

GCSE ENGLISH
LITERATURE
SUPPORT PACK

Shakespeare's
Macbeth

SUPPORT PACK INCLUDES:

Plot summary

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Macbeth: 'a chain of events'



Plot Summary

Act 1

- King Duncan plans to reward brave Macbeth with the title Thane of Cawdor for having defeated rebel forces in battle.
- Three witches prophesise that Macbeth will be Thane of Cawdor and King of Scotland.
- Macbeth is officially informed that he has become Thane of Cawdor. He is amazed the witches' prophecy has come true and reveals his hopes for the crown of Scotland.
- Macbeth's wife, Lady Macbeth, shares his ambition and calls on evil spirits to give her the strength to undertake the murder of Duncan.
- Duncan arrives at Macbeth's castle, where he is welcomed.
- When Macbeth arrives home, his wife insists on planning the murder.

Act 2

- Worried about the murder he is about to commit, Macbeth sees a vision of a dagger.
- He murders Duncan, although afterwards Lady Macbeth criticises him for being distressed. She helps to cover up the murder and they then go to bed to pretend innocence.
- Macduff, another Thane, finds Duncan murdered and the alarm is sounded.
- Macbeth slays Duncan's guards to cover his crime, but says he did it in fury because they murdered Duncan.
- Duncan's sons, Malcolm and Donalbain, slip away in fear of their lives.
- Macbeth succeeds to the throne but Macduff will not attend Macbeth's coronation.

Act 3

- Banquo suspects Macbeth of treachery and Macbeth orders his murder and the murder of Banquo's son, Fleance. Although Banquo is killed, Fleance escapes.
- Banquo's ghost appears at Macbeth's banquet and terrorises Macbeth, whose behaviour indicates his guilt to fellow guests.
- Macbeth, now acting independently of his wife, plans to see the witches again.
- The witches prepare to meet him.
- Macduff flees to the English court, leaving his wife and children behind at his castle.

Act 4

- Macbeth visits the witches and discovers that he should fear Macduff, but that no man born of a woman can harm him. He also learns that he will never be beaten until Birnam Wood comes to Dunsinane.
- After leaving the witches, Macbeth orders the murder of Macduff's wife and children.
- In England, Malcolm test the loyalty of Macduff, who has recently arrived there from Scotland.
- Macduff learns of the slaughter of his entire family by murders on Macbeth's orders.
- When Malcolm informs Macduff that England will provide an army under Siward to defeat Macbeth, Macduff vows personally to kill Macbeth.

Act 5

- The English army marches on Macbeth disguised with branches taken from Birnan Wood. Macbeth fortifies his castle at Dunsinane and prepares for a long siege.

- Macbeth learns his wife has died – apparently by suicide – but he is unconcerned, as his life appears to lack any meaning.
- He is enraged when a messenger tells him that Birnan Wood is coming to Dunsinane.
- He abandons his siege plan and goes out to fight; although his army is losing, nobody seems able to kill Macbeth himself. He meets Macduff, who was born by Caesarean (so not of woman), and Macduff kills Macbeth in single combat.
- Macduff hails Malcolm as King of Scotland and Malcolm invites all to attend his coronation at Scone.

Key characters - Summary

Macbeth: A warrior and Thane of Glamis. Macbeth defeats the armies of the rebellion against King Duncan and is rewarded with the title of Thane of Cawdor. Three Witches promise he will also become king. His fatal flaw is his “vaulting ambition” and he is convinced by his wife to murder Duncan and take the crown. Overcome with guilt and fear from his act of treason, Macbeth becomes more cruel and tyrannical until his eventual defeat, after which he is considered a mass murderer.

Lady Macbeth: Lady Macbeth is dominant, cunning and determined. She defies the gender expectations of the time to take a more controlling role in her marriage. It is she who convinces Macbeth to go through with the plot to murder Duncan. She is quick thinking and calm under pressure during the murder, but becomes increasingly isolated and haunted by guilt as the play progresses.

King Duncan: The king of Scotland at the beginning of the play. Duncan is well liked by his people and is respected as a just and noble ruler. He is generous and bestows honours and gifts on his warriors. He rewards Macbeth with the title of Thane of Cawdor, after learning the existing thane had betrayed him. Macbeth and Lady Macbeth murder Duncan in his sleep.

Banquo: Banquo is honourable and loyal. He resists the temptation presented by the witches and is later murdered by Macbeth. If Macbeth gives in to evil forces and

suggestions, then Banquo is his opposite. Both are warriors and thanes; both see and hear the witches, but at every point Banquo stands up for honour and integrity.

Macduff: Macduff is an honourable thane who, ultimately, brings justice to Macbeth. He is the man of destiny “not born of woman.” Macduff’s peers hold him in high esteem. His behaviour can be impulsive and irrational at times, most likely because he is a passionate man.

The Witches: Three sisters who embody demonic intelligence. They provide information but do not directly invite human beings to commit crimes. They use compelling and attractive predictions of the future to tempt Macbeth.

Malcolm: The son of Duncan, Prince of Cumberland, and rightful heir to the throne. He fears being falsely accused of Duncan’s murder and flees to England.

Key characters - Detail

Character Analysis: Lady Macbeth

Lady Macbeth is the deuteragonist in this drama: the wife of Macbeth, she shares his lust for power. Our initial impressions of Lady Macbeth are that she is, as Malcolm describes her at the close of the play, indeed **“fiend-like”** as, when she learns of Duncan’s visit to Dunsinane her thoughts turn immediately to regicide. Without pause, she summons evil **“spirits”** and commands them to **“make thick my blood”** so that **“no compunctious visitings of Nature”** shake her wicked intention to murder the King.

Interestingly, in this soliloquy Lady Macbeth imagines committing the regicide herself as she asks to be wrapped in the blackest smoke of Hell **“so that my keen knife sees not the wound it makes.”** Later, she privately admits in an aside: **“Had he not looked like my father as he slept, I had done’t,”** suggesting that Lady Macbeth is not as “fiend-like” as is sometimes argued. Certainly, she is not naturally **“fiend-like”** or she would not have sought assistance from the **“murdering ministers”** she conjures when the audience first meet her, even though she willingly submits to their wicked influence.

It is arguable that Lady Macbeth is subconsciously repelled by the thought of regicide because when she is pressuring her husband to commit the deed she avoids using the word “murder”; instead she employs a variety of euphemisms, including: **“this enterprise”**, Duncan being **“provided for”** or merely **“it”**. However, others argue that Shakespeare’s employment of euphemisms here is quite deliberate and serves subtly to convey Lady Macbeth’s wily, artful manipulation of her husband and which, therefore, strengthens the audience impression of her as being truly **“fiend-like”**.

However, once the regicide is committed and Lady Macbeth becomes Queen, the dynamics of her relationship with Macbeth undergoes a dramatic transformation. Despite having fulfilled her ambition to become Queen, in an aside to the audience Lady Macbeth privately admits: **“Nought’s had, all’s spent, where our desire is got without content.”** Ironically, when her husband then enters her own face becomes a mask, disguising what is in her heart as she admonishes Macbeth for entertaining gloomy thoughts which ought to have been buried alongside the body of the dead King Duncan.

As her ability to influence her husband diminishes – he simply ignores her command to halt his murderous plans for Banquo when she demands: **“You must leave this”** – Lady Macbeth becomes an increasingly isolated figure. After the banquet scene at which Macbeth arouses suspicions by his erratic behaviour, Lady Macbeth tells him: **“You lack the season of all natures – sleep.”** Ironically, the audience’s final impressions of her are in Act 5 scene 1 where she is sleepwalking, burdened by guilt.

