disgusts his followers, who start to desert him.

armoured head

Macduff

Malcolm

Birnam wood

family *bloody child* *ten thousand* *crowned child*
apparitions *woman*

a) Act 4 Short Answer Questions:

1. What has Macbeth come to ask the witches? How do they answer?

2. How has Macbeth changed since he last saw the witches? How has his moral character deteriorated? Do you think the witches are to blame?

3. Why do you think Shakespeare had Macbeth murder Macduff's wife and children? What does this symbolise about his character?

4. According to Malcolm and Macduff, what has happened to Scotland during Macbeth's reign? What do you think Shakespeare's message about kingship is here?

Plenary: Which theme is most prominent in this act (*ambition, supernatural, power and corruption, gender or fate and free will*)? Explain why below.

Act 5 Revision

DNA: How do you think the witches' apparitions have affected Macbeth as he prepares for battle with the English army?

a) Reading the Act

Read pages 48-60 to remind yourself what happened in Act 5 of *Macbeth*.

b) Act 5 Cloze Activity

Fill in the blanks to test your knowledge on what happens in each chapter

Lady Macbeth has been driven into _____ with _____ and _____. She obsessively _____ as she talks in her sleep about _____.

Macbeth is preparing for battle with the English army. He feels _____ due to the _____. Macbeth is informed that Lady Macbeth has _____ and he begins to question the point of _____. A messenger tells the king that the wood is on its way to _____ and Macbeth becomes _____.

When the army arrives at the castle, Macbeth recklessly attacks and _____ many men because he believes that no one can kill him. However, Macduff tells Macbeth that he was not born of _____ because he was born of _____. They start to fight. Macduff _____ Macbeth and his _____ is displayed for everyone to see. _____ is crowned the true king of Scotland.

guilt	defeats	prophecies	existence	woman
washes her hands		Macbeth's betrayal		Dunsinane
madness	grief	worried	invincible	head
committed suicide		kills	caesarean	Malcolm

a) Act 5 Short Answer Questions:

1. Why do you think Shakespeare shows Lady Macbeth sleepwalking?

2. What opinion do the Scottish lords now have of Macbeth and why?

3. In Act 5 Macbeth talks a lot about his perspective on life. What do these speeches reveal about his state of mind?

4. Why do you think Shakespeare makes Lady Macbeth die at this point in the play? What does Macbeth's response reveal about his state of mind?

5. Why does Macduff not take power for himself at the end of the play? What message do you think Shakespeare is trying to give us here?

Plenary: Which theme is most prominent in this act (*ambition, supernatural, power and corruption, gender or fate and free will*)? Explain why below.

Key Theme 1: Ambition

Key Context: Shakespearean Beliefs about Kingship

During the reign of King James I, people in England and Scotland believed strongly in a king's **divine right** to rule. They believed that kings were higher beings who were chosen by God (and not by men) to rule. In *Macbeth*, Shakespeare shows that a king should be chosen by divine right through the unnatural events that happen following Macbeth's **usurpation** (theft) of the throne. He is ultimately punished for his murder of the divinely-appointed King Duncan and his theft of the throne.

According to the theory of divine right, God grants kings the right to rule. An uprising against the king is therefore an uprising against the will of God. King Duncan is presented as a noble King of Scotland. He is a good and fair King, who loves his country more than his own power. When Macbeth and Lady Macbeth murder Duncan due to their corrupt ambition and desire for power, this is a rebellion against God and a disruption of the natural order. This disruption of nature is also shown in Lady Macbeth's refusal of her gender role, the supernatural changes in the landscape, and the couple's deteriorating mental health, until Macduff restores the natural order by returning the throne to Duncan's son and named heir, Malcolm.

Once Macbeth gives in to his ambition and steals the throne, he upsets the natural order of things by taking a position that is not his by right. Macbeth is unable to be a good king because of his defiance of God and nature, and his ambition drives him to commit further crimes to keep himself on the throne: the murders of Banquo, Lady Macduff, and her son. Kings were meant to protect their countries from evil, but Macbeth cannot fulfill this role; he does not prevent evil but causes it.

The land begins to reflect this evil in its king through supernatural occurrences. The land is covered in darkness and nothing can grow without the light of the sun. The land no longer has a true king to care for it, only a murderous usurper who continues to kill and the strange landscape reflects this.

Macbeth has made the land diseased through his own corrupt ambition because he has murdered its divinely-chosen king and has stolen the throne for himself. In doing so, he has become a tyrant, killing his subjects to maintain his **power**. When Macbeth hears that Birnam Wood is moving against him, it seems as if the land itself is revolting against his unnatural reign. At this moment, he knows that the prophecy has been fulfilled, and he will be defeated.

Although Macbeth and Lady Macbeth are powerful in their corrupt ambition, they are unable to fight against nature. Macbeth is defeated by the forces of Malcolm, the rightful king, and Macduff, his faithful servant. Malcolm becomes a king with the right to rule both because he is the son of Duncan, who was a true king, and because he has not murdered the innocent or otherwise gone against nature to gain his position. Malcolm is chosen by God, able to lead Scotland in a way that Macbeth cannot. With Macbeth's death and Malcolm's rise to the throne, the natural order is restored and the land can begin to heal itself under the guidance of a king who cares for his kingdom.

DNA: Read the contextual information in silence.

Kingship Context: Short Answer Questions:

1. In your own words, explain what is meant by the “divine right” of kings:

2. How does Shakespeare show that Macbeth is does not have the divine right of kingship?

3. How is the disruption of the natural order of things shown in *Macbeth*?

4. How does the landscape react to Macbeth's usurpation of the throne?

5. How is the natural order restored at the end of the play?

Plenary: List three relevant events from the play that demonstrate the theme of ambition. Give reasons for your choices.

