

Plot		Characters		Social, Historical Context		Key Quotations	
Act 1	Introduction of witches and the supernatural. The prophecy and reaction of Macbeth and Banquo. Duncan's promotion of Macbeth and the execution of Thane of Cawdor. Lady Macbeth reads a letter from Macbeth ('unsex me here'). The two plot to murder King Duncan who is visiting the castle.	Macbeth	Thane of Glamis. Becomes Thane of Cawdor. Becomes King through committing regicide.	Divine Right of Kings	The common belief was that the King has been chosen as God's representative on Earth and any challenge to this would have been seen as an attack on God himself.. Anybody who went against the <i>Divine Right of Kings</i> would have to suffer some form of downfall as a consequence for their actions.	'Fair is foul and foul is fair' – The witches	
		Lady Macbeth	Wife of Macbeth. Transgresses gender stereotypes. Goes mad and eventually commits suicide.			'As sparrows eagles or the hare the lion' Captain describing Macbeth and Banquo	
		Three Witches	Allies of the devil that influence Macbeth – enjoy causing chaos.			'Come you spirits [...] unsex me here' Lady Macbeth	
Act 2	'Is this a dagger' soliloquy. Murder of King Duncan (offstage). Macduff discovers the body – all horrified. Malcolm and Donalbain run away. Macbeth goes to Scone to be invested (crowned).	Banquo	Macbeth's best friend. Prophecy that his children will be kings. Suspects Macbeth and is murdered. Appears as a ghost.	The Great Chain of Being	In Elizabethan times, every part of creation had a place in the natural order and all of life was ranked and categorised. There was little room for social mobility within the great chain of being and, again as with the <i>Divine Right of Kings</i> , any attempt to manipulate your place within the natural order would have dire consequences.	'Take my milk for gall.' Lady Macbeth	
		Duncan	King of Scotland in exposition of play and the first to hail Macbeth as a hero. He is later slain for Macbeth's gain.			'Stars, hide your fires, let not light see my black and deep desires' – Macbeth	
Act 3	Macbeth is King. He ordered murderers to go and kill Banquo and Fleance. Macbeth hosts and feast – he is told that Banquo is killed but Fleance escaped. He sees the ghost of Banquo. He decides to go and see the witches again to tell him his fate.	Malcolm & Donalbain	King's sons. Malcolm is named heir by Duncan. Becomes King after Macbeth is slain.	James I and Religion	James took the throne after Elizabeth I who had treated Catholics very poorly and they had suffered quite severe persecution. Many has hoped that James might be more lenient, but quickly Catholics became a minority which angered many. This led to the attempted Gunpowder plot of 1605 where Guy Fawkes and friends attempted to blow up the houses of parliament with 36 barrels of Gunpowder.	'Look like th'innocent flower but be the serpent under't' Lady Macbeth to Macbeth	
		MacDuff	The thane of Fife and a barrier to Macbeth's ambitions. His family is murdered by Macbeth. He murders Macbeth (born by caesarean).			'We will proceed no further in this business.' – Macbeth to Lady Macbeth	
		<h2 style="text-align: center;">Macbeth</h2> <h3 style="text-align: center;">Key Themes</h3>				The Role of Women	The common belief of the time was the women were inferior to men in all walks of life and should rely upon the male members of their families to look after them. To be a powerful woman (such as Lady Macbeth) would have been frightening for an audience and to be disrespectful to a man (as the witches are) would have been viewed very negatively. Interestingly, all of the powerful women in this play have clear links with the supernatural and witchcraft. Lady Macduff represents the good, motherly image and she is murdered.