The bold figure who instructed evil spirits to **“pall thee in the dunnest smoke of Hell”** is now a pathetic figure, afraid of the dark. Lady Macbeth’s gentlewoman tells the Doctor observing her sleepwalk: **“She has light by her continually – ‘tis her command.”** The evil she so willingly embraced betrays her – as it betrays Macbeth – and produces only anguish in place of the rewards she had envisioned. On the night of Duncan’s murder, their hands bathed in Duncan’s blood, she boldly claimed: **“A little water clears us of this deed.”** Now, however, she seems unable to rid herself of the stench and spots of blood she imagines cover her hands still. The Doctor fears she is suicidal and claims: **“more needs she the Divine than the physician.”**

Character analysis: Macbeth

Macbeth is the protagonist in this tragedy: a tragic hero whose hamartia – the fatal flaw in his character - is his ambition, a lust for power shared by his wife. He is aware of the evil his ambition gives rise to but he is unable to overcome the temptation.

Often, Lady Macbeth is wrongly accused of inviting Macbeth to contemplate regicide. In fact, after his encounter with the witches in Act 1 scene 3, Macbeth himself considers regicide when he reflects on their prophecy and admits:

“If good, why do I yield to that suggestion

Whose horrid image doth unfix my hair

And make my seated heart knock at my ribs,

Against the use of nature?”

He is here acknowledging that the thing he is contemplating – usurping King Duncan’s crown - is **“against the use of nature.”**

Wracked by doubts, in Act 1 scene 7 as he contemplates the regicide, Macbeth wavers and informs his wife: **“We will proceed no further in *this business*.”** Unlike his wife’s wily, artful avoidance of the word “murder” during this conversation, it is clear that Macbeth uses a euphemism here because the very thought of murder frightens him, let alone the deed. Even when criticised and challenged by Lady Macbeth, he retains the moral sensibility to declare: **“I dare do all may become a man. / Who dares do more is none.”**

Having submitted to his wife’s artful persuasion, Macbeth kills Duncan but is immediately plagued by his conscience. He tells how he **“could not say Amen”** and of a voice that foretold sleeplessness as punishment for such a heinous act.

Though Macbeth is influenced by both the witches and his wife, Macbeth is not controlled by them. His story is one of moral choice and the consequences of that choice. Once Duncan is murdered, Macbeth withdraws from Lady Macbeth and all subsequent murders in this play are the products of Macbeth’s own paranoia and desperate desire to cling to power **“on this bank and shoal of time”** here on Earth, knowing he has been condemned to an eternity in Hell for killing God’s anointed representative on Earth.

Having murdered Banquo and Macduff’s family, Macbeth’s paranoia gives way to a more fundamental disorder. In Act 5 we watch as he prepares to defend his kingdom – reduced to his castle at Dunsinane – and he swings violently between fits of rage and despair. Evidently, he has lost any emotional connection to his fellow men, declares that he is **“sick at heart”** and has **“lived long enough”**. When informed of his wife’s death, he is completely unmoved and instead reflects on the meaningless of life itself. Macbeth is a tragic hero precisely because he does not accept his evil callously; he suffers for it. In his own words: **“To know my deed, ’twere best not know myself.”**

Character Analysis: Banquo

Banquo might best be described as a minor character in the tragedy of Macbeth. Nevertheless, he has an important function in the play and is considered by many to be an effective dramatic foil for Macbeth. It is through Banquo's interactions with Macbeth and his own motivations that the audience – through contrast – gain insights into Macbeth's nature also.

Alike in many ways, Banquo and Macbeth are equals as the play begins: both are Scottish "**captains**" defending Duncan's realm against the marauding Norwegians led by Sweno. They fight honourably and are heroic warriors, risking their lives in defence of Duncan's kingdom. However, after the battle when they encounter the "**weird sisters**" on the "**blasted heath**", Banquo's dramatic function is to demonstrate to an audience that the temptations of the witches may be successfully resisted and that Macbeth therefore acts from free will. Banquo expresses unshakeable moral principles and warns his friend that the witches may well be "**instruments of darkness**" who "**tell us truths**" in order to "**win us to our harm**" and to "**betray us in deepest consequence.**" Banquo's concern contrasts strikingly with Macbeth's own susceptibility to the witches.

Banquo's resistance to the influence of evil serves to highlight Macbeth's failure to resist and foregrounds his tendency towards evil, stimulated by ambition - the flaw that makes the tragedy possible.

Prompted by paranoid insecurity, when Macbeth decides to murder Banquo he acknowledges Banquo's endearing qualities: his "**royalty of nature**", his "**wisdom**" and his "**dauntless**" or fearless nature. This resentment of Banquo's natural superiority, together with jealousy of his destiny as a "**father to a line of kings**", motivates Macbeth to commit further wicked murders in the second half of the play, commencing with Banquo's and the attempted murder of his son and heir, Fleance.

Banquo's fate is determined by his virtue, just as Macbeth's is determined by his villainy.

Character Analysis: The Weird Sisters (Witches)

The weird sisters are an unholy trinity, a trio of malevolent, supernatural characters whose function in the drama is to encourage Macbeth in his evil inclinations.

Though their appearances in the play are brief, they have an important function. Shakespeare establishes the supernatural theme via their association with disorder in Nature: they appear amid thunder and lightning in a grim meeting on a "**blasted**

heath” which contributes greatly to the tone of mysterious evil which pervades the play.

Likewise, the supernatural world they represent is terrifying to an audience because it is beyond human control and in the play it is symbolic of the unpredictable force of human desire, such as Macbeth’s ruthless ambition to become King.

At their first appearance, the weird sisters state an ambiguity that Shakespeare weaves through the play: **“Fair is foul, and foul is fair.”** Indeed, the witches’ relationship with Macbeth is so entwined that the first line he speaks in the play is an echo of this riddle. He says: **“So fair and foul a day I have not seen.”**

The deceptive pictures of the future – in their initial prediction of Macbeth becoming King and later in the riddles given by the Apparitions which rise from the cauldron when Macbeth visits the witches for a second time – encourage in Macbeth and Lady Macbeth a false sense of what is desirable and possible. The magic of the witches, then, is their ability to create moral disruption which, in Macbeth’s case, leads to his death and subsequent damnation.

It is important to remember that while the witches may have **“more in them than mortal knowledge”**, they do **not** control Macbeth. They merely put ideas into his mind on which he then decides for himself. He is the master of his own destiny and acts out of free will.

Context - summary

Historical: James I

- James VI of Scotland became James I of England in 1603
- This coincides with the writing of Macbeth and Shakespeare clearly had James in mind whilst writing it
- James survived an assassination attempt
 - The play appeals to many of the kings interests by:
 - Including his fascination with the supernatural
 - Making his ancestor, Banquo, a hero in the play.

Historical: Succession

- Queen Elizabeth, who preceded James I, had no children so no natural successors.
- This created instability in the country.
- The concept of a degree of order, or having a line of succession in place, was very important to the people of the time

Historical: Scotland in the 11th Century

- A dangerous place where warring families battled for land and trade.
- Each side was led by a **thane**, whose castle became an important power base.
- The government was primitive and consisted of the king and his council – mainly warlords and church leaders. Political murders and revenge killings were common.
- The real Macbeth was born around 1005 and was the grandson of Malcolm II – so he had a strong claim to the throne.
- Macbeth usurped (replaced by force) King Duncan in about 1040

Social: a patriarchal society

- Ruled by men
- The male head of the household would hold all family wealth and land and girls would be expected to grow up to become wives and mothers. They would not be expected to concern themselves with politics.
- Women had no rights or authority in law. They could not own property or money but could influence their husbands.

Cultural: Witchcraft

- Up until the 1700's most people in England believed in witches and witchcraft.
- From the mid-1500s religious leaders tried to stamp out these beliefs to make sure that people were following the right religious practices.
- This led to a period of witch hunting where people were tried and often executed for being witches.
- It was believed that witches gained their powers directly from the Devil.
- James I had a keen interest in witchcraft and wrote a book on it in 1597 – "Daemonologie". He personally questioned one of the accused people in the North Berwick witch trials.
- In 1604, under James I, witchcraft was made a crime punishable by execution in England.