Ambition: Key Scene (A1S5)

Read the following extract from Act 1 Scene 5 and then answer the question that follows.

LADY MACBETH

The raven himself is hoarse
That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan
Under my battlements. Come, you spirits
That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here,
5 And fill me from the crown to the toe top-full
Of direst cruelty! make thick my blood;
Stop up the access and passage to remorse,
That no compunctious visitings of nature
Shake my fell purpose, nor keep peace between
10 The effect and it! Come to my woman's breasts,
And take my milk for gall, you murdering ministers,
Wherever in your sightless substances
You wait on nature's mischief! Come, thick night,
And pall thee in the dunnest smoke of hell,
15 That my keen knife see not the wound it makes,
Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark,
To cry 'Hold, hold!'

0	1
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Starting with this speech, explain how far you think Shakespeare presents Lady Macbeth as an ambitious character in the play.

Write about:

how Shakespeare presents Lady Macbeth in this speech
how Shakespeare presents Lady Macbeth as an ambitious character in the play as a whole.

[30 marks]

Ambition: Key Scene (A1S7)

Read the following extract from Act 1 Scene 7 and then answer the question that follows.

MACBETH

If it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well
It were done quickly: if the assassination
Could trammel up the consequence, and catch
With his surcease success; that but this blow
5 Might be the be-all and the end-all here,
But here, upon this bank and shoal of time,
We'd jump the life to come. But in these cases
We still have judgment here; that we but teach
Bloody instructions, which, being taught, return
10 To plague the inventor: this even-handed justice
Commends the ingredients of our poison'd chalice
To our own lips.

0	1
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Starting with this speech, explain how far you think Shakespeare presents Macbeth as corrupted by ambition.

Write about:

how Shakespeare presents Macbeth in this speech

how Shakespeare presents Macbeth as corrupted by ambition in the play as a whole.

[30 marks]

Ambition: Key Scene (A2S1)

Read the following extract from Act 2 Scene 1 and then answer the question that follows.

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.

Art thou not, fatal vision, sensible

5 To feeling as to sight? or art thou but
A dagger of the mind, a false creation,
Proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain?
I see thee yet, in form as palpable
As this which now I draw.

10 Thou marshall'st me the way that I was going;
And such an instrument I was to use.
Mine eyes are made the fools o' the other senses,
Or else worth all the rest; I see thee still,

And on thy blade and dudgeon gouts of blood,
15 Which was not so before. There's no such thing:
It is the bloody business which informs
Thus to mine eyes.

0	1
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Starting with this speech, explain how far you think Shakespeare presents Macbeth's ambition as the main reason for his downfall.

Write about:

how Shakespeare presents Macbeth's ambition in this speech
how Shakespeare presents Macbeth's ambition in the play as a whole.

[30 marks]

Key Theme 2: The Supernatural

Key Context: Shakespearean Beliefs about Witchcraft

The Elizabethans had a strong belief in witchcraft. They blamed witches for any events that they could not control or explain. This led to the **persecution** of witches; hundreds of 'witches' were hunted, prosecuted and killed in the 15th and 16th centuries. Following the outbreak of the Bubonic Plague, Elizabethans blamed witches for its spread. Similarly, whenever there were bad harvests, fires that burnt down houses or when foods were spoiled, the blame was targeted at witches.

Witches were associated with the dark and death. In Christian countries they were thought to be the servants of **Satan** (the devil), and they were believed to gather near graves to conduct their evil rites and make poisons.

There were lots of ways to test for a witch. A common way was to duck the accused under water in a pond or river. If she floated, she was a witch. If she didn't, she was innocent and probably drowned. Anyone who floated was then burnt at the stake.

Since the rich and the powerful sections of the Elizabethan society could not be touched, it was the old, poor, unprotected and hapless women who were accused of being witches. Out of 270 witches who were put on trial, 247 were women and 23 men. Of these women, most were single women who kept pets for company. The pets were considered demons, and a source of witchcraft.

Another reason that more women than men were targeted for witchcraft was that the Elizabethan society was **patriarchal** (male-dominated). Men were all-powerful and women enjoyed few rights. They were expected to be obedient to men. Elizabethan women totally relied on the male members of the family.

Since there were no trained doctors around at this time, people often turned to 'wise women' who used herbs to cure their illnesses. As the fear of witches and witchcraft increased, however, the Catholic Church extended its definition of witchcraft to include anyone with the knowledge of herbs. It was alleged that these people had pact with the Devil. Those who cured the health problems with psychedelic herbs were burnt at the stake.

King James I became king in 1603. He was particularly superstitious about witches and even wrote a book on the subject. Shakespeare wrote **Macbeth** especially to appeal to James – it has witches and is set in Scotland, where he was already king. The three witches in *Macbeth* manipulate the characters and cast spells to destroy lives.

Witches were supposed to be capable of doing all the things that the three 'weird sisters' are said to perform in *Macbeth*. It was believed that they could see into the future, change the weather, sink ships, dry up springs, change night into day and day into night. They could also cause the death of their enemies, and could make themselves invisible. For a king like Macbeth to visit *and* have dealings with witches would have seemed both a crime and a sin.

Macbeth is easily captured by their power and by their prophecies. But note that they never tell him a lie. However, they do allow *him* to deceive *himself*. The devil does not lie...but leads us into temptation.

DNA: Read the contextual information in silence.

