

Macbeth

Macbeth is a play by William Shakespeare. Some of his plays are funny but Macbeth is a sad story. The story takes place in Scotland.

It starts with three witches. They are going to find Macbeth.

Macbeth has a friend called Banquo. They are leaders in the army. They have been fighting two wars. They have won! They are happy. They are going home.

They see the three witches.

'Macbeth will be Lord of Cawdor!' says one witch.

'Macbeth will be king,' says another, 'but then Banquo's children will be kings!'



Macbeth and Banquo do not understand. The witches go away. Macbeth and Banquo meet some men. They have come from the King. They have a message. The King has made Macbeth the Lord of Cawdor! The witches are right!

Macbeth and Banquo go to Macbeth's home. The King comes too. 'Kill the King!' says Macbeth's wife. She knows what the witches said. Macbeth kills the King. He says somebody else did it. The dead King has two sons. They are called Malcolm and Donalbain. They run away. Macbeth is now the King! The witches are right again!

Macbeth knows the witches were right. He is scared. What if Banquo's children will be kings? Macbeth makes some men kill Banquo. But Banquo's son runs away. Macbeth is even more scared. He sees Banquo's ghost!

Macbeth goes to the three witches.

'Help me!' he says. He hears three more messages.

'Watch out for Macduff!' is message number one. Macbeth is scared.

'You can't be hurt by any man who has been born!' is message number two. Macbeth feels better.

'You are safe until trees move to your castle!' is message three. Macbeth is happy. Trees do not move!

Macduff has run away. He has gone to England. He finds Malcolm.

'Macbeth killed my father!' says Malcolm.

'We will fight Macbeth!' says Macduff. He joins Malcolm's army. They go to fight Macbeth.

Macbeth is still in Scotland. He is in a castle. Macbeth's wife goes mad. She dies. Macbeth is sad. But he knows what the witches said.



'I am still safe,' he thinks.

But then Malcolm and Macduff come. They have an army. Every man is holding a tree branch. The trees are moving to Macbeth's castle!

Macbeth is scared. But he knows no man can hurt him. The witches said so!

There is a big fight. Macbeth and Macduff find each other.

'I can't be hurt by any man who has been born!' says Macbeth.

'I was not born the normal way!' says Macduff.

Macbeth fights Macduff. Macduff kills Macbeth. The witches are right again!

Macbeth

Put these events in the order that they happen in the story. (C5/1c)

- A. Macbeth is killed.
- B. Macbeth and Banquo see the witches.
- C. Macbeth's wife goes mad.
- D. Macbeth kills the king.
- E. Macbeth sees the witches.

Why would Macbeth be worried about Banquo's children becoming kings?
(P3/1d)

Why does Macbeth go to the witches for a second time? (P3/1d)

In the whole play the witches say that six things will happen or be true in the future.

1. What is the sixth thing they say? (C2)

2. What happens which shows the sixth thing they say is true? (P3/1d)

Macbeth is a play full of interesting characters. Who do you think is the best or nicest character in the play? Why? (C4)

Who do you think is the worst or meanest character in the play? Why? (C4)

Macbeth

Put these events in the order that they happen in the story. (C5/1c)

- | | |
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| A. Macbeth is killed. | 5 |
| B. Macbeth and Banquo see the witches. | 1 |
| C. Macbeth's wife goes mad. | 4 |
| D. Macbeth kills the king. | 2 |
| E. Macbeth sees the witches. | 3 |

Why would Macbeth be worried about Banquo's children becoming kings?

(P3/1d) The other things the witches said have come true. If Banquo's children are going to become kings, they will have to get rid of Macbeth and his children.

Why does Macbeth go to the witches for a second time? (P3/1d) He needs their help and is worried.

In the whole play the witches say that six things will happen or be true in the future.

1. What is the sixth thing they say? (C2) That Macbeth is safe until trees move towards his castle.
2. What happens which shows the sixth thing they say is true? (P3/1d) Macduff and Malcolm's army arrive at Macbeth's castle carrying tree branches.

Macbeth is a play full of interesting characters. Who do you think is the best or nicest character in the play? Why? (C4) Various answers; must be justified.

Who do you think is the worst or meanest character in the play? Why? (C4) Various answers; must be justified.

Comprehension

Year 1/2	C1/1a	Discussing word meanings, linking new meanings to known vocabulary
	C2	Answer simple, information retrieval questions about texts*
	C3	Drawing on what they already know from background information and vocabulary provided by the teacher
	C4	Discussing and expressing views about a wide range of texts
	C5/1c	Discussing the sequence of events in texts and how items of information are related
Year 3/4	C1/2a	Explaining the meaning of words in context
	C4	Discussing and expressing views about a wide range of texts
	C6/2b	Retrieve and record information from fiction and non-fiction
	C7	Identifying how language, structure and presentation contribute to meaning
Year 5/6	C1/2a	Exploring the meaning of words in context
	C4	Discussing and expressing views about a wide range of texts
	C6/2b	Retrieve, record and present information from fiction and non-fiction
	C7	Identifying how language, structure and presentation contribute to meaning
	C8/2h	Making comparisons within and across texts
	C9	Distinguish between statements of fact and opinion

Predictions and Making Inferences

Year 1/2	P1	Link the text to their own experiences
	P2/1e	Predicting what might happen on the basis of what has been read so far
	P3/1d	Making inferences on the basis of what is being said and done
	P4	Answering and asking questions
Year 3/4	P2/2e	Predicting what might happen from details stated and implied
	P4	Asking questions to improve their understanding
	P5/2d	Drawing inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justifying inferences with evidence
Year 5/6	P2/2e	Predicting what might happen from details stated and implied
	P4	Asking questions to improve their understanding
	P5/2d	Drawing inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justifying inferences with evidence

Language for Effect

Year 1/2	L1	Recognising and joining in with predictable phrases
	L2	Learning to appreciate rhymes and poems, and to recite some by heart with appropriate intonation to make the meaning clear
Year 3/4	L3	Using dictionaries to check the meaning of words they have read
	L4	Preparing poems and play scripts to read aloud and to perform, showing understanding through intonation, tone, volume and action
Year 5/6	L2	Learning a wider range of poetry by heart
	L4	Preparing poems and play scripts to read aloud and to perform, showing understanding through intonation, tone, volume and action so that the meaning is clear to an audience
	L5/2g	Discuss and evaluate the authors' use of language, including figurative language, including the impact on the reader and how meaning is enhanced through the author's choice of words and phrases
	L6/2f	Identify and explain how content is related and contributes to meaning as a whole

*not currently a curriculum objective

Summarising

Year 1/2	S1	Discussing the significance of the title and events
Year 3/4	S2/2c	Identifying main ideas drawn from more than one paragraph and summarising these
Year 5/6	S2/2c	Summarising from more than one paragraph, identifying key details which support the main ideas

Themes and Conventions

Year 1/2	T1/1b	Becoming very familiar with non-fiction and fiction, such as key stories, fairy stories and traditional tales, and retelling them
	T2/1b	Considering the particular characteristics of the above texts
Year 3/4	T3	Reading texts that are structured in different ways and reading for a range of purposes
	T4	Identifying themes and conventions in a wide range of texts
	T5	Recognising some different forms of poetry
Year 5/6	T2	Increasing their familiarity with a wide range of books, including myths, legends and traditional stories, modern fiction, fiction from our literary heritage, and texts from other cultures and traditions
	T4	Identifying and discussing themes and conventions in and across a wide range of writing

Reading for Pleasure

Year 1/2	R1	Listening to and discussing a wide range of fiction and non-fiction texts
	R2	Participate in discussion about texts, poems and other works that are read to them and those that they can read for themselves, taking turns and listening to what others say
	R3	Discussing their favourite words and phrases
Year 3/4	R1	Listening to and discussing a wide range of fiction and non-fiction texts
	R2	Participate in discussion about both texts that are read to them and those they can read for themselves, taking turns and listening to what others say
	R3	Discussing words and phrases that capture the reader's interest and imagination
Year 5/6	R2	Participate in discussions about books that are read to them and those they can read for themselves, building on their own and others' ideas and challenging views courteously
	R3	Discussing words and phrases that capture the reader's interest and imagination
	R4	Recommending texts that they have read to their peers, giving reasons for their choices

Macbeth is an old play by a man called William Shakespeare. Some of his plays are funny, but Macbeth is a sad story. The story takes place in Scotland. It all starts with three witches...