Context - Detail

Up until Henry VIII chose to divorce his first wife, Catherine of Aragon, England was a country where people practised the Roman Catholic faith, under the leadership of the Pope in Rome. Henry wanted to divorce Catherine of Aragon for several reasons: mainly, he had not fallen in love with her; in fact, she was supposed to marry Henry's brother, Arthur, but he died. Put simply, when Henry became king of England, he appealed to the Pope in Rome to annul his marriage to Catherine but the Pope refused, saying that marriage was a lifelong contract agreed in church in the presence of God.

Henry decided to divorce himself and the English kingdom from the Catholic church. He established the Church of England and, as the reigning monarch, installed himself as the head of the Church of England. He set about dismantling the abbeys throughout his kingdom, seizing all the precious gold and silver, jewel-encrusted ornaments for himself and his new branch of Christianity became known as Protestantism (because of the protests made to Rome regarding his divorce).

This led to very deep divisions between people throughout England. In your own lifetime, a comparable divide is the recent Brexit campaign and result, which is still on everyone's lips and which remains the cause of some social and political tension, unrest, and disagreement in our society.

The unrest caused by Henry's decision to split from the Catholic church continued long after his own lifetime. When he died, his daughter became Queen Elizabeth I and, like her father, she was a Protestant. During her lifetime there were several assassination attempts and plots to overthrow her by Catholics who wished to return England to the supreme leadership of the Pope in Rome. Some of those plots were led by Elizabeth's own catholic cousin, Mary – Queen of Scots.

Elizabeth grew tired of Mary's plots and eventually agreed to her execution. Following Mary's beheading, her son James became James VI of Scotland and when the childless Elizabeth I grew old and died, James seized the throne of England and became the first King James of England.

King James I and the Gunpowder Plot

Before ascending to the throne of England, James has begun to build a trusting relationship with Elizabeth I, although English Catholics hoped he would show them more tolerance than she had. Despite this, James was as intolerant of Catholics as Elizabeth and consequently, Catholic plots to assassinate King James formed. The most famous of these assassination attempts is known as **The Gunpowder Plot** of 1605. Interestingly, to commemorate King James' lucky escape a medal was commissioned showing a snake concealed by flowers. In the play, when plotting the regicide of King Duncan, Lady Macbeth tells her husband: ***"Look like the innocent flower/But be the serpent under't."***



Above: the medal issued to commemorate the failed assassination of King James I

Also, one of the men involved in the Gunpowder Plot, Everard Digby, had been a close friend of King James and in the play is probably mirrored by the treasonous thane of Cawdor. No wonder King Duncan says of the thane of Cawdor: ***“There’s no art/To find the mind’s construction in the face./He was a gentleman on whom I built/An absolute trust.”*** King James, sitting in the audience watching the very first performance of *‘Macbeth’*, knew only too well the sense of betrayal expressed by King Duncan here.

Lastly, a major theme in the play is that of **equivocation**, which means to tell deliberately misleading half-truths. The witches equivocate in the play because they inform Macbeth that ***“No man born of a woman”*** can harm him, leading him to imagine himself to be invincible and that he will be unbeaten until Birnam Wood (a forest) moves towards his castle. Importantly, Macbeth’s noble friend, Banquo, does warn Macbeth about the witches and their prophecies when he advises: ***“Oftentimes, to win us to our harm the instruments of darkness tells us truths, win us with honest trifles, to betray’s in deepest consequence.”***

So, in what way might the theme of equivocation be connected to historical, social and cultural contexts? Well, in 1606 a Catholic priest named Henry Garnet was accused of treason, for the role he played in the Gunpowder Plot. When he was put on trial, he was found guilty of committing a crime called **perjury** (giving false evidence to the court) but he claimed the right to equivocate (to tell deliberately misleading half-truths) in self-defence. So, not only was equivocation a burning issue in England when Shakespeare was writing the play but events which unfold within it perhaps also reflects his personal view of it: namely, people who equivocate are not to be trusted – whether they are witches in 11th century Scotland or Catholic priests in 17th century England.

King James I and Witchcraft

Belief in witches and witchcraft was widespread across Europe during the 16 and 17th centuries and during the reign of Elizabeth I, persecution of people accused of witchcraft reached terrifying proportions. Hundreds of people – mostly women – were tortured, convicted and then executed for this crime between 1560 and 1603 in England.

People genuinely believed that witches possessed diabolical powers: it was believed that witches could fly, sail in sieves, create night during the day (we call this a solar eclipse today), cause fogs and storms, disease and even a person or an animal to die because of a curse. A witches curse was believed to have the power to cause infertility or to induce nightmares. Witches were also believed to be able to conjure spirits by concocting a horrible brew, typically made using animal entrails and other nauseating ingredients. When Lady Macbeth conjures evil spirits, the Jacobean audience watching the play would have identified her as a witch inviting spirits to take possession of her body. They would have been horrified that she so willingly condemns her Christian soul to Hell because of her lust for power.

In 1604 when Shakespeare was writing the play, an Act of Parliament decreed that the punishment for those convicted of witchcraft would be execution. Confessions, however, were typically extracted by means of torture, involving the crushing of limbs, the breaking of bones or by applying boiling water or oil to the body of the accused. Others might have believed themselves to be witches, or confessed to being a witch because they suffered from delusions which are recognised today as psychiatric illnesses.

King James himself was just as fascinated by ideas about witches and witchcraft. In 1590 it was alleged that a group of witches had plotted to kill him. One of the accused – Agnes Sampson – claimed during her trial to have sailed out to sea in a sieve whereupon she threw various body parts of a cat into the sea, casting a spell which would raise a storm so ferocious it would sink the king's ship. Shakespeare includes subtle references to this trial in Act 1 scene 3 when the first witch, speaking of a sailor, proclaims: ***"In a sieve I'll thither sail ... Though his bark cannot be lost/Yet it shall be tempest-tossed."*** King James would, no doubt, have drawn parallels between this and the events of his own life because he personally interrogated one of the people accused, a man named Dr. Fian, before the trial.

So fascinated did he become through his personal involvement in the trial, King James personally investigated other cases of witchcraft. In fact, in 1597 he published a book called ***'Daemonologie'*** (today, we'd spell it ***Demonology*** – meaning, 'the study of demons') and later, when he became King of England, he decreed that the book must be printed.

England during the reign of King James I was a deeply religious place. Despite the deep divisions which existed between Protestants and Catholics, virtually everyone believed in the concept of Heaven and Hell and they lived in fear of eternal damnation. Jacobean audiences would have been very familiar with the 'signs' to look out for in a person suffering demonic possession. These signs feature prominently in the play and would have been much more obvious to a Jacobean audience than to me or you watching the play in the 21st century. The signs are these:

- ***Trance*** – "Look how our partner's rapt" or entranced, says Banquo of Macbeth
- ***Inability to pray*** – "Amen/Stuck in my throat," says Macbeth to his wife
- ***Visions*** – "Is this a dagger I see before me?" says Macbeth as he waits to commit regicide
- ***Invitations to demonic possession*** – "Come, you spirits" invites Lady Macbeth

Shakespeare presents Macbeth and his wife as damned people who invite, and are seized by, demonic possession. Perhaps Shakespeare is also subtly reminding Jacobean audiences of the fate that they, too, can expect if they try to remove their Protestant king, James I, from the throne of England as people had tried – and failed – to do only a year before the play's first performance.



Above: a portrait of King James 1, painted in 1611

Beliefs about ghosts in Elizabethan and Jacobean England

Elizabethan England underwent significant religious upheaval between 1509 and 1558 (Henry VIII's reign to the reign of Elizabeth I). In summary, Henry and his son, Edward VI, worked hard to establish Protestantism in England. However, Mary Tudor returned England to Catholicism before the Protestant Queen, Elizabeth I, ascended to the throne. These pendulum swings from Protestantism to Catholicism and back again created a tense and ambiguous religious atmosphere in 16th century England.

Society's relationship to the belief in ghosts was greatly affected by this religious climate. Most significantly, the two different ways the religions viewed the notion of Purgatory influenced how people thought of ghosts.

Catholics believed that after death, souls were sent to Heaven, Hell, or Purgatory. If souls were sent to Purgatory they were to work off their sins until they were allowed in Heaven. To Catholics, ghostly apparitions would be the souls of the dead now wandering earth until they had access to Heaven.

