

Plot overview			Key characters	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>While returning from a battle victory, Macbeth, a powerful lord, meets three Witches who predict that he will become King of Scotland.</li> <li>Macbeth tells his wife of the Witches' predictions and she encourages him to murder the current king, Duncan, who is staying with them as a guest.</li> <li>After Macduff discovers the murder, Duncan's sons flee the country, leaving the way clear for Macbeth to become king.</li> <li>Banquo, Macbeth's best friend, becomes suspicious of what his friend has done so Macbeth has him murdered too.</li> <li>Macbeth pays a second visit to the Witches and receives more predictions.</li> <li>In England, Malcolm (Duncan's elder son) and his chief supporter, Macduff, plan to invade Scotland to win back the throne. An enraged Macbeth has Macduff's wife and children killed; Macduff swears revenge.</li> <li>Lady Macbeth suffers from guilt for what she has done and eventually commits suicide.</li> <li>Malcolm's invasion is successful and Macduff kills Macbeth. Malcolm becomes the new King of Scotland and the country counts the cost of Macbeth's short but bloody reign.</li> </ol>			<p><b>Macbeth:</b> One of King Duncan's generals. He loves power; the witches tempt him into murder. Originally Thane of Glamis, he becomes the Thane of Cawdor, then King of Scotland.</p> <p><b>Lady Macbeth:</b> Macbeth's wife. She is ambitious and drives him to murder but is driven mad by conscience.</p> <p><b>Three Witches:</b> Sinister ladies of witchcraft who tempt Macbeth to do dark deeds. <b>Banquo:</b> A general and friend of Macbeth. The prophecy does not corrupt him. He is murdered by Macbeth as he is considered a threat. His ghost haunts Macbeth.</p> <p><b>King Duncan:</b> The good and noble King of Scotland, murdered by Macbeth.</p> <p><b>Macduff:</b> Thane of Fife. He opposes Macbeth and supports Malcolm. He kills Macbeth in revenge for the murder of his family.</p> <p><b>Malcolm:</b> Duncan's son. He flees with his brother after the murder of Duncan but returns with English support to challenge Macbeth.</p> <p><b>Fleance:</b> Banquo's son. Macbeth tries and fails to murder him. He flees Scotland but it's implied he will return one day to fulfil the prophecy and become King.</p> <p><b>Hecate:</b> Queen of the Witches.</p>	
Killer quotations			Glossary	Key themes
<b>Act One</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"Fair is foul, foul is fair"</li> <li>"Valiant cousin, worthy gentleman"</li> <li>"All hail Macbeth - that shall be king hereafter"</li> <li>"Murder is yet but fantastical"</li> <li>"To full of the milk of human kindness"</li> <li>"Pour my spirits in thine ear"</li> <li>"If it were done"</li> <li>"Vaulting ambition"</li> <li>"Act the flower but be the serpent under it"</li> </ul>	<b>Act Two</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"Is this a dagger which I see before me?"</li> <li>"Resembled my father as he slept"</li> <li>"I have done the deed"</li> <li>"Macbeth does murder sleep"</li> <li>"twere best not know myself"</li> <li>"O Horror! Horror! Horror!"</li> </ul>	<b>Act Three</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"Thou playedst most foully for't"</li> <li>"To be safely thus"</li> <li>"scorched the snake, not killed it"</li> <li>"Be innocent of the knowledge dearest chuck"</li> <li>"Which of you have done this?"</li> <li>"Avaunt and quit my sight"</li> <li>"blood will have blood."</li> </ul>	<p><b>Ambition:</b> a strong desire to achieve something.</p> <p><b>Apparitions:</b> a ghost/ghost-like image of a person.</p> <p><b>Betrayal:</b> being disloyal.</p> <p><b>Emasculate:</b> to make someone appear less masculine.</p> <p><b>Hallucination:</b> apparent vision of something not present.</p> <p><b>Invincible:</b> feeling too powerful to be defeated.</p> <p><b>Jacobean:</b> relating to the reign of King James I.</p> <p><b>Masculinity:</b> qualities considered to be of a man.</p> <p><b>Noble:</b> belonging to aristocracy.</p> <p><b>Patriarchy:</b> a system of society in which men hold the power and women are largely excluded from it.</p> <p><b>Regicide:</b> the action of killing a king.</p> <p><b>Subvert:</b> to challenge oppressive forces.</p> <p><b>Thane:</b> a man with land granted by the king.</p> <p><b>Traitor:</b> person who betrays someone.</p> <p><b>Treason:</b> betraying one's country.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ambition</li> <li>Good and evil</li> <li>The Supernatural</li> <li>Appearance and reality</li> <li>Gender</li> <li>The difference between kingship and tyranny</li> <li>Order and chaos</li> <li>Guilt</li> </ul>
<b>Act Four</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"Beware Macduff!"</li> <li>"He has killed me mother."</li> <li>"Bleed, bleed, poor country"</li> <li>"Oh Scotland, Scotland"</li> <li>"Your wife and babes savagely slaughtered"</li> </ul>	<b>Act Five</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"Yet here's a spot"</li> <li>"So much blood in him"</li> <li>"To bed, to bed".</li> <li>"Give me mine armour."</li> <li>"Beat them backward home"</li> <li>"It is the cry of woman"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"Forgot the taste of fears"</li> <li>"She should have died hereafter"</li> <li>"life's but a walking shadow"</li> <li>"Bear like, fight the course"</li> <li>"Turn hell hound"</li> <li>"I will not yield"</li> <li>"Hail King of Scotland!"</li> </ul>		<b>Motifs</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cruelty and masculinity</li> <li>Blood and guilt</li> <li>Hallucinations and dreams</li> <li>Prophecy</li> <li>Light/dark/inclement weather</li> <li>Sleep</li> </ul> <p><b>Key words to look out for:</b> • blood • night • time • sleep • fear • nature</p>

### Context

- Macbeth* was most likely written in 1606, early in the reign of James I. King James I of England was also King James VI of Scotland and traced his ancestry back to Banquo and Fleance.