The Supernatural Context: Short Answer Questions:

1. In your own words, name three things that Elizabethans blamed witches for:

2. How did they test for witches and what was the punishment?

3. Which people were usually accused of being witches and why?

4. In your own words, explain what patriarchal means:

5. Name five things the witches were able to do in Macbeth:

Plenary: List three relevant events from the play that demonstrate the theme of the supernatural. Give reasons for your choices.

The Supernatural: Key Scene (A1S3)

Read the following extract from Act 1 Scene 3 and then answer the question that follows.

MACBETH

[Aside] Two truths are told,
As happy prologues to the swelling act
Of the imperial theme. — I thank you, gentlemen.

Aside

- 5 This supernatural soliciting
Cannot be ill, cannot be good: if ill,
Why hath it given me earnest of success,
Commencing in a truth? I am thane of Cawdor:
If good, why do I yield to that suggestion
- 10 Whose horrid image doth unfix my hair
And make my seated heart knock at my ribs,
Against the use of nature? Present fears
Are less than horrible imaginings:
My thought, whose murder yet is but fantastical,
- 15 Shakes so my single state of man that function
Is smother'd in surmise, and nothing is
But what is not.

0	1
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Starting with this speech, explain how far you think Shakespeare presents the witches' prophecies as the main reason for Macbeth's downfall in the play.

Write about:

how Shakespeare presents prophecy in this speech

how Shakespeare presents prophecy in the play as a whole.

[30 marks]

The Supernatural: Key Scene (A3S4)

Read the following extract from Act 3 Scene 4 and then answer the question that follows.

	<p>MACBETH</p> <p>What man dare, I dare: Approach thou like the rugged Russian bear, The arm'd rhinoceros, or the Hyrcan tiger; Take any shape but that, and my firm nerves</p> <p>5 Shall never tremble: or be alive again, And dare me to the desert with thy sword; If trembling I inhabit then, protest me The baby of a girl. Hence, horrible shadow! Unreal mockery, hence!</p> <p>10 <i>GHOST OF BANQUO vanishes</i> Why, so: being gone, I am a man again. Pray you, sit still.</p> <p>LADY MACBETH</p> <p>You have displaced the mirth, broke the good meeting,</p> <p>15 With most admired disorder.</p>
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0	1
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Starting with this speech, explain how far you think Shakespeare presents hallucinations as the symbol of Macbeth's guilt.

Write about:

how Shakespeare presents hallucinations in this speech

how Shakespeare presents hallucinations in the play as a whole.

[30 marks]

The Supernatural: Key Scene (A4S1)

Read the following extract from Act 4 Scene 1 and then answer the question that follows.

SECOND APPARITION

Be bloody, bold, and resolute; laugh to scorn
The power of man, for none of woman born
Shall harm Macbeth.

5 *Descends*

MACBETH

Then live, Macduff: what need I fear of thee?
But yet I'll make assurance double sure,
And take a bond of fate: thou shalt not live;
10 That I may tell pale-hearted fear it lies,
And sleep in spite of thunder.

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Starting with this speech, explain how far you think Shakespeare presents Macbeth as manipulated by supernatural powers.

Write about:

how Shakespeare presents supernatural powers in this speech
how Shakespeare presents supernatural powers in the play as a whole.

[30 marks]

Key Theme 3: Power and Corruption

Key Context: *Macbeth's* Historical Background

Shakespeare wrote *Macbeth* in 1606. It is important to understand the **historical and political context** in which it was written, as that is the key to the main theme of the play, which is that excessive ambition will have terrible consequences, driving any illegitimate possession of power into corruption. When **James I** became king after the death of Elizabeth I in 1603, he was not a direct descendent. Queen Elizabeth I had died without children, nephews or nieces; James I was a distant cousin and her nearest relation. For this reason, there were many people who were unhappy with his coronation as king and claimed the throne for themselves. Shakespeare wrote *Macbeth* partly as a cautionary tale, warning any other potential regicides (king-killers) of the awful fate that would inevitably overtake them. This is one reason why *Macbeth* is often referred to as a **tyrant** in the play, a word which has two meanings. A tyrant is both a usurper – someone who had seized power without any legal right to do so – and a ruler who exercises their power in a harsh cruel way. *Macbeth's* brutal murder at the hand of Macduff is a warning to anyone who might consider killing James I, as *Macbeth* had killed King Duncan.

During the reign of Queen Elizabeth, Shakespeare's acting company was called the 'Chamberlain's Men', and it is known that they performed for the court. After James I was crowned, they changed their name to the 'King's Men' as a tribute to him. Shakespeare needed to stay in favour with the King and his court so that he could afford to keep writing and producing plays. In *Macbeth*, Shakespeare seeks to flatter and please the King in various ways. *Macbeth*, the character who usurps the place of a lawful King, is shown as losing everything as a result – he becomes hated and demonised by all his subjects, as does his wife, who supports him in his crime. Banquo, who James I claimed as their ancestor, is presented in a completely positive light. When the witches show *Macbeth* the future, he sees a line of kings descended from Banquo that seems to 'stretch out to the crack of doom'. This flatters King James with the promise of a long-standing dynasty. He also included many supernatural elements to entertain James I, who believed strongly in witchcraft.

Shakespeare based the story of *Macbeth* on a real Scottish king, **Mac Bethad** (or *Macbeth* in English). Mac Bethad did kill the previous king, Duncan, then ruled the Scots from 1040-1057. He eventually died in a battle that returned Duncan's son Malcolm to the throne.