Protestants did not believe in the existence of Purgatory, but they did accept that ghosts existed. However, they believed that these ghostly apparitions were demons, sent from Hell to seduce people into performing crimes or unholy acts. Protestant Thomas Browne writes in *Religio Medici* in 1643:

"I believe...that these apparitions and ghosts of departed persons are not the wandering souls of men, but the unquiet walks of devils, prompting and suggesting us unto mischief, blood, and villainy; instilling and stealing into our hearts that the blessed spirits are not at rest in their graves, but wander, solicitous of the affairs of the world...and those phantasms appear often."

Banquo's ghost in 'Macbeth':

Given our understanding of the different Catholic and Protestant beliefs in what ghosts were, it would seem unequivocal that Shakespeare's presentation of the ghost of Banquo which haunts Macbeth in Act 3 scene 4 is through the lens of Catholic attitudes to ghosts. Banquo was sent to his death in a most untimely manner, dying before he was able to repent his sins. Consequently, in accordance with Catholic belief in the existence of Purgatory, Banquo's soul could not reach Heaven.

Instead, Banquo's ghost returns to haunt Macbeth: the sinner responsible for his gruesome and untimely death. Shakespeare's stage directions confirm that a ghost is undoubtedly present on the stage but the ghost is visible only to Macbeth. Macbeth himself seems surprised by this fact as he exclaims: "**Prithee! See there! / Behold! Look!**" to his wife who, like all other guests at the feast, is unable to see the ghost. The reason for this is simple: Macbeth alone bears the burden of guilt for this murder because earlier he refused to share the dark details of his plans for Banquo with his wife, instead telling her to: "**Be innocent of the knowledge dearest chuck.**" Little wonder, then, she speaks reproachfully to him at the feast, claiming: "**When all's done/You look but on a stool**" and suggests that: "**This is the air-drawn dagger which you said/Led you to Duncan.**"



Important quotes

Act I

The Witches – “Fair is foul and foul is fair.”

Macbeth – “If chance will have me king, why, chance may crown me.”

Duncan – “There’s no art to find the mind’s construction in the face”

Macbeth – “Stars, Hide your fires! Let not the light see my black and deep desires.”

Macbeth - “I have no spur To prick the sides of my intent, but only Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself And falls on the other.”

Lady Macbeth – “Come you spirits that tend on moral thoughts! Unsex me here, and fill me from the crown to the toe, top-full of direst cruelty.”

Lady Macbeth – “Look like the innocent flower, but be the serpent under it.”

Lady Macbeth – “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, 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.”

Lady Macbeth – “Screw your courage to the sticking place.”

Act II

Macbeth – “Is this a dagger which I see before me”

Donaldbain – “there’s daggers in men’s smiles.”

Act III

Macbeth – “I am in blood stepp'd in so far, that, should I wade no more, returning were as tedious as go o'er.”

Act IV

The Witches – “Double, double toil and trouble.”

Second Witch – “By the pricking of my thumbs, Something wicked this way comes.”

First apparition – “beware Macduff; Beware the thane of Fife.”

Second apparition – “for none of woman born Shall harm Macbeth.”

Third apparition – “Macbeth shall never vanquish'd be until Great Birnam wood to high Dunsinane hill Shall come against him.”

Lady Macduff – “when our actions do not, our fears do make us traitors.”

Act V

Lady Macbeth – “Out, damned spot! Out I say!”

Angus – “those he commands move only in command, nothing in love: now does he feel his title hang loose about him, like a giant's robe upon a dwarfish thief.”

Macbeth – “I have supp'd full with horrors; direness, familiar to my slaughterous thoughts cannot once start me.”

Macduff – “ Macduff was from his mother's womb Untimely ripp'd.”

Macbeth – “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 talk told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing.”

Essay advice

You should spend 55 minutes on this section.

You should aim to use the extract **and your knowledge of the wider text** to respond to the question.

What the examiner wants to see:

'A candidate's response is likely to be a critical, exploratory, well-structured argument. It takes a conceptualised approach to the full task supported by a range of judicious references. There will be a fine-grained and insightful analysis of language and form and structure supported by judicious use of subject terminology. Convincing exploration of one or more ideas/perspectives/contextual factors/interpretations.'

- A focused, detailed, cohesive evaluation of the interrelationship of language, form and structure and their effect on the reader.
- Relevant subject terminology is integrated and precise.
- An assured personal response
- High level of engagement with the text
- Critical style with perceptive understanding and interpretation
- Well-chosen reference integrated into the response
- Excellent understanding of context, and convincing understanding of the relationship between text and context is integrated into the response.

Subject terminology to use for AO2:

- **Metaphor** – describe one thing as something different, allowing you to make a comparison in your mind's eye.
- **Simile** – a comparison by using the words 'like' or 'as' to help you see it.
- **Imagery** –helps to paint a vivid picture in your mind to help you understand what a character is thinking about or feeling.
- **Oxymoron** – two words which seem to have opposite meanings or contradict each other are placed together to create particular effects.
- **Foreshadowing** – warning, hinting at events to come later in the play
- **Imperative verbs** – commanding or bossy verbs
- **Hyperbole** – exaggeration
- **Contrasts** – ideas that differ from each other
- **Antithesis** – a person or thing that is the direct opposite of someone or something else.
- **Personification** – giving human characteristics to something non-human.

- **Rhetorical question** – asking a question designed to encourage thinking.

You should try to memorise 15 quotes in total and ensure they are taken from each key character from various points in the play. You should try to use between 5-7 quotes in your response.

<p>BANQUO Good sir, why do you start; and seem to fear Things that do sound so fair? I' the name of truth, Are ye fantastical, or that indeed Which outwardly ye show? My noble partner You greet with present grace and great prediction Of noble having and of royal hope, That he seems rapt withal: to me you speak not. If you can look into the seeds of time, And say which grain will grow and which will not, Speak then to me, who neither beg nor fear Your favours nor your hate.</p> <p>First Witch Hail!</p> <p>Second Witch Hail!</p> <p>Third Witch Hail!</p> <p>First Witch Lesser than Macbeth, and greater.</p> <p>Second Witch Not so happy, yet much happier.</p> <p>Third Witch Thou shalt get kings, though thou be none: So all hail, Macbeth and Banquo!</p> <p>First Witch Banquo and Macbeth, all hail!</p> <p>MACBETH Stay, you imperfect speakers, tell me more: By Sinel's death I know I am thane of Glamis; But how of Cawdor? The thane of Cawdor lives, A prosperous gentleman; and to be king Stands not within the prospect of belief, No more than to be Cawdor. Say from whence You owe this strange intelligence? or why Upon this blasted heath you stop our way With such prophetic greeting? Speak, I charge you.</p> <p><i>(The Witches vanish)</i></p>	<p>5</p> <p>10</p> <p>15</p> <p>20</p> <p>25</p>
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Q1: Starting with this conversation, explain how far Shakespeare presents Macbeth as a character who believes in the **supernatural power of the witches**.

Write about:

- How Shakespeare presents Macbeth's reaction to the witches here
- How Shakespeare presents his beliefs in them elsewhere in the play.

[30 marks]
SPaG [4 marks]

At this point in the play Lady Macbeth is speaking. She has just received the news that King Duncan will be spending the night at her castle.

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, 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 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, That my keen knife see not the wound it makes, Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark, To cry 'Hold, hold!'	5 10 15
--	--

Q1: Starting with this speech, explain how far you think Shakespeare presents Lady Macbeth as a **powerful woman**.

Write about:

- how Shakespeare presents Lady Macbeth in this speech
- how Shakespeare presents Lady Macbeth in the play as a whole. [30 marks]

SPAG [4 marks]

At this point in the play, Macbeth has decided he will **not** kill King Duncan. He is just about to share this news with his wife, Lady Macbeth.