In a secret place, the witches meet. They want to find Macbeth.

‘We will wait until his fighting is over,’ they say. ‘We will meet him on his way home.’

Macbeth has a good friend called Banquo. They are leaders in King Duncan’s army. They have been fighting two wars, and They have won! They are happy Because they are going home.



A storm is all around them. Then through the rain they see the three witches.

‘Macbeth will be Lord of Cawdor!’ says one witch.

‘Macbeth will be king!’ says another.

Macbeth and Banquo do not understand, and Macbeth is shocked. He cannot speak!

‘What about me?’ asks Banquo. ‘Tell me my future!’

‘Your future is not as happy,’ says one of the witches. ‘But later your children will be kings!’

Macbeth and Banquo still do not understand. But the witches leave without telling them anything else. The two friends do not know if they should believe what they have heard. But then Macbeth and Banquo meet some men who have come from King Duncan. They have a special message. The King has made Macbeth the Lord of Cawdor! Macbeth is shocked. The witches are right!

Macbeth wants to find out if the witches will be right about everything. Will he be King? He writes a letter to his wife to tell her the story. Later on, Macbeth and Banquo go to Macbeth's home. King Duncan comes too.

Easy

'Kill the King!' says Macbeth's wife. 'Don't worry. No one will know the truth. You will be the new king!'

Macbeth is not sure, but his wife keeps telling him to do it and he agrees to kill the King. Macbeth and his wife come up with an evil plan. Macbeth kills the King and tells everyone that the King's servants did it. The dead King has two sons called Malcolm and Donalbain. They are very scared and run away. Macbeth is made into the new King! The witches are right again!

Macbeth knows the witches were right. But this makes him worried. If the witches were right about him, could Banquo's children really become kings? Will they kill Macbeth? These thoughts make Macbeth scared. He makes some men try to kill Banquo and Banquo's son Fleance. Banquo is killed but Fleance runs away. Macbeth is even more scared. Later that night he sees Banquo's ghost! People start to think he is losing his mind.



Macbeth really needs to find help, so he goes back to the three witches.

'Help me!' he says. He hears three more strange messages.

'Watch out for Macduff!' is the first message, and Macbeth is worried.

'You can't be hurt by any man who has been born!' is the second message, which makes Macbeth feel much better.

'You are safe until trees move to your castle!' is the third message, and Macbeth is very happy. Trees do not move!

Macduff understands how evil Macbeth is and runs away. He goes to England to find an army. He wants to make Scotland safe by killing Macbeth. Soon he finds Malcolm, who has gathered an army.

'Macbeth killed my father!' says Malcolm sadly.

Easy

'We will fight Macbeth!' says Macduff. He joins Malcolm and his army. They march to Scotland to fight Macbeth.

Macbeth is still in Scotland, waiting in a strong castle. Macbeth's wife goes mad. She thinks she has blood all over her hands which she cannot wash off. She dies, and when Macbeth hears about it he is sad. But he remembers what the witches said.

'I am still safe,' he thinks.



But then Malcolm and Macduff come. They are leading a very big army, and every man is holding a tree branch. The trees are moving to Macbeth's castle!

Macbeth is shocked. But he knows no man can hurt him. The witches said so! They have been right about everything else!

There is a huge fight. Soon Macbeth and Macduff find each other.

'I can't be hurt by any man who has been born!' says Macbeth.

'I was not born the normal way!' says Macduff.

Macbeth knows now that he will die. With a loud shout he runs at Macduff. They fight and Macduff kills Macbeth. The witches are right again!

Put these events in the order that they happen in the story. (C5/1c)

- A. Macbeth is killed.
- B. Macbeth and Banquo see the witches.
- C. Macbeth's wife goes mad.
- D. Macbeth kills the king.
- E. Macbeth sees the witches.

The witches only say one thing to Banquo, but it scares Macbeth.

1. Why would Macbeth be worried about Banquo's children becoming kings?
(P3/1d)

2. Why would Fleance's escape make Macbeth even more scared? (P3/1d)

Why does Macbeth go to the witches for a second time? (P3/1d)

In the whole play the witches say that six things will happen or be true in the future.

1. What is the sixth thing they say? (C2)

2. What happens which shows the sixth thing they say is true? (P3/1d)

1. Who do you think is the best or nicest character in the play? Why? (C4)

2. Who do you think is the worst or meanest character in the play? Why? (C4)

Two of these sentences about the story are true and two are false. Put 'True' or 'False' next to the right sentences. (C2)

- A. The story takes place in Ireland. _____
- B. William Shakespeare wrote the play. _____
- C. Macduff was not born the normal way. _____
- D. Macbeth kills Macduff. _____

In this story the writer shows that every time a person decides to do something, other things happen because of what they do. What do you think is the biggest decision made by a character in the story? Why is the decision so important? Remember to think about what the decision leads to. (C5/1c)

Put these events in the order that they happen in the story. (C5/1c)

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| A. Macbeth is killed. | 5 |
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| D. Macbeth kills the king. | 2 |
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The witches only say one thing to Banquo, but it scares Macbeth.

1. Why would Macbeth be worried about Banquo's children becoming kings? (P3/1d) **The other things the witches said have come true. If Banquo's children are going to become kings, they will have to get rid of Macbeth and his children.**
2. Why would Fleance's escape make Macbeth even more scared? (P3/1d) **Fleance escaping means that there is still a chance that what the witches said will come true. There is still someone from Banquo's family who could become king, and who might kill Macbeth to do it.**

Why does Macbeth go to the witches for a second time? (P3/1d) **He needs their help and is worried.**

In the whole play the witches say that six things will happen or be true in the future.

1. What is the sixth thing they say? (C2) **That Macbeth is safe until trees move towards his castle.**
2. What happens which shows the sixth thing they say is true? (P3/1d) **Macduff and Malcolm's army arrive at Macbeth's castle carrying tree branches.**

Macbeth is a play full of interesting characters.

Easy

1. Who do you think is the best or nicest character in the play? Why? (C4)

Various answers; must be justified.

2. Who do you think is the worst or meanest character in the play? Why? (C4)

Various answers; must be justified.

Two of these sentences about the story are true and two are false. Put 'True' or 'False' next to the right sentences. (C2)

A. The story takes place in Ireland. **False**

B. William Shakespeare wrote the play. **True**

C. Macduff was not born the normal way. **True**

D. Macbeth kills Macduff. **False**

In this story the writer shows that every time a person decides to do something, other things happen because of what they do. What do you think is the biggest decision made by a character in the story? Why is the decision so important?

Remember to think about what the decision leads to. (C5/1c) **Various answers; must be justified.**

Comprehension

Year 1/2	C1/1a	Discussing word meanings, linking new meanings to known vocabulary
	C2	Answer simple, information retrieval questions about texts*
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Year 5/6	C1/2a	Exploring the meaning of words in context
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Predictions and Making Inferences

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Year 5/6	L2	Learning a wider range of poetry by heart
	L4	Preparing poems and play scripts to read aloud and to perform, showing understanding through intonation, tone, volume and action so that the meaning is clear to an audience
	L5/2g	Discuss and evaluate the authors' use of language, including figurative language, including the impact on the reader and how meaning is enhanced through the author's choice of words and phrases
	L6/2f	Identify and explain how content is related and contributes to meaning as a whole

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Year 1/2	S1	Discussing the significance of the title and events
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Themes and Conventions

Year 1/2	T1/1b	Becoming very familiar with non-fiction and fiction, such as key stories, fairy stories and traditional tales, and retelling them
	T2/1b	Considering the particular characteristics of the above texts
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	T4	Identifying themes and conventions in a wide range of texts
	T5	Recognising some different forms of poetry
Year 5/6	T2	Increasing their familiarity with a wide range of books, including myths, legends and traditional stories, modern fiction, fiction from our literary heritage, and texts from other cultures and traditions
	T4	Identifying and discussing themes and conventions in and across a wide range of writing

Reading for Pleasure

Year 1/2	R1	Listening to and discussing a wide range of fiction and non-fiction texts
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Year 5/6	R2	Participate in discussions about books that are read to them and those they can read for themselves, building on their own and others’ ideas and challenging views courteously
	R3	Discussing words and phrases that capture the reader’s interest and imagination
	R4	Recommending texts that they have read to their peers, giving reasons for their choices

Macbeth is an old play by a man called William Shakespeare. It was written in 1606. Some of Shakespeare's plays are funny, but Macbeth is a terribly tragic story. The story takes place in Scotland. It all begins with three witches...