Shakespeare probably read about Mac Bethad in a history book by Raphael Holinshed, which included the witches and their predictions, Lady *Macbeth's* role in the murder and the moving of Birnam Wood. Shakespeare changed the story even further by making *Macbeth's* reign shorter and more evil. In the history books, Banquo helped *Macbeth* murder Duncan, but Shakespeare presents Banquo as a wise, noble figure who makes *Macbeth* jealous as much for his goodness as for the witches' prophecies. This was partly because King James I claimed to be descended from Banquo, and partly to provide a contrast for the audience between the evil, murderous masculinity of *Macbeth* and Banquo's more moral, noble manliness.

DNA: Read the contextual information in silence.

Historical Context: Short Answer Questions:

1. Why was James I's throne threatened when he was crowned?

2. How does Shakespeare react to this situation in *Macbeth*?

3. Why does Shakespeare make Macbeth a tyrant?

4. How does Shakespeare flatter James I in *Macbeth*?

5. How does Shakespeare use history books in the plot of *Macbeth*?

Plenary: List three relevant events from the play that demonstrate the theme of power and corruption. Give reasons for your choices.

Power and Corruption: Key Scene (A3S1)

Read the following extract from Act 3 Scene 1 and then answer the question that follows.

MACBETH

To be thus is nothing;
But to be safely thus. — Our fears in Banquo
Stick deep; and in his royalty of nature
Reigns that which would be fear'd: 'tis much he dares;
5 And, to that dauntless temper of his mind,
He hath a wisdom that doth guide his valour
To act in safety. There is none but he
Whose being I do fear: and, under him,
My Genius is rebuked; as, it is said,
10 Mark Antony's was by Caesar. He chid the sisters
When first they put the name of king upon me,
And bade them speak to him: then prophet-like
They hail'd him father to a line of kings:
Upon my head they placed a fruitless crown,
15 And put a barren sceptre in my gripe,
Thence to be wrench'd with an unlineal hand,
No son of mine succeeding.

0	1
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Starting with this speech, explain how far you think Shakespeare presents Macbeth as being obsessed with power in the play.

Write about:

how Shakespeare presents Macbeth in this speech

how Shakespeare presents Macbeth in the play as a whole.

[30 marks]

Power and Corruption: Key Scene (A3S6)

Read the following extract from Act 3 Scene 6 and then answer the question that follows.

LORD
The son of Duncan,
From whom this tyrant holds the due of birth
Lives in the English court, and is received
Of the most pious Edward with such grace
5 That the malevolence of fortune nothing
Takes from his high respect: thither Macduff
Is gone to pray the holy king, upon his aid
To wake Northumberland and warlike Siward:
That, by the help of these—with Him above
10 To ratify the work—we may again
Give to our tables meat, sleep to our nights,
Free from our feasts and banquets bloody knives,
Do faithful homage and receive free honours:
All which we pine for now: and this report
15 Hath so exasperate the king that he
Prepares for some attempt of war.

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Starting with this speech, explain how far you think Shakespeare presents Macbeth as a corrupt tyrant.

Write about:

how Shakespeare presents Macbeth in this speech
how Shakespeare presents Macbeth as a corrupt tyrant in the play as a whole.

[30 marks]

Power and Corruption: Key Scene (A5S3)

Read the following extract from Act 5 Scene 3 and then answer the question that follows.

MACBETH

Bring me no more reports; let them fly all:

Till Birnam wood remove to Dunsinane,

I cannot taint with fear. What's the boy Malcolm?

Was he not born of woman? The spirits that know

5 All mortal consequences have pronounced me thus:

'Fear not, Macbeth; no man that's born of woman

Shall e'er have power upon thee.' Then fly, false thanes,

And mingle with the English epicures:

The mind I sway by and the heart I bear

10 Shall never sag with doubt nor shake with fear.

Enter a Servant

The devil damn thee black, thou cream-faced loon!

Where got'st thou that goose look?

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Starting with this speech, explain how far you think Shakespeare presents Macbeth as corrupted by power.

Write about:

how Shakespeare presents Macbeth in this speech

how Shakespeare presents Macbeth as corrupted by power in the play as a whole.

[30 marks]

Key Theme 4: Gender

Key Context: Shakespearean Gender Roles

In Elizabethan times women legally belonged to their fathers (or their brothers if their father died), and then to their husbands. This meant that they had to be **subservient** to men and obey them in all things. Most Elizabethan women didn't argue with this, as they were raised to believe that they were **inferior** to men and that men knew better. Women who refused to obey men were punished with the whipping stool.

There were no schools for girls. Wealthy girls were educated at home, while poor girls received no education. Elizabethan women were also not allowed to enter University or become professionals such as doctors or lawyers. They did not have the vote and were not allowed to enter politics or own property. Widows and unmarried orphan girls were at risk of homelessness, unless a man in their families took pity on them.

Despite the many strong female roles in plays such as *Macbeth*, Elizabethan women were not allowed to act in the theatres. It was seen as immoral and shameful for a woman to go on stage, as women were meant to be seen and not heard. Instead, the female roles were played by young men whose voices had not broken.

As well as not being allowed to make their own choices in everyday life, Elizabethan women were also not allowed to choose their own husbands. Instead, they were used to make links with other powerful families through arranged marriages.

Married women were expected to bring a dowry (money or property) to the marriage as a gift from the father to the new husband. Once married, they had to run the household chores and look after the children. Elizabethan women were expected to have many children, and many women died in childbirth. This explains why Queen Elizabeth I was reluctant to marry. As a single woman, she could make her own decisions. Had she married, she would have been expected to obey her husband.

The only alternative for women who did not wish to marry was to enter a religious institution, where they would take a vow of celibacy and shut themselves away from men forever. These institutions provided the only place where women could develop an advanced education, but when King Henry VIII rejected the Catholic Church in the mid-sixteenth century, many of these religious institutions were closed down, meaning women no longer had any option but to remain under the control of men.