<p>MACBETH We will proceed no further in this business: He hath honour'd me of late; and I have bought Golden opinions from all sorts of people, Which would be worn now in their newest gloss, Not cast aside so soon.</p>	5
<p>LADY MACBETH Was the hope drunk Wherein you dress'd yourself? hath it slept since? And wakes it now, to look so green and pale At what it did so freely? From this time Such I account thy love. Art thou afeard To be the same in thine own act and valour As thou art in desire? Wouldst thou have that Which thou esteem'st the ornament of life, And live a coward in thine own esteem, Letting 'I dare not' wait upon 'I would,' Like the poor cat i' the adage?</p>	10
<p>MACBETH Prithee, peace: I dare do all that may become a man; Who dares do more is none.</p>	15
<p>LADY MACBETH 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.</p>	20

Q1: Starting with this conversation, explain how far you think Shakespeare presents Lady Macbeth as the **dominant partner** in this relationship.

Write about:

- how Shakespeare presents Lady Macbeth in this speech
- how Shakespeare presents Lady Macbeth elsewhere in the play. [30 marks]

SPAG [4 marks]

Act 1

ACT 1 SCENE I. A desert place.

Thunder and lightning. Enter three Witches

First Witch

When shall we three meet again
In thunder, lightning, or in rain?

Second Witch

When the hurlyburly's done,
When the battle's lost and won.

Third Witch

That will be ere the set of sun.

First Witch

Where the place?

Second Witch

Upon the heath.

Third Witch

There to meet with Macbeth.

First Witch

I come, Graymalkin!

Second Witch

Paddock calls.

Third Witch

Anon.

ALL

Fair is foul, and foul is fair:
Hover through the fog and filthy air.

Exeunt

Starting with this extract, how does Shakespeare present the power of the witches in Macbeth?

Write about:

- How Shakespeare presents the power of the witches here
- How Shakespeare presents their power elsewhere in the play.

[30 marks]
SPaG [4 marks]

ACT 1 SCENE 2. A camp near Forres.

Alarum within. Enter DUNCAN, MALCOLM, DONALBAIN, LENNOX, with Attendants, meeting a bleeding Sergeant

DUNCAN

What bloody man is that? He can report,
As seemeth by his plight, of the revolt
The newest state.

MALCOLM

This is the sergeant
Who like a good and hardy soldier fought
'Gainst my captivity. Hail, brave friend!
Say to the king the knowledge of the broil
As thou didst leave it.

Sergeant

Doubtful it stood;
As two spent swimmers, that do cling together
And choke their art. The merciless Macdonwald--
Worthy to be a rebel, for to that
The multiplying villanies of nature
Do swarm upon him--from the western isles
Of kerns and gallowglasses is supplied;
And fortune, on his damned quarrel smiling,
Show'd like a rebel's whore: but all's too weak:
For brave Macbeth--well he deserves that name--
Disdaining fortune, with his brandish'd steel,
Which smoked with bloody execution,
Like valour's minion carved out his passage
Till he faced the slave;
Which ne'er shook hands, nor bade farewell to him,
Till he unseam'd him from the nave to the chaps,
And fix'd his head upon our battlements.

Starting with this extract, how does Shakespeare present Macbeth as a heroic character?

Write about:

- How Shakespeare presents Macbeth as heroic here
- How Shakespeare presents him as heroic elsewhere in the play.

[30 marks]
SPaG [4 marks]

ACT 1 SCENE 3

First Witch

All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, thane of Glamis!

Second Witch

All hail, Macbeth, hail to thee, thane of Cawdor!

Third Witch

All hail, Macbeth, thou shalt be king hereafter!

BANQUO

Good sir, why do you start; and seem to fear
Things that do sound so fair? I' the name of truth,
Are ye fantastical, or that indeed
Which outwardly ye show? My noble partner
You greet with present grace and great prediction
Of noble having and of royal hope,
That he seems rapt withal: to me you speak not.
If you can look into the seeds of time,
And say which grain will grow and which will not,
Speak then to me, who neither beg nor fear
Your favours nor your hate.

First Witch

Hail!

Second Witch

Hail!

Third Witch

Hail!

First Witch

Lesser than Macbeth, and greater.

Second Witch

Not so happy, yet much happier.

Third Witch

Thou shalt get kings, though thou be none:
So all hail, Macbeth and Banquo!

First Witch

Banquo and Macbeth, all hail!

Starting with this extract, how does Shakespeare use the character of Banquo in the play?

Write about:

- How Shakespeare presents Banquo here
- How Shakespeare presents Banquo elsewhere in the play.

[30 marks]
SPaG [4 marks]

ACT 1 SCENE 3

MACBETH

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

Aside

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
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,
Shakes so my single state of man that function
Is smother'd in surmise, and nothing is
But what is not.

BANQUO

Look, how our partner's rapt.

MACBETH

[Aside] If chance will have me king, why, chance may crown me,
Without my stir.

BANQUO

New horrors come upon him,
Like our strange garments, cleave not to their mould
But with the aid of use.

Starting with this extract, how does Shakespeare present Macbeth's decision-making in the play?

Write about:

- How Shakespeare presents Macbeth's decision making here
 - How Shakespeare presents his decision making elsewhere in the play. [30 marks]
- SPaG [4 marks]

ACT 1 SCENE 4

DUNCAN

There's no art
To find the mind's construction in the face:
He was a gentleman on whom I built
An absolute trust.

Enter MACBETH, BANQUO, ROSS, and ANGUS

O worthiest cousin!
The sin of my ingratitude even now
Was heavy on me: thou art so far before
That swiftest wing of recompense is slow
To overtake thee. Would thou hadst less deserved,
That the proportion both of thanks and payment
Might have been mine! only I have left to say,
More is thy due than more than all can pay.

MACBETH

The service and the loyalty I owe,
In doing it, pays itself. Your highness' part
Is to receive our duties; and our duties
Are to your throne and state children and servants,
Which do but what they should, by doing every thing
Safe toward your love and honour.

DUNCAN

Welcome hither:
I have begun to plant thee, and will labour
To make thee full of growing. Noble Banquo,
That hast no less deserved, nor must be known
No less to have done so, let me enfold thee
And hold thee to my heart.

Starting with this extract, how far can the play *Macbeth* be seen as a lesson in kingship?

Write about:

- How Shakespeare may be teaching the lesson in kingship here
- How Shakespeare presents kingship elsewhere in the play.

[30 marks]
SPaG [4 marks]

ACT 1 SCENE 5

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,
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
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,
That my keen knife see not the wound it makes,
Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark,
To cry 'Hold, hold!'

Enter MACBETH

Great Glamis! worthy Cawdor!
Greater than both, by the all-hail hereafter!
Thy letters have transported me beyond
This ignorant present, and I feel now
The future in the instant.

Starting with this extract, how does Shakespeare present Lady Macbeth?

Write about:

- How Shakespeare presents Lady Macbeth's here
- How Shakespeare presents her elsewhere in the play.

[30 marks]

SPaG [4 marks]

ACT 1 SCENE 6. Before Macbeth's castle.

Hautboys and torches. Enter DUNCAN, MALCOLM, DONALBAIN, BANQUO, LENNOX, MACDUFF, ROSS, ANGUS, and Attendants

DUNCAN

This castle hath a pleasant seat; the air
Nimbly and sweetly recommends itself
Unto our gentle senses.

BANQUO

This guest of summer,
The temple-haunting martlet, does approve,
By his loved mansionry, that the heaven's breath
Smells wooingly here: no jutting, frieze,
Buttress, nor coign of vantage, but this bird
Hath made his pendent bed and procreant cradle:
Where they most breed and haunt, I have observed,
The air is delicate.

Enter LADY MACBETH

DUNCAN

See, see, our honour'd hostess!
The love that follows us sometime is our trouble,
Which still we thank as love. Herein I teach you
How you shall bid God 'ild us for your pains,
And thank us for your trouble.

LADY MACBETH

All our service
In every point twice done and then done double
Were poor and single business to contend
Against those honours deep and broad wherewith
Your majesty loads our house: for those of old,
And the late dignities heap'd up to them,
We rest your hermits.