Thunder booms and lightning flashes. In a secret and lonely place, the witches meet. They want to find Macbeth.

'We will wait until his battles are over,' they decide. 'We will meet him on his way home.'

Macbeth has a good friend called Banquo. They are both tough leaders in King Duncan's army. They have been fighting two long wars, and they have won! Tired but happy with winning, they are going home.



A strange and dark storm is all around them. As they trudge through the rain, they see the three witches.

'Macbeth will be Lord of Cawdor!' calls out one of the ugly witches.

'Macbeth will be king!' cries another.

Macbeth and Banquo do not understand. Who are these witches? Could they really know the future? Macbeth is so shocked he cannot speak!

'What about me?' asks Banquo. 'Tell me my future!'

'Your own future is not as happy,' moan the witches. 'But your story ends better than Macbeth's. In a little time your children will rule Scotland!'

Macbeth and Banquo are still very confused. They really want to ask more questions but the witches leave without telling them anything else. The two friends do not know if they should believe what they have heard. But as they begin to march home again, they meet some men who have come from King Duncan. The men carry a special message. The King has made Macbeth the Lord of Cawdor! Macbeth is shocked; the witches are right!

Macbeth wants to know if the witches will be right about everything else. Will he become the King? He writes a short letter to his wife to tell her the story.

Later on, Macbeth and Banquo get back to Macbeth's home. King Duncan comes too.

Macbeth's wife has read the letter and knows what she wants.

Tricky

'Kill the King!' whispers Macbeth's wife. 'Don't worry. No one will know the truth. You will be the new king!'

Macbeth is not sure, but his wife keeps pushing and pushing him to do it and so he agrees to murder the King. Macbeth and his wife come up with an evil and clever plan. Macbeth creeps into the King's bedroom and kills him while he sleeps. When the body is found, Macbeth tells everyone that the King's servants did it. The dead King has two sons called Malcolm and Donalbain. They are very scared and run away. Donalbain hides in Ireland and Malcolm goes to England. With no one left to follow King Duncan, Macbeth becomes the new King of Scotland! The witches are right again!

Macbeth knows the witches were right. But rather than enjoying being King, he is more worried than ever. If the witches were right about him, could they be right about Banquo's children ruling over Scotland? Will Banquo and his son kill him? Full of fear, Macbeth pays some men to try to kill Banquo and Banquo's son Fleance. Banquo is killed but Fleance escapes. When he finds out his plan has gone wrong, Macbeth is even more scared, and later that night he sees Banquo's ghost! People begin to think he is losing his mind.



Macbeth really needs to find help. Will he lose his crown and his life? Searching for answers, he goes back to the three witches. He finds them in a huge cave, sitting around a bubbling pot.

'Help me!' he begs. The witches show him three strange creatures, and each one gives him a different message.

'Watch out for Macduff!' moans the first creature, and Macbeth is worried.

'You can't be hurt by any man who has been born from a woman!' cries the second creature. Macbeth is pleased. Surely he will never be hurt!

'You are safe until trees move to your castle!' laughs the third creature, and Macbeth is very happy. Everybody knows that trees do not move!

Macduff understands how evil and dangerous Macbeth has become and runs away to England to find an army. He plans to make Scotland safe again by killing Macbeth. Soon he finds Malcolm, who is living as a guest of the English king and has gathered an army.

'Macbeth murdered my father!' cries Malcolm sadly.

Tricky

'We will fight Macbeth together!' says Macduff. He joins Malcolm and his army. They and thousands of men march to Scotland to fight Macbeth.

Macbeth is still in Scotland, waiting in a strong castle. Lady Macbeth is full of worries that their guilt will be discovered. Soon she goes mad, and is seen sleepwalking and rubbing her hands. She believes they are covered in blood which she cannot wash off. Full of pain and guilt she dies, and when Macbeth hears what has happened he is sad. But he remembers what the witches said.

'I am still safe,' he thinks.



But then Malcolm and Macduff arrive leading their huge army. To hide how many soldiers are with them, they have made every man hold a leafy tree branch. The trees are moving to Macbeth's castle!

Macbeth is shocked and his confidence begins to fall. But he knows no man can hurt him. The witches said so! They have been right about everything else!

'The only sword I'm afraid of is one carried by a man without a mother!' screams Macbeth.

There is a huge and horrible battle. Macbeth is winning every fight. Macduff searches for him, and in the middle of the battle they find each other.

'Don't even try fighting me! You might as well stab the air! I can't be wounded by any man who has been born!' laughs Macbeth.

'Ha! Then be afraid Macbeth! I was not born the normal way!' shouts Macduff.

His last hope gone, Macbeth knows now that he will die. With a last desperate cry he runs at Macduff. Their swords and shields crash together! They fight on and on and in the end Macduff kills Macbeth, chopping off his head. The witches are right for the last time!

Put these events in the order that they happen in the story. (S2/2c)

- A. Macbeth is killed.
- B. Macbeth and Banquo see the witches.
- C. Macbeth's wife goes mad.
- D. Macbeth kills the king.
- E. Macbeth sees the witches.

The witches only say one thing to Banquo, but it scares Macbeth.

1. Why would Macbeth be worried about Banquo's children becoming kings? (P5/2d)

2. Why would Fleance's escape make Macbeth even more scared? (P5/2d)

Why does Macbeth go to the witches for a second time? (P5/2d)

In the whole play the witches say that six things will happen or be true in the future.

1. What is the sixth thing they say? (C6/2b)

2. What happens which shows the sixth thing they say is true? (C6/2b)

Macbeth is a play full of interesting characters.

1. Who do you think is the best or nicest character in the play? Why? (C4)

2. Who do you think is the worst or meanest character in the play? Why? (C4)

Two of these sentences about the story are true and two are false. Put 'True' or 'False' next to the right sentences. (C6/2b)

Tricky

- A. The story takes place in Ireland. _____
- B. William Shakespeare wrote the play. _____
- C. Macduff was not born the normal way. _____
- D. Macbeth kills Macduff. _____

In this story the writer shows that every time a person decides to do something, other things happen because of what they do. What do you think is the biggest decision made by a character in the story? Why is the decision so important? Remember to think about what the decision leads to. (S2/2c)

Whose body is found before Macbeth blames the servants? (C6/2b)

The text you have just read does not just tell a story. Find and explain one way that the writer has used a different type of writing. (T4)

When she is speaking to Macbeth about killing King Duncan, Macbeth's wife 'whispers' to him. What does the word 'whispers' tell you about the plan and how she is feeling? (C1/2a)

Put these events in the order that they happen in the story. (S2/2c)

- | | |
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| A. Macbeth is killed. | 5 |
| B. Macbeth and Banquo see the witches. | 1 |
| C. Macbeth's wife goes mad. | 4 |
| D. Macbeth kills the king. | 2 |
| E. Macbeth sees the witches. | 3 |

The witches only say one thing to Banquo, but it scares Macbeth.

1. Why would Macbeth be worried about Banquo's children becoming kings? (P5/2d)
The other things the witches said have come true. If Banquo's children are going to become kings, they will have to get rid of Macbeth and his children.
2. Why would Fleance's escape make Macbeth even more scared? (P5/2d) **Fleance escaping means that there is still a chance that what the witches said will come true. There is still someone from Banquo's family who could become king, and who might kill Macbeth to do it.**

Why does Macbeth go to the witches for a second time? (P5/2d) **He needs their help and is worried.**

In the whole play the witches say that six things will happen or be true in the future.