Lady Macbeth disrupts Elizabethan gender roles by demonstrating a desire for power, and by manipulating her husband and questioning his manhood. Shakespeare uses images of motherhood in Act 1, Scene 7 to show how shockingly Lady Macbeth resists this role. She is punished for her deviance when she is driven to madness and suicide in Act 5.

Shakespeare also uses *Macbeth* to explore gender roles for men. For Macbeth, masculinity is repeatedly linked to violence and destruction, and Lady Macbeth encourages him to murder by asking him if he is really a man. However, Shakespeare also provides alternative examples of masculinity in Duncan, Banquo, Macduff and Malcolm – men who are defined by their goodness and morality, rather than by violence and destruction. Perhaps he wanted to show that true manliness was about creating and protecting a community, rather than about destroying one.

DNA: Read the contextual information in silence.

Gender Roles Context: Short Answer Questions:

1. In your own words, explain what subservient means:

2. What was the purpose of Elizabethan marriage?

3. How were unmarried Elizabethan women treated?

4. How does Shakespeare present the role of women through Lady Macbeth's character?

5. What different types of masculinity are displayed in *Macbeth*?

Plenary: List three relevant events from the play that demonstrate the theme of gender. Give reasons for your choices.

Gender: Key Scene (A1S7)

Read the following extract from Act 1 Scene 7 and then answer the question that follows.

MACBETH

Prithee, peace:

I dare do all that may become a man;

Who dares do more is none.

LADY MACBETH

5 What beast was't, then,

That made you break this enterprise to me?

When you durst do it, then you were a man;

And, to be more than what you were, you would

Be so much more the man. Nor time nor place

10 Did then adhere, and yet you would make both:

They have made themselves, and that their fitness now

Does unmake you. I have given suck, and know

How tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me:

I would, while it was smiling in my face,

15 Have pluck'd my nipple from his boneless gums,

And dash'd the brains out, had I so sworn as you

Have done to this.

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Starting with this speech, explain how far you think Shakespeare presents equal gender roles in the play.

Write about:

how Shakespeare presents gender roles in this speech

how Shakespeare presents gender roles in the play as a whole.

[30 marks]

Gender: Key Scene (A2S2)

Read the following extract from Act 2 Scene 2 and then answer the question that follows.

	<p>LADY MACBETH</p> <p>Who was it that thus cried? Why, worthy thane, You do unbend your noble strength, to think So brainsickly of things. Go get some water, 5 And wash this filthy witness from your hand. Why did you bring these daggers from the place? They must lie there: go carry them; and smear The sleepy grooms with blood.</p> <p>MACBETH</p> <p>10 I'll go no more: I am afraid to think what I have done; Look on't again I dare not.</p> <p>LADY MACBETH</p> <p>15 Infirm of purpose! Give me the daggers: the sleeping and the dead Are but as pictures: 'tis the eye of childhood That fears a painted devil. If he do bleed, I'll gild the faces of the grooms withal; For it must seem their guilt.</p>
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Starting with this speech, explain how far you think Shakespeare presents Lady Macbeth as having power over Macbeth.

Write about:

how Shakespeare presents Lady Macbeth in this speech
how Shakespeare presents Lady Macbeth as having power over Macbeth in the play as a whole.

[30 marks]

Gender: Key Scene (A5S1)

Read the following extract from Act 5 Scene 1 and then answer the question that follows.

LADY MACBETH

5 Out, damned spot! out, I say!—One: two: why,
then, 'tis time to do't.—Hell is murky!—Fie, my
lord, fie! a soldier, and afeard? What need we
fear who knows it, when none can call our power to
account?—Yet who would have thought the old man
to have had so much blood in him.

Doctor

Do you mark that?

LADY MACBETH

10 The thane of Fife had a wife: where is she now?—
What, will these hands ne'er be clean?—No more o'
that, my lord, no more o' that: you mar all with
this starting.

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Starting with this speech, explain how far you think Shakespeare presents Lady Macbeth as a traditional Elizabethan woman.

Write about:

how Shakespeare presents Lady Macbeth in this speech
how Shakespeare presents Lady Macbeth as a traditional
Elizabethan woman in the play as a whole.

[30 marks]

Key Theme 5: Fate and Free Will

Key Context: Fate, Free Will and The Tragic Hero

The Elizabethans believed that **fate** was the main controlling factor in a person's life, and was symbolised by the wheel of **fortune**. The wheel was used to explain the high and low points of a person's life as well as the randomness of life. Those people that had obtained a high position on the wheel of fortune, such as kings or nobles, could eventually end up as beggars simply by a rotation of the wheel. The concept of a wheel of fate also was used to account for seemingly random fortuitous moments in a person's life. No one knew when the wheel would stop or where a person might end up on the wheel. This concept of fate eliminated a person's ability to control his own destiny. Shakespearean tragedies make use of this concept of fate to dramatize the eventual downfall of a character. In *Macbeth*, the main character is a victim of the wheel of fate as he rises to a position of political power, and then falls into ruin and eventually dies.

In many ways, *Macbeth* is the story of the struggle between fate and the desire for **free will** and the ability to control your own destiny. In ancient Greek tragedies, fate always overpowered human will through the character of the **tragic hero**. For Shakespeare, his belief in Christianity meant that his characters must face a choice between good and evil, right and wrong and so has some control over his own fate.