Starting with this extract, how does Shakespeare present ideas of duplicity in Macbeth?

Write about:

- How Shakespeare presents duplicity here
- How Shakespeare presents duplicity elsewhere in the play.

[30 marks]
SPaG [4 marks]

ACT 1 SCENE 7

MACBETH

We will proceed no further in this business:
He hath honour'd me of late; and I have bought
Golden opinions from all sorts of people,
Which would be worn now in their newest gloss,
Not cast aside so soon.

LADY MACBETH

Was the hope drunk
Wherein you dress'd yourself? hath it slept since?
And wakes it now, to look so green and pale
At what it did so freely? From this time
Such I account thy love. Art thou afeard
To be the same in thine own act and valour
As thou art in desire? Wouldst thou have that
Which thou esteem'st the ornament of life,
And live a coward in thine own esteem,
Letting 'I dare not' wait upon 'I would,'
Like the poor cat i' the adage?

MACBETH

Prithee, peace:
I dare do all that may become a man;
Who dares do more is none.

Starting with this extract, how does Shakespeare present the relationship between Macbeth and Lady Macbeth?

Write about:

- How Shakespeare presents their relationship here
- How Shakespeare presents their relationship elsewhere in the play.

[30 marks]
SPaG [4 marks]

Act 2

ACT 2 SCENE I. Court of Macbeth's castle.

Enter BANQUO, and FLEANCE bearing a torch before him

BANQUO

How goes the night, boy?

FLEANCE

The moon is down; I have not heard the clock.

BANQUO

And she goes down at twelve.

FLEANCE

I take't, 'tis later, sir.

BANQUO

Hold, take my sword. There's husbandry in heaven;
Their candles are all out. Take thee that too.
A heavy summons lies like lead upon me,
And yet I would not sleep: merciful powers,
Restrain in me the cursed thoughts that nature
Gives way to in repose!

Enter MACBETH, and a Servant with a torch

Give me my sword.
Who's there?

Starting with this extract, how does Shakespeare use images to convey powerful ideas in Macbeth?

Write about:

- How Shakespeare uses images here, and the ideas they convey
- How Shakespeare uses images elsewhere in the play.

[30 marks]

SPaG [4 marks]

ACT 2 SCENE 2

Enter LADY MACBETH

LADY MACBETH

That which hath made them drunk hath made me bold;
What hath quench'd them hath given me fire.

Hark! Peace!

It was the owl that shriek'd, the fatal bellman,
Which gives the stern'st good-night. He is about it:
The doors are open; and the surfeited grooms
Do mock their charge with snores: I have drugg'd
their possets,
That death and nature do contend about them,
Whether they live or die.

MACBETH

[Within] Who's there? what, ho!

LADY MACBETH

Alack, I am afraid they have awaked,
And 'tis not done. The attempt and not the deed
Confounds us. Hark! I laid their daggers ready;
He could not miss 'em. Had he not resembled
My father as he slept, I had done't.

Starting with this extract, how far does Shakespeare present Lady Macbeth as a vulnerable character?

Write about:

- How Shakespeare presents Lady Macbeth here
- How Shakespeare presents her elsewhere in the play.

[30 marks]

SPaG [4 marks]

ACT 2 SCENE 3

MACDUFF

O horror, horror, horror! Tongue nor heart
Cannot conceive nor name thee!

MACBETH LENNOX

What's the matter.

MACDUFF

Confusion now hath made his masterpiece!
Most sacrilegious murder hath broke ope
The Lord's anointed temple, and stole thence
The life o' the building!

MACBETH

What is 't you say? the life?

LENNOX

Mean you his majesty?

MACDUFF

Approach the chamber, and destroy your sight
With a new Gorgon: do not bid me speak;
See, and then speak yourselves.

Exeunt MACBETH and LENNOX

Awake, awake!
Ring the alarum-bell. Murder and treason!
Banquo and Donalbain! Malcolm! awake!
Shake off this downy sleep, death's counterfeit,
And look on death itself! up, up, and see
The great doom's image! Malcolm! Banquo!
As from your graves rise up, and walk like sprites,
To countenance this horror! Ring the bell.

Bell rings

Starting with this extract, how are attitudes and reactions towards death shown in *Macbeth*?

Write about:

- How Shakespeare presents the lords' reaction to the death of Duncan here
- How Shakespeare presents attitudes and reactions to death elsewhere in the play.

[30 marks]

SPaG [4 marks]

ACT 2 SCENE 4

Old Man

Threescore and ten I can remember well:
Within the volume of which time I have seen
Hours dreadful and things strange; but this sore night
Hath trifled former knowings.

ROSS

Ah, good father,
Thou seest, the heavens, as troubled with man's act,
Threaten his bloody stage: by the clock, 'tis day,
And yet dark night strangles the travelling lamp:
Is't night's predominance, or the day's shame,
That darkness does the face of earth entomb,
When living light should kiss it?

Old Man

'Tis unnatural,
Even like the deed that's done. On Tuesday last,
A falcon, towering in her pride of place,
Was by a mousing owl hawk'd at and kill'd.

ROSS

And Duncan's horses--a thing most strange and certain--
Beauteous and swift, the minions of their race,
Turn'd wild in nature, broke their stalls, flung out,
Contending 'gainst obedience, as they would make
War with mankind.

Old Man

'Tis said they eat each other.

Starting with this extract, how far is *Macbeth* about disruption of the natural order?

Write about:

- How Shakespeare disrupts natural order here
- How Shakespeare disrupts natural order elsewhere in the play.

[30 marks]
SPaG [4 marks]

Act 3

ACT 3 SCENE 1

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;
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,
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,
And put a barren sceptre in my gripe,
Thence to be wrench'd with an unlineal hand,
No son of mine succeeding. If 't be so,
For Banquo's issue have I filed my mind;
For them the gracious Duncan have I murder'd;
Put rancours in the vessel of my peace
Only for them; and mine eternal jewel
Given to the common enemy of man,
To make them kings, the seed of Banquo kings!
Rather than so, come fate into the list.
And champion me to the utterance! Who's there!

Starting with this extract, how does Shakespeare present Macbeth's paranoia and its consequences?

Write about:

- How Shakespeare presents Macbeth's paranoia here
- How Shakespeare presents the effects of his paranoia elsewhere in the play. [30 marks]

SPaG [4 marks]

ACT 3 SCENE 2

LADY MACBETH

Nought's had, all's spent,
Where our desire is got without content:
'Tis safer to be that which we destroy
Than by destruction dwell in doubtful joy.

Enter MACBETH

How now, my lord! why do you keep alone,
Of sorriest fancies your companions making,
Using those thoughts which should indeed have died
With them they think on? Things without all remedy
Should be without regard: what's done is done.

MACBETH

We have scotch'd the snake, not kill'd it:
She'll close and be herself, whilst our poor malice
Remains in danger of her former tooth.
But let the frame of things disjoint, both the
worlds suffer,
Ere we will eat our meal in fear and sleep
In the affliction of these terrible dreams
That shake us nightly: better be with the dead,
Whom we, to gain our peace, have sent to peace,
Than on the torture of the mind to lie
In restless ecstasy. Duncan is in his grave;
After life's fitful fever he sleeps well;
Treason has done his worst: nor steel, nor poison,
Malice domestic, foreign levy, nothing,
Can touch him further.

Starting with this extract, how does Shakespeare present the marriage between Macbeth and Lady Macbeth?

Write about:

- How Shakespeare presents their relationship here
- How Shakespeare presents their relationship elsewhere in the play.

[30 marks]
SPaG [4 marks]

ACT 3 SCENE 3

Second Murderer

A light, a light!

Enter BANQUO, and FLEANCE with a torch

Third Murderer

'Tis he.

First Murderer

Stand to't.

BANQUO

It will be rain to-night.

First Murderer

Let it come down.

They set upon BANQUO

BANQUO

O, treachery! Fly, good Fleance, fly, fly, fly!

Thou mayst revenge. O slave!

Dies. FLEANCE escapes

Third Murderer

Who did strike out the light?