1. What is the sixth thing they say? (C6/2b) **That Macbeth is safe until trees move towards his castle.**
2. What happens which shows the sixth thing they say is true? (C6/2b) **Macduff and Malcolm's army arrives at Macbeth's castle carrying tree branches.**

Macbeth is a play full of interesting characters.

1. Who do you think is the best or nicest character in the play? Why? (C4) **Various answers; must be justified.**
2. Who do you think is the worst or meanest character in the play? Why? (C4) **Various answers; must be justified.**

Two of these sentences about the story are true and two are false. Put 'True' or 'False' next to the right sentences. (C6/2b)

Tricky

- A. The story takes place in Ireland. **False**
- B. William Shakespeare wrote the play. **True**
- C. Macduff was not born the normal way. **True**
- D. Macbeth kills Macduff. **False**

In this story the writer shows that every time a person decides to do something, other things happen because of what they do. What do you think is the biggest decision made by a character in the story? Why is the decision so important? Remember to think about what the decision leads to. (S2/2c) **Various answers; must be justified.**

Whose body is found before Macbeth blames the servants? (C6/2b) **King Duncan's body**

The text you have just read does not just tell a story. Find and explain one way that the writer has used a different type of writing. (T4) **The writer has written a factual/non-fiction introduction before starting the fictional narrative.**

When she is speaking to Macbeth about killing King Duncan, Macbeth's wife 'whispers' to him. What does the word 'whispers' tell you about the plan and how she is feeling? (C1/2a) **She wants the plan to remain a secret and is nervous/concerned about being overheard and discovered. She knows how terrible it would be for their treachery to be discovered.**

Comprehension

Year 1/2	C1/1a	Discussing word meanings, linking new meanings to known vocabulary
	C2	Answer simple, information retrieval questions about texts*
	C3	Drawing on what they already know from background information and vocabulary provided by the teacher
	C4	Discussing and expressing views about a wide range of texts
	C5/1c	Discussing the sequence of events in texts and how items of information are related
Year 3/4	C1/2a	Explaining the meaning of words in context
	C4	Discussing and expressing views about a wide range of texts
	C6/2b	Retrieve and record information from fiction and non-fiction
	C7	Identifying how language, structure and presentation contribute to meaning
Year 5/6	C1/2a	Exploring the meaning of words in context
	C4	Discussing and expressing views about a wide range of texts
	C6/2b	Retrieve, record and present information from fiction and non-fiction
	C7	Identifying how language, structure and presentation contribute to meaning
	C8/2h	Making comparisons within and across texts
	C9	Distinguish between statements of fact and opinion

Predictions and Making Inferences

Year 1/2	P1	Link the text to their own experiences
	P2/1e	Predicting what might happen on the basis of what has been read so far
	P3/1d	Making inferences on the basis of what is being said and done
	P4	Answering and asking questions
Year 3/4	P2/2e	Predicting what might happen from details stated and implied
	P4	Asking questions to improve their understanding
	P5/2d	Drawing inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justifying inferences with evidence
Year 5/6	P2/2e	Predicting what might happen from details stated and implied
	P4	Asking questions to improve their understanding
	P5/2d	Drawing inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justifying inferences with evidence

Language for Effect

Year 1/2	L1	Recognising and joining in with predictable phrases
	L2	Learning to appreciate rhymes and poems, and to recite some by heart with appropriate intonation to make the meaning clear
Year 3/4	L3	Using dictionaries to check the meaning of words they have read
	L4	Preparing poems and play scripts to read aloud and to perform, showing understanding through intonation, tone, volume and action
Year 5/6	L2	Learning a wider range of poetry by heart
	L4	Preparing poems and play scripts to read aloud and to perform, showing understanding through intonation, tone, volume and action so that the meaning is clear to an audience
	L5/2g	Discuss and evaluate the authors' use of language, including figurative language, including the impact on the reader and how meaning is enhanced through the author's choice of words and phrases
	L6/2f	Identify and explain how content is related and contributes to meaning as a whole

*not currently a curriculum objective

Summarising

Year 1/2	S1	Discussing the significance of the title and events
Year 3/4	S2/2c	Identifying main ideas drawn from more than one paragraph and summarising these
Year 5/6	S2/2c	Summarising from more than one paragraph, identifying key details which support the main ideas

Themes and Conventions

Year 1/2	T1/1b	Becoming very familiar with non-fiction and fiction, such as key stories, fairy stories and traditional tales, and retelling them
	T2/1b	Considering the particular characteristics of the above texts
Year 3/4	T3	Reading texts that are structured in different ways and reading for a range of purposes
	T4	Identifying themes and conventions in a wide range of texts
	T5	Recognising some different forms of poetry
Year 5/6	T2	Increasing their familiarity with a wide range of books, including myths, legends and traditional stories, modern fiction, fiction from our literary heritage, and texts from other cultures and traditions
	T4	Identifying and discussing themes and conventions in and across a wide range of writing

Reading for Pleasure

Year 1/2	R1	Listening to and discussing a wide range of fiction and non-fiction texts
	R2	Participate in discussion about texts, poems and other works that are read to them and those that they can read for themselves, taking turns and listening to what others say
	R3	Discussing their favourite words and phrases
Year 3/4	R1	Listening to and discussing a wide range of fiction and non-fiction texts
	R2	Participate in discussion about both texts that are read to them and those they can read for themselves, taking turns and listening to what others say
	R3	Discussing words and phrases that capture the reader's interest and imagination
Year 5/6	R2	Participate in discussions about books that are read to them and those they can read for themselves, building on their own and others' ideas and challenging views courteously
	R3	Discussing words and phrases that capture the reader's interest and imagination
	R4	Recommending texts that they have read to their peers, giving reasons for their choices

Macbeth is a well-known, old play written by a man called William Shakespeare which was performed for the first time in 1606. Many of Shakespeare's plays are pleasant and funny, but Macbeth is a dark and terrible story. The story takes place in wild Scotland around the same time the Vikings existed. Imagine you are in a theatre. The lights go down and the stage curtain rises. Everything begins with three mysterious witches...

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

Thunder booms and lightning flashes brightly in the darkness. In a secret and lonely place the cackling witches gather. They are seeking Macbeth.

'We will wait until his battles are finished,' they quickly decide. 'We will approach him as he travels home.'

Macbeth and his loyal friend, Banquo, are both tough leaders in King Duncan's army. They have been bravely fighting in two long wars against invading armies from Ireland and Norway, and they have finally won! Weary and battle-scarred, but happy with winning, they are slowly heading home.

A mysterious and dark storm swirls strangely around them, soaking and nearly blinding them. As they continue to trudge through the heavy rain, three shapes begin to appear in front of them. Finally the shapes become clear... The three witches have arrived.

'Macbeth will become Lord of Cawdor!' one of the ugly witches calls out shrilly.

'Macbeth will become King!' cries another voice through the rain.

Macbeth and Banquo look at each other, puzzled. Who on earth are these witches? How could they possibly know the future? Will their words actually come true? Macbeth is so shocked by their claims that he cannot speak. Banquo, however, is bolder and steps forward bravely.

'What about me you weird witches?' demands Banquo. 'If you really can look into the future, tell me what lies ahead for me! I am not afraid.'

'Your future is not so happy but is also much happier!' announce the witches puzzlingly. 'You shall never be King, but your family will rule Scotland!'

Macbeth and Banquo are still very confused. They are desperate to ask more questions but the witches quickly leave without telling them anything else, and Macbeth's cries for answers are lost in the wind. The two friends are unsure if they should believe what they have heard, but as they begin to march home again, they meet some messengers who have come from King Duncan. The messengers bring a special announcement; the King has replaced the old Lord of Cawdor with Macbeth! Macbeth is completely shocked - the wild and weird witches are right!

Macbeth is curious to know if all the witches' predictions will come true. Will he actually be crowned as King? He scribbles and sends a short letter to his wife to tell her all that has happened.