According to Greek tragedies, the tragic hero had five main features. He begins as a **noble character** of high status and some moral goodness, but he has an **imperfection**, which allows audiences to empathise with his weaknesses. The tragic hero also has a **fatal flaw** which drives him to an error in judgement that leads to his downfall. The tragic hero always demonstrates **excessive pride** and a desire to beat fate and control his own destiny, but ultimately comes to his downfall at the hands of a **nemesis** who cannot be avoided.

Macbeth meets this criteria when he is introduced to us as a war hero, who is overly confident and not sufficiently frightened (like Banquo is) when he meets the witches who prophesy his kingship. His fatal flaw is ambition and his wild desire for power leads to his corruption. He is encouraged to make his fatal error in judgement (the murder of King Duncan) by the prophecies of the witches and the manipulations of his wife, Lady Macbeth. Once crowned king, he shows excessive pride when he plans to murder Banquo and Macduff's family, and becomes a tyrant. This leads ultimately to his downfall at the hands of his nemesis, Macduff, who fulfils the prophecy because he is not born of woman, and murders Macbeth at the end of the play.

The fact that Macbeth does have some free will and actively chooses his downfall is demonstrated in his regular preoccupation with **sin**, heaven and hell. From the moment he considers the sin of murdering Duncan in A1S7, to his hallucination of the dagger in A2S1 and his guilty fear at what he has done when he brings the bloody daggers to Lady Macbeth in A2S2, he shows a strong awareness of God's wrath, and everything that occurs afterwards can be interpreted as God's way of punishing him for his sins.

Both Macbeth and his wife learn the hard way; when you turn your back on Heaven and try to resist God's plan and take control of your own destiny, you will face the consequences of God.

DNA: Read the contextual information in silence.

Fate, Free Will and the Tragic Hero Context: Short Answer Questions:

1. In your own words, explain the Elizabethan belief in the wheel of fortune:

2. What struggle does Shakespeare portray in *Macbeth*?

3. What are the five main features of the tragic hero?

4. How does *Macbeth* demonstrate the features of a tragic hero?

5. How does Shakespeare show that *Macbeth* does have some free will in *Macbeth*?

Plenary: List three relevant events from the play that demonstrate the theme of fate and free will. Give reasons for your choices.

Fate and Free Will: Key Scene (A4S1)

Read the following extract from Act 4 Scene 1 and then answer the question that follows.

	<p>Third Apparition</p> <p>Be lion-mettled, proud; and take no care Who chafes, who frets, or where conspirers are: Macbeth shall never vanquish'd be until</p> <p>5 Great Birnam wood to high Dunsinane hill Shall come against him.</p> <p><i>Descends</i></p> <p>MACBETH</p> <p>That will never be</p> <p>10 Who can impress the forest, bid the tree Unfix his earth-bound root? Sweet bodements! good! Rebellion's head, rise never till the wood Of Birnam rise, and our high-placed Macbeth Shall live the lease of nature, pay his breath</p> <p>15 To time and mortal custom. Yet my heart Throbs to know one thing: tell me, if your art Can tell so much: shall Banquo's issue ever Reign in this kingdom?</p>
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Starting with this speech, explain how far you think Shakespeare presents the witches' prophecies influencing Macbeth's fate.

Write about:

how Shakespeare presents prophecy in this speech

how Shakespeare presents prophecy as influencing Macbeth's fate in the play as a whole.

[30 marks]

Fate and Free Will: Key Scene (A5S5)

Read the following extract from Act 5 Scene 5 and then answer the question that follows.

MACBETH

She should have died hereafter;
There would have been a time for such a word.
To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day
5 To the last syllable of recorded time,
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!
Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
10 And then is heard no more: it is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.

Enter a Messenger

Thou comest to use thy tongue; thy story quickly.

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Starting with this speech, explain how far you think Shakespeare presents Macbeth's feelings about fate and free will.

Write about:

how Shakespeare presents Macbeth in this speech
how Shakespeare presents Macbeth's feelings about fate and free will in the play as a whole.

[30 marks]

Fate and Free Will: Key Scene (A5S8)

Read the following extract from Act 5 Scene 8 and then answer the question that follows.

	<p>MACBETH Accursed be that tongue that tells me so, For it hath cow'd my better part of man! And be these juggling fiends no more believed, That palter with us in a double sense; 5 That keep the word of promise to our ear, And break it to our hope. I'll not fight with thee.</p>
	<p>MACDUFF Then yield thee, coward, And live to be the show and gaze o' the time: 10 We'll have thee, as our rarer monsters are, Painted on a pole, and underwrit, 'Here may you see the tyrant.'</p>
	<p>MACBETH I will not yield, 15 To kiss the ground before young Malcolm's feet, And to be baited with the rabble's curse. Though Birnam wood be come to Dunsinane, And thou opposed, being of no woman born, Yet I will try the last. Before my body 20 I throw my warlike shield. Lay on, Macduff, And damn'd be him that first cries, 'Hold, enough!'</p>

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Starting with this speech, explain how far you think Shakespeare presents Macbeth's downfall as caused by fate.

Write about:

how Shakespeare presents Macbeth's downfall in this speech
how Shakespeare presents Macbeth's downfall as caused by fate in the play as a whole.