First Murderer

Wast not the way?

Third Murderer

There's but one down; the son is fled.

Starting with this extract, how are murders presented in *Macbeth*?

Write about:

- How Shakespeare presents murder here
- How Shakespeare presents murders elsewhere in the play.

[30 marks]
SPaG [4 marks]

ACT 3 SCENE 4

ROSS

Gentlemen, rise: his highness is not well.

LADY MACBETH

Sit, worthy friends: my lord is often thus,
And hath been from his youth: pray you, keep seat;
The fit is momentary; upon a thought
He will again be well: if much you note him,
You shall offend him and extend his passion:
Feed, and regard him not. Are you a man?

MACBETH

Ay, and a bold one, that dare look on that
Which might appal the devil.

LADY MACBETH

O proper stuff!
This is the very painting of your fear:
This is the air-drawn dagger which, you said,
Led you to Duncan. O, these flaws and starts,
Impostors to true fear, would well become
A woman's story at a winter's fire,
Authorized by her grandam. Shame itself!
Why do you make such faces? When all's done,
You look but on a stool.

Starting with this extract, how far do you agree with the view that 'Lady Macbeth has no independence and no real power.'?

Write about:

- How Shakespeare presents Lady Macbeth's power and independence here
 - How Shakespeare presents her independence elsewhere in the play. [30 marks]
- SPaG [4 marks]

ACT 3 SCENE 5. A Heath.

Thunder. Enter the three Witches meeting HECATE

First Witch

Why, how now, Hecate! you look angerly.

HECATE

Have I not reason, beldams as you are,
Saucy and overbold? How did you dare
To trade and traffic with Macbeth
In riddles and affairs of death;
And I, the mistress of your charms,
The close contriver of all harms,
Was never call'd to bear my part,
Or show the glory of our art?
And, which is worse, all you have done
Hath been but for a wayward son,
Spiteful and wrathful, who, as others do,
Loves for his own ends, not for you.
But make amends now: get you gone,
And at the pit of Acheron
Meet me i' the morning: thither he
Will come to know his destiny:
Your vessels and your spells provide,
Your charms and every thing beside.
I am for the air; this night I'll spend
Unto a dismal and a fatal end:
Great business must be wrought ere noon:
Upon the corner of the moon
There hangs a vaporous drop profound;
I'll catch it ere it come to ground:
And that distill'd by magic sleights
Shall raise such artificial sprites
As by the strength of their illusion
Shall draw him on to his confusion:
He shall spurn fate, scorn death, and bear
He hopes 'bove wisdom, grace and fear:
And you all know, security
Is mortals' chiefest enemy.

Starting with this extract, to what extent can the witches be blamed for what happens to Macbeth?

Write about:

- How Shakespeare presents the witches here
- How Shakespeare presents their effects on Macbeth elsewhere in the play. [30 marks]

SPaG [4 marks]

Act 4

ACT 4 SCENE 1

MACBETH

I conjure you, by that which you profess,
Howe'er you come to know it, answer me:
Though you untie the winds and let them fight
Against the churches; though the yesty waves
Confound and swallow navigation up;
Though bladed corn be lodged and trees blown down;
Though castles topple on their warders' heads;
Though palaces and pyramids do slope
Their heads to their foundations; though the treasure
Of nature's germens tumble all together,
Even till destruction sicken; answer me
To what I ask you.

First Witch

Speak.

Second Witch

Demand.

Third Witch

We'll answer.

First Witch

Say, if thou'dst rather hear it from our mouths,
Or from our masters?

MACBETH

Call 'em; let me see 'em.

Starting with this extract, how does Shakespeare present Macbeth's relationship with the witches?

Write about:

- How Shakespeare presents Macbeth's relationship to the witches here
- How Shakespeare presents his relationship with them elsewhere in the play. [30 marks]

SPaG [4 marks]

ACT 4 SCENE 2

Son

Nay, how will you do for a husband?

LADY MACDUFF

Why, I can buy me twenty at any market.

Son

Then you'll buy 'em to sell again.

LADY MACDUFF

Thou speak'st with all thy wit: and yet, i' faith,
With wit enough for thee.

Son

Was my father a traitor, mother?

LADY MACDUFF

Ay, that he was.

Son

What is a traitor?

LADY MACDUFF

Why, one that swears and lies.

Son

And be all traitors that do so?

LADY MACDUFF

Every one that does so is a traitor, and must be hanged.

Son

And must they all be hanged that swear and lie?

LADY MACDUFF

Every one.

Son

Who must hang them?

LADY MACDUFF

Why, the honest men.

Son

Then the liars and swearers are fools,
for there are liars and swearers enow to beat
the honest men and hang up them.

LADY MACDUFF

Now, God help thee, poor monkey!

Starting with this extract, what ideas about motherhood does Shakespeare explore in *Macbeth*?

Write about:

- How Shakespeare presents ideas of motherhood here
- How Shakespeare presents ideas of motherhood elsewhere in the play. [30 marks]

SPaG [4 marks]

ACT 4 SCENE 3

MALCOLM

But I have none: the king-becoming graces,
As justice, verity, temperance, stableness,
Bounty, perseverance, mercy, lowliness,
Devotion, patience, courage, fortitude,
I have no relish of them, but abound
In the division of each several crime,
Acting it many ways. Nay, had I power, I should
Pour the sweet milk of concord into hell,
Uproar the universal peace, confound
All unity on earth.

MACDUFF

O Scotland, Scotland!

MALCOLM

If such a one be fit to govern, speak:
I am as I have spoken.

MACDUFF

Fit to govern!
No, not to live. O nation miserable,
With an untitled tyrant bloody-scepter'd,
When shalt thou see thy wholesome days again,
Since that the truest issue of thy throne
By his own interdiction stands accursed,
And does blaspheme his breed? Thy royal father
Was a most sainted king: the queen that bore thee,
Oftener upon her knees than on her feet,
Died every day she lived. Fare thee well!
These evils thou repeat'st upon thyself
Have banish'd me from Scotland. O my breast,
Thy hope ends here!

Starting with this extract, how does Shakespeare present Macduff as a heroic character?

Write about:

- How Shakespeare presents Macduff's heroism here
- How Shakespeare presents his heroism elsewhere in the play.

[30 marks]
SPaG [4 marks]

ACT 4 SCENE 3

MACDUFF

My children too?

ROSS

Wife, children, servants, all
That could be found.

MACDUFF

And I must be from thence!
My wife kill'd too?

ROSS

I have said.

MALCOLM

Be comforted:
Let's make us medicines of our great revenge,
To cure this deadly grief.

MACDUFF

He has no children. All my pretty ones?
Did you say all? O hell-kite! All?
What, all my pretty chickens and their dam
At one fell swoop?

MALCOLM

Dispute it like a man.

MACDUFF

I shall do so;
But I must also feel it as a man:
I cannot but remember such things were,
That were most precious to me. Did heaven look on,
And would not take their part? Sinful Macduff,
They were all struck for thee! naught that I am,
Not for their own demerits, but for mine,
Fell slaughter on their souls. Heaven rest them now!

Starting with this extract, how does Shakespeare explore ideas of masculinity in *Macbeth*?

Write about:

- How Shakespeare presents masculinity here
- How Shakespeare presents masculinity elsewhere in the play.

[30 marks]
SPaG [4 marks]

Act 5

ACT 5 SCENE 1

LADY MACBETH

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

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.

Doctor

Go to, go to; you have known what you should not.

Gentlewoman

She has spoke what she should not, I am sure of that: heaven knows what she has known.

LADY MACBETH

Here's the smell of the blood still: all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand. Oh, oh, oh!

Starting with this extract, how does Shakespeare present Lady Macbeth as a sympathetic character?

Write about:

- How Shakespeare presents Lady Macbeth as sympathetic here
- How Shakespeare presents ways in which she is sympathetic elsewhere in the play.