'Is this a dagger which I see before me, the handle toward my hand?'

Expert

A little while later, Macbeth and Banquo return triumphantly to Macbeth's home, with King Duncan as their guest. Lady Macbeth has read the letter and is filled with evil desires, which she secretly explains to Macbeth.

'Kill the King tonight!' she whispers. 'Don't be fearful. No one will discover the truth if we are careful, and you will be crowned as King!'

At first Macbeth is unsure and resists the idea, but his wife keeps pushing and pushing him to do it and eventually, he agrees to murder the King. Macbeth and his wife come up with an evil and clever plot, and even though he sees a worrying vision of a bloody dagger, Macbeth decides to put the plan into action. Lady Macbeth gets the King's servants drunk, and once they are asleep Macbeth creeps silently into the King's bedroom and kills him with the servants' knives. When the body is discovered, Macbeth announces to everyone that the King's servants did it and kills them. The dead King has two sons called Malcolm and Donalbain who fear for their lives and quickly flee. Donalbain hides in Ireland and Malcolm escapes to England. With no one left to claim the throne, Macbeth is crowned as the new King of Scotland. The witches are right a second time!

Rather than enjoying being King, however, Macbeth is more worried than ever. If the witches were right about him, could they be right about Banquo's children ruling over Scotland? Will Banquo and his son Fleance challenge or even kill Macbeth? Full of fear, Macbeth hires some tough men to murder the pair of them. Ambushed on the way to a feast, Banquo is killed but Fleance escapes. When he finds out his plan has gone wrong, Macbeth is even more scared and later that night at the feast he is faced with the grisly sight of Banquo's ghost! People begin to think Macbeth has gone mad.

'Double, double toil and trouble; fire burn and cauldron bubble.'

Macbeth is now desperately looking for help and advice. Will he lose his crown and his life? Searching for answers, he hurries to find the three witches. He finally discovers them in a huge cave, chanting and throwing strange things into a mysterious, bubbling pot.

'Help me!' he begs and waits for their answer. One by one, three strange creatures rise from the pot, and each one delivers a different message to Macbeth.

'Beware Macduff, the Lord of Fife!' moans the first creature loudly. Macbeth is worried and tries to ask a question, but is silenced by the witches.

'You can't be hurt by any man who has been born from a woman!' cries the second creature as it appears from the hot liquid. Macbeth is understandably pleased. Surely this means he will never be hurt or killed! Whom should he fear now?

'You are safe, until the forest moves to your castle!' laughs the third creature wildly, and Macbeth is happier still. Everybody knows that trees do not move!

But then the witches produce a vision of many Kings and Banquo's grinning ghost. These are the rulers of Scotland who will come from Banquo's family! Macbeth becomes bitter and angry, shouting at the witches as they vanish. His rage grows quickly and he orders that Macduff's home

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Comprehension – Macbeth – Y3m/Y4s/Y5e – Expert

be attacked and everyone found there killed.

Expert

Macduff understands how evil and dangerous Macbeth has become and without knowing what Macbeth has planned, he runs away to England to find an army. He plans to make Scotland safe again by killing Macbeth. Soon he finds Malcolm, who is living as a guest of the English King and has gathered an army. While the two of them are talking, however, a messenger arrives and brings terrible news – Macduff's family have been horribly murdered by Macbeth's soldiers.

'Macbeth deserves to die for all the evil things he has done!' cries Malcolm angrily. 'Let your grief lead you to kill him!'

'We will fight Macbeth together!' agrees Macduff, tears of sadness in his eyes. The pair set out for revenge, marching swiftly with thousands of men to Scotland, to fight Macbeth.

'Behold, where stands the usurper's cursed head?'

Macbeth is still in Scotland, waiting to defend himself in a strong castle. Lady Macbeth is full of worries that their crimes will be discovered, and soon her thoughts drive her mad. She is seen sleepwalking, muttering fearfully to herself and scrubbing at her hands, convinced they are covered in blood which she cannot wash off. Full of pain and guilt, she dies, and when Macbeth hears what has happened he begins to wonder if there is any point in being alive. But he is still brave, certain that the witches' messages mean he will not be killed.

Then, in the distance, a sight is seen which terrifies the murderous King. Malcolm and Macduff are leading their huge army towards Macbeth's fortress. To disguise how many soldiers are with them, the two leaders have made every man carry a leafy tree branch. The forest is marching to Macbeth's castle!

Macbeth is shocked and his confidence begins to fail him. But he holds on to one final hope – no man can harm him! The witches said so and they have been right about everything else...

'The only sword which brings me any fear is the sword carried by a motherless man!' Macbeth screams desperately.

The two armies smash together in a huge and horrible battle. Macbeth easily beats every soldier he faces. Macduff searches eagerly for him, wanting revenge, and in the middle of the battle the two enemies finally meet.

'Don't even bother to try and fight me! You might as well stab the air! I can't be wounded by any man who has been born!' laughs Macbeth confidently.

'Ha! Then now is the time for fear to fill you! I was not born the normal way!' shouts Macduff over the crashing and clashing of weapons and armour.

His last hope gone, Macbeth knows now that he will die. With a desperate cry, he charges wildly at Macduff. Their swords and shields smash together loudly. Their epic fight goes on and on until eventually, Macduff defeats Macbeth and chops off his head. The witches are proved right for the final time!

Put these events in the order that they happen in the story. (S2/2c)

- A. Macbeth is killed.
- B. Macbeth and Banquo see the witches.
- C. Macbeth's wife goes mad.
- D. Macbeth kills the king.
- E. Macbeth sees the witches.

The witches only say one thing to Banquo, but it scares Macbeth.

1. Why would Macbeth be worried about Banquo's children becoming kings? (P5/2d)

2. Why would Fleance's escape make Macbeth even more scared? (P5/2d)

Why does Macbeth go to the witches for a second time? (P5/2d)

In the whole play the witches say that six things will happen or be true in the future.

1. What is the sixth thing they say? (C6/2b)

2. What happens which shows the sixth thing they say is true? (C6/2b)

Macbeth is a play full of interesting characters.

1. Who do you think is the best or nicest character in the play? Why? (C4)

2. Who do you think is the worst or meanest character in the play? Why? (C4)

Two of these sentences about the story are true and two are false. Put 'True' or 'False' next to the right sentences. (C6/2b)

Expert

- A. The story takes place in Ireland. _____
- B. William Shakespeare wrote the play. _____
- C. Macduff was not born the normal way. _____
- D. Macbeth kills Macduff. _____

In this story the writer shows that every time a person decides to do something, other things happen because of what they do. What do you think is the biggest decision made by a character in the story? Why is the decision so important? Remember to think about what the decision leads to. (S2/2c)

Whose body is found before Macbeth blames the servants? (C6/2b)

The text you have just read does not just tell a story. Find and explain one way that the writer has used a different type of writing. (T4)

When she is speaking to Macbeth about killing King Duncan, Macbeth's wife 'whispers' to him. What does the word 'whispers' tell you about the plan and how she is feeling? (C1/2a)

Using the right tense is very important as a writer. Different tenses change how readers understand a text.

- 1. What tense has the writer used when telling the actual story of Macbeth? (T4)

2. How does using this tense help to make a reader feel like they are in a theatre watching the play? (C7)

Tick one word from the list which you think best describes Macbeth. Find and copy a sentence from the text and explain why you chose your word. (P5/2d)

A. cruel

B. clever

C. foolish

D. weak-minded

E. strong-minded

Expert

'Behold, where stands the usurper's cursed head'.

Read the last section of the story again. Who do you think the 'cursed head' belonged to? (P5/2d)

Put these events in the order that they happen in the story. (S2/2c)

- | | |
|--|---|
| A. Macbeth is killed. | 5 |
| B. Macbeth and Banquo see the witches. | 1 |
| C. Macbeth's wife goes mad. | 4 |
| D. Macbeth kills the king. | 2 |
| E. Macbeth sees the witches. | 3 |

The witches only say one thing to Banquo, but it scares Macbeth.