'Is this a dagger I see before me, its handle toward my hand? Come, let me clutch thee.' – Macbeth							
Act 4	Macbeth visits the witches who show him three apparitions: no man born of woman can harm him; beware Macbeth; he can't be defeated until Burnham Wood moves to his castle. Macbeth feels invincible. He hears Macduff has gone to England (to consort with Malcolm) and so orders Macduff's family to be killed. Macduff convinces Malcolm to raise an army to fight Macbeth.	<h2 style="text-align: center;">Macbeth</h2> <h3 style="text-align: center;">Key Themes</h3>		The supernatural	James I stood out as being particularly superstitious, even but the standards of the time. He wrote a book called <i>Daemonology</i> , an alarmist book which spoke of how people sold their souls to the devil in order to gain supernatural powers. In addition, he had an addition to the bible 'thou must not suffer a witch to live'. Witches were considered to be the allies of the devil.	'Will all Great Neptune's ocean wash this blood clean from my hand?' – Macbeth	
						Fate and free will	
Act 5	Lady Macbeth is sleep walking and trying to wash the blood from her hands. Macbeth prepares to fight Malcolm's army but isn't too worried at first until the forest starts to move (the army have cut down branches to disguise themselves). He is killed by Macduff and Malcolm is crowned the rightful King of Scotland.	<h2 style="text-align: center;">Macbeth</h2> <h3 style="text-align: center;">Key Themes</h3>		The supernatural	James I stood out as being particularly superstitious, even but the standards of the time. He wrote a book called <i>Daemonology</i> , an alarmist book which spoke of how people sold their souls to the devil in order to gain supernatural powers. In addition, he had an addition to the bible 'thou must not suffer a witch to live'. Witches were considered to be the allies of the devil.	'My hands are of your colour but I shame to wear a heart so white.' – Lady Macbeth	
						Ambition	
<h2 style="text-align: center;">Key Vocabulary</h2>		<h2 style="text-align: center;">Macbeth</h2> <h3 style="text-align: center;">Key Themes</h3>		<h2 style="text-align: center;">Shakespeare's methods</h2>		'O full of scorpions in my mind, dear wife.' – Macbeth	
						Gender perception	
Duplicitous: Someone who lies and leads a double life		<h2 style="text-align: center;">Macbeth</h2> <h3 style="text-align: center;">Key Themes</h3>		<h2 style="text-align: center;">Shakespeare's methods</h2>		'I am cabined, cribbed, confined, bound in to saucy doubts and fears.' –Macbeth just before he sees Banquo's ghost.	
Morality: the idea that there is a clear right and wrong						Madness and delusion	
Regicide: the act of killing the monarch		<h2 style="text-align: center;">Macbeth</h2> <h3 style="text-align: center;">Key Themes</h3>		<h2 style="text-align: center;">Shakespeare's methods</h2>		'Take any shape but that, and my firm nerves shall never tremble [...] Hence horrible shadow!' – Macbeth to Banquo's ghost	
Downfall: when someone falls from a great height to being nothing/ unimportant						Supernatural	
Hamartia: a fatal flaw that leads to a downfall		<h2 style="text-align: center;">Macbeth</h2> <h3 style="text-align: center;">Key Themes</h3>		<h2 style="text-align: center;">Shakespeare's methods</h2>		'Beware Macduff/ No man born of woman shall harm Macbeth / Macbeth shall never vanquished be until Great Burnham wood to high Dunsinane hill shall come against him.' The Witches' apparitions	
Inevitable: definitely going to happen						Goodness and Evil	
Transgresses: goes beyond the limits of what is acceptable		<h2 style="text-align: center;">Macbeth</h2> <h3 style="text-align: center;">Key Themes</h3>		<h2 style="text-align: center;">Shakespeare's methods</h2>		'He has no children [...] all my pretty chickens' – Macduff when he finds out Macbeth has murdered his family	
						Appearance and Reality (deception)	
		<h2 style="text-align: center;">Macbeth</h2> <h3 style="text-align: center;">Key Themes</h3>		<h2 style="text-align: center;">Shakespeare's methods</h2>		Symbolism: When a <b>physical thing</b> (e.g. blood) represents an <b>idea</b> (e.g. guilt)	
						Gothic imagery: Midnight, full moons, fog, shadows ... all of these are <b>common images</b>	
		<h2 style="text-align: center;">Macbeth</h2> <h3 style="text-align: center;">Key Themes</h3>		<h2 style="text-align: center;">Shakespeare's methods</h2>		Pathetic Fallacy: When the <b>weather reflects the mood</b> and atmosphere of a piece of writing or film.	
						Tragedy/ tragic genre: when the hero suffers from a hamartia (fatal flaw e.g. ambition) that leads to their downfall.	
		<h2 style="text-align: center;">Macbeth</h2> <h3 style="text-align: center;">Key Themes</h3>		<h2 style="text-align: center;">Shakespeare's methods</h2>		Soliloquy: a speech where a character speaks to themselves/ the audience enabling the audience to understand the character's thoughts and feelings.	
						Dramatic Irony: when the audience know something that the characters do not (e.g. Macbeth and Lady Macbeth plotting to murder the King).	
		<h2 style="text-align: center;">Macbeth</h2> <h3 style="text-align: center;">Key Themes</h3>		<h2 style="text-align: center;">Shakespeare's methods</h2>		Rhyme: the witches speak in rhyming couplets which show they're strange and unusual creatures – Macbeth and lady Macbeth also speak in rhyming couples at parts in the play.	
						'And be these juggling fiends no more believed, that palter with us in a double sense' Macbeth	
		<h2 style="text-align: center;">Macbeth</h2> <h3 style="text-align: center;">Key Themes</h3>		<h2 style="text-align: center;">Shakespeare's methods</h2>		'Of this dead butcher and his fiendlike queen' – Malcolm	