- The Great Chain of Being:** the belief that every person, animal and even plant was assigned a place in the world by God. It was wrong to aspire to a different place.
- The Divine Right of Kings:** the belief that the King was chosen and anointed by God; to go against the King, therefore, was to go against God.
- In 1589, James married Anne of Denmark. After they were married, ships they were travelling on were stopped by storms three times. He became convinced that 'witches' who had tried to sink the ships; these accusations led to a witch trial in 1590 in North Berwick.
- James wrote a book about witchcraft in 1597 - it was called *Daemonologie*.
- James was not a well-liked king to begin with. In 1605, Guy Fawkes and his fellow Catholics decided to use gunpowder to blow up the House of Lords, the King and most of the English nobility at the state opening of Parliament in November 1605.

Exam criteria		Form and structure		Literary techniques																						
Level 6 (approx.. grade 9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Essay is driven by one overall concept. A clear point of view drives your argument. You can refer to other viewpoints, but you relate them back to your own central concept</li><li>Convincing ideas and interpretations</li><li>Close analysis</li><li>Focussed, short quotations</li><li>Clear understanding of the writer’s purpose</li></ul>	<b>Form</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The form of <i>Macbeth</i> is a dramatic play. More specifically, it is a tragedy.</li><li>Tragic plays can be traced back all the way to the beginnings of drama in Ancient Greece. In <i>Poetics</i>, one of the first books of literary criticism, Aristotle set out the key features of tragedy. Tragedy set out to stir up feelings of fear and pity in the audience - this is known as catharsis.</li></ul> <b>Structure</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>Chronological</b> structure. This is where events are revealed to the audience/reader in the order in which they have happened.</li><li>The events of this play are organised into five acts, each containing a number of scenes. However, it is important to note that Shakespeare himself almost certainly did not organise the play in this way and that this structure would have been added later during the editing process when the plays were turned into published text after being performed that way.</li><li>The idea of the five-act structure follows a model designed by Gustav Freytag, a German author from the 19th-century. He suggested there were five stages in a tragic dramatic structure. He named these stages: exposition, rising action, climax, falling action and catastrophe.</li></ul>		<b>Antithesis:</b> A person, idea or thing which is the complete opposite of something else. <b>Aside:</b> a remark or passage in a play that is intended to be heard by the audience but not by any other characters <b>Blank verse:</b> unrhyming verse that uses iambic pentameter. <b>Chiasmus:</b> a rhetorical device in which words or grammatical constructions are repeated in reverse order. <b>Dramatic irony:</b> a feature by which the full significance of a character’s words or actions is clear to the audience or reader although unknown to the character. <b>Equivocation:</b> the use of ambiguous language to conceal the truth. <b>Iambic pentameter:</b> a line of verse with 10 best, consisting of five sets of ‘iamb’: one unstressed syllable followed by one stressed syllable. <b>Imagery:</b> visually descriptive language. <b>Metaphor:</b> a figure of speech that describes something by saying it is something else. <b>Motif:</b> a recurring idea or image. <b>Oxymoron:</b> placing two contradictory ideas next to each other (i.e. “feather of lead”). <b>Pathetic fallacy:</b> giving human <u>feelings</u> to something non-human. It normally relates to the weather. <b>Simile:</b> a comparison between two things using <i>like</i> or <i>as</i> . <b>Verbal irony:</b> a language feature in which the intended meaning of a statement differs from the meaning that the words appear to express.																						