1. Why would Macbeth be worried about Banquo's children becoming kings? (P5/2d) **The other things the witches said have come true. If Banquo's children are going to become kings, they will have to get rid of Macbeth and his children.**
2. Why would Fleance's escape make Macbeth even more scared? (P5/2d) **Fleance escaping means that there is still a chance that what the witches said will come true. There is still someone from Banquo's family who could become king, and who might kill Macbeth to do it.**

Why does Macbeth go to the witches for a second time? (P5/2d) **He needs their help and is worried.**

In the whole play the witches say that six things will happen or be true in the future.

1. What is the sixth thing they say? (C6/2b) **That Macbeth is safe until trees move towards his castle.**
2. What happens which shows the sixth thing they say is true? (C6/2b) **Macduff and Malcolm's army arrives at Macbeth's castle carrying tree branches.**

Macbeth is a play full of interesting characters.

1. Who do you think is the best or nicest character in the play? Why? (C4) **Various answers; must be justified.**
2. Who do you think is the worst or meanest character in the play? Why? (C4) **Various answers; must be justified.**

Two of these sentences about the story are true and two are false. Put 'True' or 'False' next to the right sentences. (C6/2b)

Expert

- A. The story takes place in Ireland. **False**
- B. William Shakespeare wrote the play. **True**
- C. Macduff was not born the normal way. **True**
- D. Macbeth kills Macduff. **False**

In this story the writer shows that every time a person decides to do something, other things happen because of what they do. What do you think is the biggest decision made by a character in the story? Why is the decision so important? Remember to think about what the decision leads to. (S2/2c) **Various answers; must be justified.**

Whose body is found before Macbeth blames the servants? (C6/2b) **King Duncan's body**

The text you have just read does not just tell a story. Find and explain one way that the writer has used a different type of writing. (T4) **The writer has written a factual/non-fiction introduction before starting the fictional narrative. The writer has included quotations from the play.**

When she is speaking to Macbeth about killing King Duncan, Macbeth's wife 'whispers' to him. What does the word 'whispers' tell you about the plan and how she is feeling? (C1/2a)

She wants the plan to remain a secret and is nervous/concerned about being overheard and discovered. She knows how terrible it would be for their treachery to be discovered.

Using the right tense is very important as a writer. Different tenses change how readers understand a text.

1. What tense has the writer used when telling the actual story of Macbeth? (T4) **Present tense**

2. How does using this tense help to make a reader feel like they are in a theatre watching the play? (C7) **The story is presented as happening live before the reader in real time, just as the action and dialogue of a play takes place in front of an audience live.**

Expert

Tick one word from the list which you think best describes Macbeth. Find and copy a sentence from the text and explain why you chose your word. (P5/2d)

- A. cruel
- B. clever
- C. foolish
- D. weak-minded
- E. strong-minded

Any selection is valid as long as it is justified by the copied sentence and explanation.

'Behold, where stands the usurper's cursed head'.

Read the last section of the story again. Who do you think the 'cursed head' belonged to?
(P5/2d) **Macbeth**

Comprehension

Year 1/2	C1/1a	Discussing word meanings, linking new meanings to known vocabulary
	C2	Answer simple, information retrieval questions about texts*
	C3	Drawing on what they already know from background information and vocabulary provided by the teacher
	C4	Discussing and expressing views about a wide range of texts
	C5/1c	Discussing the sequence of events in texts and how items of information are related
Year 3/4	C1/2a	Explaining the meaning of words in context
	C4	Discussing and expressing views about a wide range of texts
	C6/2b	Retrieve and record information from fiction and non-fiction
	C7	Identifying how language, structure and presentation contribute to meaning
Year 5/6	C1/2a	Exploring the meaning of words in context
	C4	Discussing and expressing views about a wide range of texts
	C6/2b	Retrieve, record and present information from fiction and non-fiction
	C7	Identifying how language, structure and presentation contribute to meaning
	C8/2h	Making comparisons within and across texts
	C9	Distinguish between statements of fact and opinion

Predictions and Making Inferences

Year 1/2	P1	Link the text to their own experiences
	P2/1e	Predicting what might happen on the basis of what has been read so far
	P3/1d	Making inferences on the basis of what is being said and done
	P4	Answering and asking questions
Year 3/4	P2/2e	Predicting what might happen from details stated and implied
	P4	Asking questions to improve their understanding
	P5/2d	Drawing inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justifying inferences with evidence
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	P4	Asking questions to improve their understanding
	P5/2d	Drawing inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justifying inferences with evidence

Language for Effect

Year 1/2	L1	Recognising and joining in with predictable phrases
	L2	Learning to appreciate rhymes and poems, and to recite some by heart with appropriate intonation to make the meaning clear
Year 3/4	L3	Using dictionaries to check the meaning of words they have read
	L4	Preparing poems and play scripts to read aloud and to perform, showing understanding through intonation, tone, volume and action
Year 5/6	L2	Learning a wider range of poetry by heart
	L4	Preparing poems and play scripts to read aloud and to perform, showing understanding through intonation, tone, volume and action so that the meaning is clear to an audience
	L5/2g	Discuss and evaluate the authors' use of language, including figurative language, including the impact on the reader and how meaning is enhanced through the author's choice of words and phrases
	L6/2f	Identify and explain how content is related and contributes to meaning as a whole

*not currently a curriculum objective

Summarising

Year 1/2	S1	Discussing the significance of the title and events
Year 3/4	S2/2c	Identifying main ideas drawn from more than one paragraph and summarising these
Year 5/6	S2/2c	Summarising from more than one paragraph, identifying key details which support the main ideas

Themes and Conventions

Year 1/2	T1/1b	Becoming very familiar with non-fiction and fiction, such as key stories, fairy stories and traditional tales, and retelling them
	T2/1b	Considering the particular characteristics of the above texts
Year 3/4	T3	Reading texts that are structured in different ways and reading for a range of purposes
	T4	Identifying themes and conventions in a wide range of texts
	T5	Recognising some different forms of poetry
Year 5/6	T2	Increasing their familiarity with a wide range of books, including myths, legends and traditional stories, modern fiction, fiction from our literary heritage, and texts from other cultures and traditions
	T4	Identifying and discussing themes and conventions in and across a wide range of writing

Reading for Pleasure

Year 1/2	R1	Listening to and discussing a wide range of fiction and non-fiction texts
	R2	Participate in discussion about texts, poems and other works that are read to them and those that they can read for themselves, taking turns and listening to what others say
	R3	Discussing their favourite words and phrases
Year 3/4	R1	Listening to and discussing a wide range of fiction and non-fiction texts
	R2	Participate in discussion about both texts that are read to them and those they can read for themselves, taking turns and listening to what others say
	R3	Discussing words and phrases that capture the reader's interest and imagination
Year 5/6	R2	Participate in discussions about books that are read to them and those they can read for themselves, building on their own and others' ideas and challenging views courteously
	R3	Discussing words and phrases that capture the reader's interest and imagination
	R4	Recommending texts that they have read to their peers, giving reasons for their choices

First performed in 1606, Macbeth is a very popular play created by the famous playwright, William Shakespeare. Several of Shakespeare's plays are witty comedies, but Macbeth is a dark and terrible story, and is an example of a tragic play. The story is set in wild and war-torn Scotland around the same time the Vikings existed. Imagine yourself in a theatre. As the audience grows quiet and the lights become dim, the stage curtain rises. Everything begins with three mysterious witches...

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

A roll of thunder booms and a fork of lightning flashes brightly in the darkness. In a secret and lonely place the trio of cackling witches gather. They seek Macbeth.

'We will wait until the warrior's battles are lost and won,' they quickly decide, 'before the setting of the sun, we will approach him as he travels homeward.'

Macbeth and his loyal friend, Banquo, are both experienced generals in King Duncan's Scottish army. They have been bravely fighting in two long wars against Irish and Norwegian invaders, and they have finally been victorious! Weary and battle-scarred, but pleased with their success, they are slowly heading home. A mysterious and dark storm swirls strangely around them, soaking them to the skin and nearly blinding them. As they continue to trudge through the bitterly heavy rain, they catch sight of three shapes slowly appearing in front of them. Finally the shapes become clear... The three witches have arrived.

