

MACBETH

Characters		Themes		More AO2		AO3
<p>Macbeth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Easily manipulated - Fair but foul - Corrupted by ambition - Violent throughout 	<p>Lady Macbeth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cruel, ambitious and ruthless - Initially in control - Weaker than she thinks? - Insomniac - Insane with guilt 	<p>Supernatural</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Witches are deliberately confusing - Vision of dagger - B's ghost = guilt - Apparitions and prophecies - LM's bloody hands 	<p>Fate vs Free Will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - M's choices? - M doomed from the start? - M believes his fate - B doesn't act on prophecy - M loses control of life 	<p>Blank verse:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Used by majority of characters 	<p>Symbolism:</p> <p>Light = good Dark = evil Nature = correct order</p> <p>Health / disease = state of Scotland Blood = guilt</p> <p>Water = innocence</p> <p>Masculinity = aggression / courage</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The belief at the time was that the power of Kings was given directly by God. Any opposition to the King was an attack on God himself, and therefore sacrilege, the worst possible sin. Therefore, the contemporary audience would have been extremely shocked at Macbeth's behaviour. • It was believed that if the King were to be killed, then the natural world would be turned upside down. This is shown in Macbeth, when the weather turns strange; owls are attacking during the day time and the Kings horses have gone wild. • The contemporary audience were open to the idea of the supernatural. They would not have been surprised by the presence of the three witches in the play. A modern audience, much more sceptical as a whole are able to suspend their disbelief. • Elizabethans believed that evil occurs in darkness, which is a recurring theme in Macbeth.
<p>The Witches</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deliberately vague - Instruments of fate - Enjoy causing trouble and chaos - Manipulate Macbeth's ambition - One entity? 	<p>Banquo</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Macbeth's foil - Macbeth obsessed by his prophecy - Loyal and noble - Terrifying ghost - Sceptical of Witches & Macbeth 	<p>Reality vs appearance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 'Fair is foul' - Hiding true thoughts - Harder to hide (LM) - Too trusting of appearances? (D) - Audience see 'true' characters 	<p>Ambition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Motivates M & LM - M's fatal flaw - Corrupts M & LM - Macduff ambitious for Scotland - Banquo doesn't act on ambition 	<p>Prose</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lower class characters use prose - Speech sounds more natural with no set rhythm - Porter speaks in prose - Lady Macbeth speaks in prose when she sleepwalks = insanity. 		
<p>Duncan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Macbeth's antithesis as King - Popular and fair - Emotional - Far too trusting - His sons are good men 	<p>The Macduffs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Macbeth's antithesis as a man - Wife contrasts LM - Country > family - Loyal and strong - Sirrah's death = ruthless Macbeth 	<p>Good vs Evil</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - M initially good - Women = evil? - Constant battle - M overcome by evil desires - Religious conflict (Heaven and Hell) 	<p>Loyalty/Betrayal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - B & Macduff loyal - M & LM pretend to be loyal - Loyalty to Scotland - Betraying God - Macbeth doesn't earn loyalty as King 	<p>Rhyme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sets the witches apart as evil and unnatural - Witches use trochaic tetrameter - Sometimes rhyme is used for emphasis by other characters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender roles were clearly defined in Jacobean times and the contemporary audience would have been surprised to see Lady Macbeth adopt such a commanding and dominant role in the relationship. However, a modern audience is used to examples of powerful women and gender roles are no longer so clearly defined. • In many ways, Shakespeare's portrayal of Lady Macbeth in the first half of the play, shows her with qualities that would be more suitable on the battle field from which Macbeth has just returned. • Shakespeare included a lot of blood and murder, which the Elizabethans expected to see in a play. 	