Level 5 (approx. Grade 7-8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Explores deeper ideas such as themes</li><li>Explore different viewpoints and alternative readings</li><li>Analysis is more developed than level 4</li><li>Tentative: use of modal verbs such as “might”, “could” and “may”</li></ul>	<b>Shakespearean tragedy conventions</b> <table><tr><td><b>Tragic Hero</b></td><td>A main character cursed by fate and possessed of a tragic flaw.</td></tr><tr><td><b>Good vs evil</b></td><td>This struggle can take place as part of the plot or exist within the main character.</td></tr><tr><td><b>Hamartia</b></td><td>The fatal character flaw of the tragic hero.</td></tr><tr><td><b>Tragic Waste</b></td><td>The good being destroyed along with the bad at the resolution of the play. Often played out with the unnecessary loss of life, especially of "good guy" characters.</td></tr><tr><td><b>External Conflict</b></td><td>This can be a problem facing the hero as a result of the plot or a "bad guy" character.</td></tr><tr><td><b>Internal Conflict</b></td><td>The struggle the hero engages in with his/her fatal flaw.</td></tr><tr><td><b>Catharsis</b></td><td>The release of the audience’s emotions through empathy with the characters.</td></tr><tr><td><b>Supernatural Elements</b></td><td>Magic, witchcraft, ghosts, etc.</td></tr><tr><td><b>Lack of Poetic Justice</b></td><td>Things end poorly for everyone, including the "good guys."</td></tr><tr><td><b>Comic Relief</b></td><td>One or more humorous characters, whose job was to lighten the mood.</td></tr><tr><td><b>Peripeteia</b></td><td>A sudden reversal in fortunes, or change in circumstances.</td></tr></table>		<b>Tragic Hero</b>	A main character cursed by fate and possessed of a tragic flaw.	<b>Good vs evil</b>	This struggle can take place as part of the plot or exist within the main character.	<b>Hamartia</b>	The fatal character flaw of the tragic hero.	<b>Tragic Waste</b>	The good being destroyed along with the bad at the resolution of the play. Often played out with the unnecessary loss of life, especially of "good guy" characters.	<b>External Conflict</b>	This can be a problem facing the hero as a result of the plot or a "bad guy" character.	<b>Internal Conflict</b>	The struggle the hero engages in with his/her fatal flaw.	<b>Catharsis</b>	The release of the audience’s emotions through empathy with the characters.	<b>Supernatural Elements</b>	Magic, witchcraft, ghosts, etc.	<b>Lack of Poetic Justice</b>	Things end poorly for everyone, including the "good guys."	<b>Comic Relief</b>	One or more humorous characters, whose job was to lighten the mood.	<b>Peripeteia</b>	A sudden reversal in fortunes, or change in circumstances.	
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Level 4 (approx. grade 5-6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Understood the task and the play</li><li>Explored the text as a conscious construct. This means that you will discuss the writer and clearly explain that the text has been deliberately created</li><li>Understood and explained what the text is about an abstract level: they have focussed on themes and ideas</li><li>Explained the effect of the writer’s choices, linked to purpose</li><li>Understood and explained the context</li></ul>	<b>Suggested essay structure</b> <p><b>Point:</b> state your idea, using key words from the question.</p> <p><b>Evidence:</b> choose a relevant quotation to support your idea.</p> <p><b>Technique:</b> what deliberate technique has the writer used? This could be any aspect of language or structure.</p> <p><b>Analysis (zoom!):</b> choose a key word and explore what meaning is created.</p> <p><b>Link:</b> make a clear, relevant link to the context.</p>	<b>Suggested sentence starters</b> <p>Shakespeare introduces the character as... Shakespeare uses... Shakespeare wants to... Shakespeare communicates... Shakespeare intends to... Shakespeare decided to start with... Shakespeare presents Macbeth as... The play closes/opens with... Shakespeare wants to audience to think that... The character is presented as... by the Shakespeare to... Shakespeare want the audience/reader to understand... The character embodies/ represents/ symbolises... Shakespeare illustrates the idea through... The idea of...is presented by Shakespeare through... The concept is explored through the use of... When Shakespeare uses...he wants to convey the idea that... X is portrayed as... A sense of...is created by Shakespeare by.... The entrance of X symbolises... We already know that...because... The audience is aware of... This character is first presented as... This is a turning point because... Shakespeare may be trying to/ could be trying to show... Shakespeare is influenced by... The audience may interpret this as... <b>Nine or never:</b> Shakespeare challenges the audience to... The concept of...</p>	<b>How to write an effective introduction</b> <p><b>Sentence 1:</b> Define the key word in the question. Personalise it - what does it mean to you? Contextualise it based on the text you’re writing about.</p> <p><b>Sentence 2:</b> Identify a question based on what the author wants us to think of the key theme/character named in the exam question.</p>																						