[30 marks]

SPaG [4 marks]

ACT 5 SCENE 2

ANGUS

Now does he feel
His secret murders sticking on his hands;
Now minutely revolts upbraid his faith-breach;
Those he commands move only in command,
Nothing in love: now does he feel his title
Hang loose about him, like a giant's robe
Upon a dwarfish thief.

MENTEITH

Who then shall blame
His pester'd senses to recoil and start,
When all that is within him does condemn
Itself for being there?

CAITHNESS

Well, march we on,
To give obedience where 'tis truly owed:
Meet we the medicine of the sickly weal,
And with him pour we in our country's purge
Each drop of us.

LENNOX

Or so much as it needs,
To dew the sovereign flower and drown the weeds.
Make we our march towards Birnam.

Starting with this extract, how does Shakespeare present the consequences of bad kingship in *Macbeth*?

Write about:

- How Shakespeare presents the consequences here
 - How Shakespeare presents the consequences elsewhere in the play. [30 marks]
- SPaG [4 marks]

ACT 5 SCENE 3. Dunsinane. A room in the castle.

Enter MACBETH, Doctor, and Attendants

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
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
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?

Servant

There is ten thousand--

MACBETH

Geese, villain!

Servant

Soldiers, sir.

MACBETH

Go prick thy face, and over-red thy fear,
Thou lily-liver'd boy. What soldiers, patch?
Death of thy soul! those linen cheeks of thine
Are counsellors to fear. What soldiers, whey-face?

Starting with this extract, how far does Shakespeare present Macbeth as a brave character?

Write about:

- How Shakespeare presents Macbeth's bravery here
- How Shakespeare presents his bravery elsewhere in the play.

[30 marks]
SPaG [4 marks]

ACT 5 SCENE 4

MALCOLM

Cousins, I hope the days are near at hand
That chambers will be safe.

MENTEITH

We doubt it nothing.

SIWARD

What wood is this before us?

MENTEITH

The wood of Birnam.

MALCOLM

Let every soldier hew him down a bough
And bear't before him: thereby shall we shadow
The numbers of our host and make discovery
Err in report of us.

Soldiers

It shall be done.

SIWARD

We learn no other but the confident tyrant
Keeps still in Dunsinane, and will endure
Our setting down before 't.

MALCOLM

'Tis his main hope:
For where there is advantage to be given,
Both more and less have given him the revolt,
And none serve with him but constrained things
Whose hearts are absent too.

MACDUFF

Let our just censures
Attend the true event, and put we on
Industrious soldiership.

Starting with this extract, how does Shakespeare present rebels and rebellion in *Macbeth*?

Write about:

- How Shakespeare presents the rebels here
- How Shakespeare presents the rebels and rebellion elsewhere in the play. [30 marks]

SPaG [4 marks]

ACT 5 SCENE 5. Dunsinane. Within the castle.

Enter MACBETH, SEYTON, and Soldiers, with drum and colours

MACBETH

Hang out our banners on the outward walls;
The cry is still 'They come:' our castle's strength
Will laugh a siege to scorn: here let them lie
Till famine and the ague eat them up:
Were they not forced with those that should be ours,
We might have met them dareful, beard to beard,
And beat them backward home.

A cry of women within

What is that noise?

SEYTON

It is the cry of women, my good lord.

Exit

MACBETH

I have almost forgot the taste of fears;
The time has been, my senses would have cool'd
To hear a night-shriek; and my fell of hair
Would at a dismal treatise rouse and stir
As life were in't: I have supp'd full with horrors;
Direness, familiar to my slaughterous thoughts
Cannot once start me.

Starting with this extract, to what extent does Macbeth undergo change in the play?

Write about:

- How Shakespeare presents Macbeth's change here
- How Shakespeare presents his changes elsewhere in the play.

[30 marks]

SPaG [4 marks]

ACT 5 SCENE 6. Dunsinane. Before the castle.

Drum and colours. Enter MALCOLM, SIWARD, MACDUFF, and their Army, with boughs

MALCOLM

Now near enough: your leafy screens throw down.
And show like those you are. You, worthy uncle,
Shall, with my cousin, your right-noble son,
Lead our first battle: worthy Macduff and we
Shall take upon 's what else remains to do,
According to our order.

SIWARD

Fare you well.
Do we but find the tyrant's power to-night,
Let us be beaten, if we cannot fight.

MACDUFF

Make all our trumpets speak; give them all breath,
Those clamorous harbingers of blood and death.

Exeunt

Starting with this extract, what attitudes towards soldiers and war are presented in *Macbeth*?

Write about:

- How Shakespeare presents the warriors reaction here
- How Shakespeare presents the attitudes towards soldiers and war elsewhere in the play.

[30 marks]

SPaG [4 marks]

ACT 5 SCENE 7. Another part of the field.

Alarums. Enter MACBETH

MACBETH

They have tied me to a stake; I cannot fly,
But, bear-like, I must fight the course. What's he
That was not born of woman? Such a one
Am I to fear, or none.

Enter YOUNG SIWARD

YOUNG SIWARD

What is thy name?

MACBETH

Thou'lt be afraid to hear it.

YOUNG SIWARD

No; though thou call'st thyself a hotter name
Than any is in hell.

MACBETH

My name's Macbeth.

YOUNG SIWARD

The devil himself could not pronounce a title
More hateful to mine ear.

MACBETH

No, nor more fearful.

YOUNG SIWARD

Thou liest, abhorred tyrant; with my sword
I'll prove the lie thou speak'st.

They fight and YOUNG SIWARD is slain

MACBETH

Thou wast born of woman
But swords I smile at, weapons laugh to scorn,
Brandish'd by man that's of a woman born.

Starting with this extract how does Shakespeare present the way Macbeth sees himself?

Write about:

- How Shakespeare presents Macbeth's opinion of himself here
 - How Shakespeare presents his opinion of himself elsewhere in the play. [30 marks]
- SPaG [4 marks]

ACT 5 SCENE 8

MACBETH

I will not yield,
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
I throw my warlike shield. Lay on, Macduff,
And damn'd be him that first cries, 'Hold, enough!'

Exeunt, fighting. Alarums

Retreat. Flourish. Enter, with drum and colours, MALCOLM, SIWARD, ROSS, the other Thanes, and Soldiers

MALCOLM

I would the friends we miss were safe arrived.

SIWARD

Some must go off: and yet, by these I see,
So great a day as this is cheaply bought.

MALCOLM

Macduff is missing, and your noble son.

ROSS

Your son, my lord, has paid a soldier's debt:
He only lived but till he was a man;
The which no sooner had his prowess confirm'd
In the unshrinking station where he fought,
But like a man he died.

SIWARD

Then he is dead?

ROSS

Ay, and brought off the field: your cause of sorrow
Must not be measured by his worth, for then
It hath no end.

SIWARD

Had he his hurts before?

ROSS

Ay, on the front.

SIWARD

Why then, God's soldier be he!

Starting with this extract how does Shakespeare explore ideas about honour and reputation in Macbeth?

Write about:

- How Shakespeare presents honour and reputation here
- How Shakespeare presents the importance of honour and reputation elsewhere in the play.

[30 marks]

SPaG [4 marks]

ACT 5 SCENE 8

MALCOLM

We shall not spend a large expense of time
Before we reckon with your several loves,
And make us even with you. My thanes and kinsmen,
Henceforth be earls, the first that ever Scotland
In such an honour named. What's more to do,
Which would be planted newly with the time,
As calling home our exiled friends abroad
That fled the snares of watchful tyranny;
Producing forth the cruel ministers
Of this dead butcher and his fiend-like queen,
Who, as 'tis thought, by self and violent hands
Took off her life; this, and what needful else
That calls upon us, by the grace of Grace,
We will perform in measure, time and place:
So, thanks to all at once and to each one,
Whom we invite to see us crown'd at Scone.

Flourish. Exeunt

Starting with this extract, how far does Shakespeare present events in *Macbeth* as inevitable?

Write about:

- How Shakespeare presents the events as inevitable here
- How Shakespeare presents the idea that the events may be inevitable elsewhere in the play.

[30 marks]

SPaG [4 marks]