'Greetings to Macbeth, soon to be Lord of Cawdor!' one of the ugly witches announces shrilly to the soldiers and the storm.

'Greetings to Macbeth, who will be King soon after!' cries another cackling voice through the rain.

Macbeth and Banquo look at each other, puzzled. Who on earth are these witches? How could they possibly know the future? Will their predictions actually prove to be true? Macbeth is so astounded by their claims, that for a moment, he is speechless! Banquo, however, is bolder. Intrigued, he steps forward bravely.

'And what about me, you weird witches?' demands Banquo, eagerly. 'If you really can predict the future, tell me what lies ahead for me! I am not afraid.'

Did you know?

It is thought to be unlucky to say the word 'Macbeth' in a theatre. People call it 'The Scottish Play' instead!

'Your future... Hmm... Not so happy but also much happier!' proclaim the witches cryptically. 'You shall never be King, but your family will rule Scotland!'

Macbeth drags himself out of his shocked silence, desperate to ask more questions. But like smoke caught in the wind, the witches quickly vanish

without another word, and Macbeth's cries for answers are lost in the storm. Wondering at what they have just encountered, the two baffled men begin to march home again. Distracted by the questions flashing through their minds, they nearly miss the sound of approaching horses. Messengers from King Duncan arrive with some incredible news; the King has replaced the traitorous old Lord of Cawdor with Macbeth! Macbeth is completely astounded - the wild and weird witches are right! Will all their predictions come true? Will he actually be crowned as King? Macbeth hastily scribbles a brief letter to his wife to explain the astonishing situation.

Brainbox

'Is this a dagger which I see before me, the handle toward my hand?'

A little while later, Macbeth and Banquo return triumphantly to the gates of Macbeth's home, with King Duncan as their honoured guest. But the welcome is not as pleasant as it first appears. Lady Macbeth has read the letter and is consumed by evil desires, which she secretly explains to Macbeth.

'Kill Duncan tonight and claim the throne!' she whispers urgently. 'Don't hesitate. No one will uncover the truth if we are careful, and you will be crowned as King!'

At first, Macbeth is unsure and resists the idea, but his wife keeps pressuring him and eventually, he agrees to murder the King. Macbeth and his wife create an evil and cunning plot, and despite seeing a worrying vision of a bloody dagger, Macbeth decides to put the plan into action. Lady Macbeth gets the King's servants drunk, and once they are asleep Macbeth creeps silently into the slumbering King's bedroom like a hunter stalking his prey. Tightly grasping the servants' knives, Macbeth stands ready over the King's bed. An owl shrieks in the night. The King takes one...last... breath...

When the body is discovered, Macbeth immediately declares the guilt of the two servants and kills them, pretending he is outraged at Duncan's death. The murdered King has two sons called Malcolm and Donalbain who fear for their lives and quickly flee to England and Ireland, respectively. With no heir to claim King Duncan's throne, Macbeth is crowned as the new King of Scotland! The witches are right a second time! Rather than celebrating, however, Macbeth is more worried than ever. If the witches were right about him, could they be right about Banquo's children ruling over Scotland? Will they challenge or even kill Macbeth? Terrified, Macbeth hires some tough men to ambush Banquo and his son Fleance on the way to a feast. Banquo is killed but Fleance escapes. When he finds out his plan has failed, Macbeth is even more scared and soon comes face to face with the grisly sight of Banquo's ghost! His guests begin to wonder if he is losing his mind.

'Double, double toil and trouble; fire burn and cauldron bubble.'

Macbeth is now desperately seeking help and advice. Searching for answers, he hurries to find the three witches, finally discovering them in a huge cave which gapes like a dark mouth in the side of a mountain. The gruesome trio are busily chanting and throwing strange ingredients into a mysterious, bubbling cauldron.

'Help me!' begs Macbeth breathlessly, his wide eyes reflecting the witches' flickering fire. Slowly and carefully, the witches add yet more disgusting items to their potion. Colourful smoke begins to pour from the pot as one by one, three strange creatures rise from it. Each one delivers Macbeth a different message.

Brainbox

'Beware Macduff, the Lord of Fife!' moans the first creature loudly. Macbeth is worried and rushes to ask a question, but he is instantly silenced by the witches.

'You can't be hurt by any man who has been born from a woman!' screeches the second creature as it appears with a hiss from the hot liquid. Macbeth is understandably pleased. Surely this means he will never be hurt or killed! Whom should he fear now? Let Macduff do what he pleases!

'You are safe until the forest marches to your castle!' laughs the third creature wildly, and Macbeth is happier still. Everybody knows that trees do not move!

But his happiness is short lived. Before he can protest, the witches produce a vision of many golden-crowned kings in a line, followed by Banquo's grinning ghost. These are the rulers of Scotland who will come from Banquo's family! Macbeth becomes bitter and angry, shouting at the witches as they vanish, cursing his terrible visit. His rage grows quickly, burning like a forest fire until it consumes him. He orders that Macduff's home be attacked and everyone found there, killed.

Did you know?

Shakespeare wrote 'Macbeth' when King James I ruled England and Scotland. King James thought he was descended from Banquo. Could King James be one of the kings shown by the witches? Some people think Shakespeare put that vision in the play to make himself popular with the King!

Macduff, meanwhile, has seen how evil and dangerous Macbeth has become and without suspecting what Macbeth has planned, he flees to England to find an army. He plans to make Scotland safe again by killing Macbeth. Soon he reaches Duncan's son, Malcolm, who is living as a guest of King Edward (of England) and has gathered an army with the help of an English lord. While the two of them are talking, however, a sorrowful messenger arrives bearing terrible news. Macduff's family have been captured and horribly murdered by Macbeth's soldiers.

'Macbeth deserves to die for all the evil deeds he has done!' cries Malcolm angrily. 'Let your grief drive you to kill him!'

'We will fight Macbeth together!' howls Macduff, tears of rage and sorrow filling his eyes. The pair set out, hungry for revenge, marching swiftly with thousands of hard men to Scotland, to fight Macbeth.

'Behold, where stands the usurper's cursed head'

Macbeth remains in Scotland, waiting for his enemies and improving his strong castle. Lady Macbeth is consumed with worries that their crimes will be discovered and avenged, and soon her anxiety drives her mad. She is seen sleepwalking, muttering fearfully to herself and scrubbing at her hands, convinced they are covered in bloodstains which she cannot wash off. Full of pain and guilt, she dies, and when Macbeth hears what has happened he is almost overcome by hopelessness, wondering if there is any point in being alive. But he is still brave and refuses to give in, certain that the witches' messages mean he will survive.

Then, in the distance, a sight is seen which terrifies the murderous King. Beating drums and pounding footsteps begin to shake the ground. Malcolm and Macduff are leading their huge army towards Macbeth's fortress. To disguise how many soldiers are with them, the two leaders have cut down some nearby woodland and insisted that every man carry a leafy tree branch in front of them. The forest is advancing on Macbeth's castle! Fear feels like a cold and heavy stone in the King's chest. But still he clings to one, final hope. No man can harm him! The witches said so! They have been right about everything else!

'The only weapon which brings me any fear is the sword carried by a motherless man!' screams Macbeth desperately.

The two armies smash together in a huge and horrible battle. Macbeth is like a whirlwind, slashing, cutting, easily defeating every soldier he faces. Macduff is on the hunt, searching eagerly for him, wanting revenge. In the heart of the battle, the two enemies finally come face to face.

'Don't even bother attempting to fight me! You might as well hack at the air! I can't be wounded by any man who has been born!' laughs Macbeth confidently.

'Ha! Then now is the time for fear to fill you! I was not born the normal way!' Macduff shouts scornfully over the crashing and clashing of weapons and armour.

Macbeth's final hope is dead, and he knows that soon he will be too. With a desperate cry he charges wildly at Macduff. Their swords and shields smash together violently! Their epic fight rages all over the castle until eventually, Macduff beats Macbeth to the floor. With a howl of victory and a swing of his sword, he chops off Macbeth's head. The witches are proved right for the last time!