[30 marks]



ROYAL FAMILY



Duncan

*King of Scotland.
Murdered by Macbeth in Act II*

Malcolm

*Flees to England after his father's murder.
Becomes king in Act V*

Donalbain

*Flees to Ireland after his father's murder.
Does not return.*

NOBILITY

Macbeth — m. — Lady Macbeth

*Thane of Glamis. Becomes
Thane of Cawdor, then
King of Scotland. Killed
by Macduff in Act V*

*Plots murder of
Duncan. Dies
in Act V*

Macduff — m. — Lady Macduff

*Thane of Fife. Opposes
Macbeth's rule.
Kills him in Act V*

*Murdered on
Macbeth's orders
in Act IV*

Ross

*Thane of Ross. Macbeth's
cousin. Turns against
Macbeth.*

Banquo

*Friend to Macbeth. Hears witches'
prophecies. Murdered on Macbeth's
orders in Act III. His ghost
haunts Macbeth*

Son

*Murdered along with
his mother in Act IV*

Other Thanes

*Menteth
Angus
Cathness
Lennox*

Fleance

*Banquo's son.
Escapes murder
ordered by Macbeth*

Seyward

*Earl of Northumberland. Leads
English army that defeats
Macbeth in Act V*

Young Seyward

*Fights alongside his father
against Macbeth.
Killed by Macbeth*



WITCHES

Hecat

Queen of the Witches

Three Weird Sisters

*Prophets, who appear to Macbeth and
Banquo and make predictions about
their futures*



Macbeth Knowledge Organiser

Key Quotations

The witches: Fair is foul, and foul is fair, Hover through the fog an filthy air. *(Act I, Scene i)*

The witches: When shall we three meet again in thunder, lightning, or in rain? When the hurlyburly 's done, When the battle 's lost and won. *(Act I, Scene i)*

Captain: For brave Macbeth—well he deserves that name— Disdaining fortune, with his brandished steel, Which smoked with bloody execution, Like valour's minion carved out his passage *(Act I, Scene ii)*

Banquo: And oftentimes, to win us to our harm, the instruments of darkness tell us truths *(Act I scene iii)*

Macbeth: This supernatural soliciting cannot be ill, cannot be good *(Act I, Scene III)*

Macbeth: If chance will have me king, why, chance may crown me. *(Act I, Scene III)*

Macbeth: Stars hide your fires let not light see my black and deep desires. *(Act I, Scene IV)*

Lady Macbeth: Yet do I fear thy nature; It is too full o' the milk of human kindness. *(Act I, Scene V)*

Lady Macbeth: Look like the innocent flower, but be the serpent under't. *(Act I, Scene V)*

Lady Macbeth: Come, you spirits That tend on mortal thoughts, un-sex me here And fill me from the crown to the toe topfull Of direst cruelty *(Act I, Scene v)*

Macbeth: If it were done, when 'tis done, then 'twere well It were done quickly. *(Act I, Scene vii)*

Macbeth: I have no spur To prick the sides of my intent, but only Vaulting ambition which o'erleaps itself And falls on th'other. *(Act I, Scene vii)*

Macbeth: I dare do all that may become a man; Who dares do more is none. *(Act I, Scene vii)*

Lady Macbeth: Screw your courage to the sticking-place, and we'll not fail. *(Act I, Scene vii)*

Macbeth: Is this a dagger which I see before me, The handle toward my hand? *(Act II, Scene I)*

Macbeth: Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood clean from my hand? *(Act II, Scene ii)*

Lady Macbeth: My hands are of your colour, but I would shame to wear a heart so white. *(Act ii, Scene ii)*

Donalbain: There's daggers in men's smiles. *(Act II, Scene iii)*

Banquo: Thou hast it now, King, Cawdor, Glamis, all., as the weird sisters promis'd, and I fear Thou hast play'd most foully for't *(Act III scene i)*

Macbeth: Only for them, and mine eternal jewel Given to the common enemy of man, To make them kings, the seed of Banquo kings! *(Act III, Scene i)*

Lady Macbeth: What's done is done. **Macbeth:** We have scorch'd the snake, not kill'd it. *(Act III, Scene ii)*

Macbeth: O full of scorpions is my mind, dear wife! *(Act III, Scene ii)*

Macbeth: Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest chuck. *(Act III, scene li)*

Macbeth: Duncan is in his grave; After life's fitful fever he sleeps well *(Act III, Scene liii)*

Macbeth: Thou canst not say I did it; never shake thy gory locks at me! *(Act III, scene lv)*

The witches: By the pricking of my thumbs, Something wicked this way comes. *(Act IV, Scene i)*

Second Apparition: Be bloody, bold and resolute. Laugh to scorn The power of man, for none of woman born Shall harm Macbeth *(Act IV, scene i)*

Lady Macbeth: Out, damned spot! out, I say! *(Act V, Scene i).*

Lady Macbeth: Here's the smell of blood still; all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand. *(Act V, Scene i)*

Macbeth: To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow, Creeps in this petty pace from day to day, To the last syllable of recorded time; And all our yesterdays have lighted fools The way to dusty death. *(Act V, Scene v)*

Macbeth: Out, out, brief candle! Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player, That struts and frets his hour upon the stage, And then is heard no more. It is a tale Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, Signifying nothing. *(Act V, Scene v)*

Macbeth: I bear a charmed life which must not yield To one of woman born. *(Act V, Scene viii)*

Macduff: Macduff was from his mother's womb untimely ripp'd. *(Act V, Scene viii)*

Malcolm: Of this dead butcher and his fiend-like queen *(Act V, Scene ix)*

Macbeth Knowledge Organiser

Plot summary

Act I scene i – The three witches gather to in a thunder storm to meet Macbeth

Act I scene ii – Duncan hears reports of the battle in which Macbeth proves himself a hero and also of the treachery of the Thane of Cawdor.

Act I scene iii – Macbeth & Banquo meet the witches and hear the predictions that he will be Thane of Cawdor and the next king. Ross arrives to confirm that Macbeth is the new Thane of Cawdor.

Act I scene iv – Duncan decides to make his son Malcolm the heir to his throne and tells Macbeth that he will visit his castle.

