

Macbeth SUPER Knowledge Organiser: "I have no spur to prick the sides of my intent, but only vaulting ambition.." Grades 8/9

Vaulting Vocabulary

Divine providence
Metaphysical
Moral darkness
Inherent
Malevolence
ontological
Nihilistic
Tyrannical
Enigmatic
Vulgar
Convulsive
Ambiguous
Futile
Ambivalence
Garish

Soliloquy
Paradox
Cyclical
Motif
Verse/prose
Metre: iamb, trochee, spondee, pyrrhic
Hypermetric syllable
Microcosm
Antithesis
Foreshadowing
Pathetic fallacy

Allusion
Aside
rhyme
Climatic moment
Eponymous
Dramatic irony
Animal imagery
Plosive
Lexical
field/semantic field

Magical Methods



Macbeth: a tragic hero.

The classical philosopher Aristotle argued that tragic heroes should follow certain conventions. They must be 'highly renowned' but have a flaw (**harmatia**) that leads to a reversal of fortune (**peripeteia**). Often the flaw is linked to excessive pride (**hubris**). Watching the hero's tragic fall causes the audience to feel pity and fear (**catharsis**).

Critics Corner

Christian Imagery in Macbeth

This is a play about a man who is anguished by knowing that he has bartered the gold of men's esteem for the tinsel of sovereignty. **Victor Kiernan**

Macbeth is a play saturated with religious situations, ideas and images
Macbeth is a Doomsday play which draws heavily on biblical imagery **Victor Kiernan**

The Weird Sisters

As soon as Macbeth and Banquo enter the witches immediately assume a loftier tone, their predictions then have the obscure brevity, the majestic solemnity of oracles, such as have every spread terror among mortals. **A.W. Schlegel**

Babes

Macbeth is the great play of babes. Lady Macbeth commits the first atrocity when she boasts of her ability to dash out a baby's brains. Banquo is a source of babes, Duncan is a father too, perhaps the most powerful symbol in the tragedy is that of the naked babe. **Michael Long**

Research more theories online:

<http://www.inquiriesjournal.com/articles/67/a-brief-look-at-feminism-in-shakespeares-macbeth>



Impressive openers

Character development

By the close of the play/poem/novel the once ... has developed into...

Reader positioning

(The writer) positions the reader/audience in favour of /against ____ by...

Deepening analysis

At first glance...; however, on closer inspection...

Proposing a tentative idea

Perhaps, (writer's name) was hinting that ...

Contrasting alternative viewpoints

Some readers might propose that...; other readers, however, might argue...

Identifying the main thing

The most important word/sentence/idea/chapter/moment is ____ because....

Reader response

The reader is caught between...

Peeling away the layers of characterisation

On the exterior..., yet on the interior we can infer....

Character motives

_____ is motivated not only by... but also by...

Noting subtleties

Here, the writer cleverly....

Macbeth was first performed in 1606, likely with King James I in the audience. Shakespeare may have wanted to please the King through his play's representation of the dangers of challenging monarchy.

James I also claimed to believe that he was a descendant of Banquo and Fleance. James I promoted the concept of the divine right of kings throughout his reign. King James was nearly assassinated in 1600 – thoroughly condemned regicide. Belief in the supernatural was far more prevalent than it is today. King James I wrote a book on the subject - 'Daemonologie' (1596) - in which he called witches 'detestable slaves of the Devil'.

Jacobean society was highly patriarchal. Women were typically regarded as emotionally and intellectually weaker than men. Under James I as both King and Head of the Church, the country remained strictly Protestant. The Jacobean public was generally god-fearing, interpreting religious concepts such as heaven and hell literally.