Act I scene v – Lady Macbeth reads a letter from her husband about the events so far and makes up her mind to murder Duncan.

Act I scene vi – Duncan arrives at Macbeth’s castle and is welcomed by Lady Macbeth.

Act I scene vii – Macbeth decides he cannot go through with the plot but Lady Macbeth persuades him to change his mind.

Act II scene i – Banquo feels uneasy about what might happen in the night. Macbeth makes his way to Duncan’s room to kill him and sees a ghostly dagger floating in the air before him.

Act II scene ii – Macbeth forgets to leave the bloody daggers in Duncan’s room after the murder and Lady Macbeth is forced to take charge and put them back.

Act II scene iii – The next morning Duncan’s body is discovered by Macduff; Macbeth kills the servants in pretend rage; Duncan’s sons, Malcolm & Donalbain, flee the castle.

Act II scene iv – Macduff reports that suspicion for the murder has fallen on the king’s sons; Macbeth has travelled to Scone to be crowned.

Act III scene i – Macbeth is now king, but Banquo is suspicious about how the witch’s predications have come true. Macbeth arranges to have him murdered.

Act III scene ii – LM tries to get Macbeth to talk to her about his plans but he refuses.

Act III scene iii – Banquo is murdered but his son, Fleance, escapes.

Act III scene iv – At a feast that night, Macbeth sees the ghost of Banquo. Lady Macbeth tries to calm him down but when this fails cancels the feasts and sends the courtiers away.

Act III scene v – The witches discuss events so far; Hecate, the ruler of the witches, predicts his downfall.

Act III scene vi – suspicion of Macbeth is growing; Macduff has left for England to rouse support against him.

Act IV scene i – The witches tell Macbeth he cannot be harmed by anyone ‘born of a woman’ and that he will be safe until Birnam Wood moves to the castle at Dunsinane. Macbeth decides to murder Macduff’s family.

Act IV scene ii – Macbeth’s murderers kill Lady Macduff and her children.

Act IV scene iii – Macduff discovers his family’s murder and, with Malcolm, leads an army to attack Macbeth.

Act V scene i – Lady Macbeth is sleep walking and trying to wash an imaginary blood spot from her hands.

Act V scene ii – Malcolm’s army is at Birnam Wood and hear reports that Macbeth’s supporters are deserting him.

Act V scene iii – Macbeth is besieged but puts his trust in the witches’ prophesy.

Act V scene iv – Malcolm orders his army to cut down branches from Birnam Wood to disguise the number of soldiers.

Act V scene v – Macbeth is told of his wife’s death and about the news that Birnam Wood seems to be approaching. He resolves to die fighting.

Act V scene vi - viii – Macbeth is killed by Macduff (who reveals he was delivered by caesarean and so not properly ‘born’). Malcolm becomes the new king of Scotland and order is restored.

Key characters	Key themes	Historical context	Stylistic features and symbols
<p>Macbeth Thane of Glamis</p> <p>Lady Macbeth his wife</p> <p>Banquo Macbeth’s best friend</p> <p>Fleance Banquo’s son</p> <p>Duncan King of Scotland</p> <p>Malcolm Duncan’s eldest son</p> <p>Macduff – Thane of Fife</p> <p>Lady Macduff his wife</p> <p>Donalbain Duncan’s younger son</p> <p>Ross, Lennox, Angus Scottish nobles</p> <p>Weird Sisters (the witches) supernatural beings who predict events in the play.</p> <p>Hecate goddess of the witches</p>	<p>Ambition: a negative quality that drives Macbeth’s downfall.</p> <p>Power and corruption: Power corrupts Macbeth into becoming a tyrant</p> <p>Supernatural: Witches and hallucinations add to the chaos of Macbeth’s rule and make it seem unreal and frightening.</p> <p>Fate and free will: did the witches control Macbeth or was his downfall the result of his own choices?</p> <p>Gender: how does LM’s relationship with Macbeth reflect Elizabethan norms?</p>	<p><i>Macbeth</i> was most likely written in 1606, early in the reign of James I, who had been James VI of Scotland before he succeeded to the English throne in 1603. Only a century earlier, England had suffered under the massive disorder of the Wars of the Roses. Civil disorder was now seen as the ultimate disaster, an ungodly state. Macbeth’s rule represents this civil disorder as a time of chaos. Macbeth (or Mac Bethad) was a real Scottish king from 1040-1057. Additionally, the witches’ prophecy that Banquo will found a line of kings is a link to King James’s family’s claim to have descended from the historical Banquo. The theme of bad versus good kingship, embodied by Macbeth and Duncan, respectively, would have resonated at the royal court, where James was busy developing his English version of the theory of the divine right of kings. It was believed that kings were appointed by ‘divine right’ and were anointed by God. To kill a king was considered the worst sin and a terrible crime. <i>Macbeth</i> is a tragedy and the character of Macbeth is a tragic hero, a man who began nobly but is driven to his downfall by a fatal flaw (ambition) and is defeated at the hands of his nemesis (Macduff).</p>	<p>Blood – a symbol of guilt and violence</p> <p>The supernatural – Shakespeare uses prophesy, hallucinations, ghosts and magic to give the play a menacing, unnatural feel.</p> <p>Oxymoron – opposites & contradiction recur throughout the play</p> <p>Pathetic fallacy – unnatural events are usually echoed by unnatural weather</p> <p>Blank verse – non rhyming lines written in iambic pentameter (iam= a beat <i>du duh</i>; pent = five)</p> <p>Soliloquy – where a character speaks their thoughts aloud to the audience</p> <p>Monologue – a long speech by a single character</p> <p>Dramatic irony – when the audience knows more than a character or characters do</p>