Brainbox

Put these events in the order that they happen in the story. (S2/2c)

- A. Macbeth is killed.
- B. Macbeth and Banquo see the witches.
- C. Macbeth's wife goes mad.
- D. Macbeth kills the king.
- E. Macbeth sees the witches.

The witches only say one thing to Banquo, but it scares Macbeth.

1. Why would Macbeth be worried about Banquo's children becoming kings? (P5/2d)

2. Why would Fleance's escape make Macbeth even more scared? (P5/2d)

Why does Macbeth go to the witches for a second time? (P5/2d)

In the whole play the witches say that six things will happen or be true in the future.

1. What is the sixth thing they say? (C6/2b)

2. What happens which shows the sixth thing they say is true? (C6/2b)

Macbeth is a play full of interesting characters.

1. Who do you think is the best or nicest character in the play? Why? (C4)

2. Who do you think is the worst or meanest character in the play? Why? (C4)

Two of these sentences about the story are true and two are false. Put 'True' or 'False' next to the right sentences. (C6/2b)

Brainbox

- A. The story takes place in Ireland. _____
- B. William Shakespeare wrote the play. _____
- C. Macduff was not born the normal way. _____
- D. Macbeth kills Macduff. _____

In this story the writer shows that every time a person decides to do something, other things happen because of what they do. What do you think is the biggest decision made by a character in the story? Why is the decision so important? Remember to think about what the decision leads to. (S2/2c)

Whose body is found before Macbeth blames the servants? (C6/2b)

The text you have just read does not just tell a story. Find and explain one way that the writer has used a different type of writing. (T4)

When she is speaking to Macbeth about killing King Duncan, Macbeth's wife 'whispers' to him. What does the word 'whispers' tell you about the plan and how she is feeling? (C1/2a)

Using the right tense is very important as a writer. Different tenses change how readers understand a text.

- 1. What tense has the writer used when telling the actual story of Macbeth? (T4)

2. How does using this tense help to make a reader feel like they are in a theatre watching the play? (C7)

Tick one word from the list which you think best describes Macbeth. Find and copy a sentence from the text and explain why you chose your word. (P5/2d)

- A. cruel
- B. clever
- C. foolish
- D. weak-minded
- E. strong-minded

Brainbox

'Behold, where stands the usurper's cursed head'.

Read the last section of the story again. Who do you think the 'cursed head' belonged to? (P5/2d)

What does the word 'trudge' tell you about Macbeth and Banquo as they walk through the storm? (C1/2a)

'With no heir to claim King Duncan's throne Macbeth is crowned as the new King of Scotland!'

1. What is an 'heir'? (C1/2a)

2. Which famous person has an heir in Britain today? (C3)

Find and explain one way which the writer creates suspense and tension when describing the scene where King Duncan is murdered. (L5/2g)

Put these events in the order that they happen in the story. (S2/2c)

- | | |
|--|---|
| A. Macbeth is killed. | 5 |
| B. Macbeth and Banquo see the witches. | 1 |
| C. Macbeth's wife goes mad. | 4 |
| D. Macbeth kills the king. | 2 |
| E. Macbeth sees the witches. | 3 |

The witches only say one thing to Banquo, but it scares Macbeth.

1. Why would Macbeth be worried about Banquo's children becoming kings? (P5/2d) **The other things the witches said have come true. If Banquo's children are going to become kings, they will have to get rid of Macbeth and his children.**
2. Why would Fleance's escape make Macbeth even more scared? (P5/2d) **Fleance escaping means that there is still a chance that what the witches said will come true. There is still someone from Banquo's family who could become king, and who might kill Macbeth to do it.**

Why does Macbeth go to the witches for a second time? (P5/2d) **He needs their help and is worried.**

In the whole play the witches say that six things will happen or be true in the future.

1. What is the sixth thing they say? (C6/2b) **That Macbeth is safe until trees move towards his castle.**
2. What happens which shows the sixth thing they say is true? (C6/2b) **Macduff and Malcolm's army arrives at Macbeth's castle carrying tree branches.**

Macbeth is a play full of interesting characters.

1. Who do you think is the best or nicest character in the play? Why? (C4) **Various answers; must be justified.**
2. Who do you think is the worst or meanest character in the play? Why? (C4) **Various answers; must be justified.**

Two of these sentences about the story are true and two are false. Put 'True' or 'False' next to the right sentences. (C6/2b)

Brainbox

- A. The story takes place in Ireland. **False**
- B. William Shakespeare wrote the play. **True**
- C. Macduff was not born the normal way. **True**
- D. Macbeth kills Macduff. **False**

In this story the writer shows that every time a person decides to do something, other things happen because of what they do. What do you think is the biggest decision made by a character in the story? Why is the decision so important? Remember to think about what the decision leads to. (S2/2c) **Various answers; must be justified.**

Whose body is found before Macbeth blames the servants? (C6/2b) **King Duncan's body**

The text you have just read does not just tell a story. Find and explain one way that the writer has used a different type of writing. (T4) **The writer has written a factual/non-fiction introduction before starting the fictional narrative. The writer has included quotations from the play.**

When she is speaking to Macbeth about killing King Duncan, Macbeth's wife 'whispers' to him. What does the word 'whispers' tell you about the plan and how she is feeling? (C1/2a) **She wants the plan to remain a secret and is nervous/concerned about being overheard and discovered. She knows how terrible it would be for their treachery to be discovered.**

Using the right tense is very important as a writer. Different tenses change how readers understand a text.

1. What tense has the writer used when telling the actual story of Macbeth? (T4) **Present tense**

2. How does using this tense help to make a reader feel like they are in a theatre watching the play? (C7) **The story is presented as happening live before the reader in real time, just as the action and dialogue of a play takes place in front of an audience live.**

Tick one word from the list which you think best describes Macbeth. Find and copy a sentence from the text and explain why you chose your word. (P5/2d)

- A. cruel
- B. clever
- C. foolish
- D. weak-minded
- E. strong-minded

Brainbox

Any selection is valid as long as it is justified by the copied sentence and explanation.

'Behold, where stands the usurper's cursed head'.

Read the last section of the story again. Who do you think the 'cursed head' belonged to?

(P5/2d) **Macbeth**

What does the word 'trudge' tell you about Macbeth and Banquo as they walk through the storm? (C1/2a) **Various answers possible along the lines of the following: they are tired; they are finding it slow and tedious to walk through the storm; they are discouraged by the harshness of the weather; they are determined to get home and have set their minds to keeping going in spite of their weariness and the weather.**

'With no heir to claim King Duncan's throne Macbeth is crowned as the new King of Scotland!'

- 1. What is an 'heir'? (C1/2a) **A person who is entitled to become King or Queen when the previous monarch dies.**
- 2. Which famous person has an heir in Britain today? (C3) **The Queen**

Find and explain one way which the writer creates suspense and tension when describing the scene where King Duncan is murdered. (L5/2g) **Various answers; must be justified. Some examples: short sentences; use of ellipses to mimic the King's breathing; others are possible.**

Comprehension

Year 1/2	C1/1a	Discussing word meanings, linking new meanings to known vocabulary
	C2	Answer simple, information retrieval questions about texts*
	C3	Drawing on what they already know from background information and vocabulary provided by the teacher
	C4	Discussing and expressing views about a wide range of texts
	C5/1c	Discussing the sequence of events in texts and how items of information are related
Year 3/4	C1/2a	Explaining the meaning of words in context
	C4	Discussing and expressing views about a wide range of texts
	C6/2b	Retrieve and record information from fiction and non-fiction
	C7	Identifying how language, structure and presentation contribute to meaning
Year 5/6	C1/2a	Exploring the meaning of words in context
	C4	Discussing and expressing views about a wide range of texts
	C6/2b	Retrieve, record and present information from fiction and non-fiction
	C7	Identifying how language, structure and presentation contribute to meaning
	C8/2h	Making comparisons within and across texts
	C9	Distinguish between statements of fact and opinion

Predictions and Making Inferences

Year 1/2	P1	Link the text to their own experiences
	P2/1e	Predicting what might happen on the basis of what has been read so far
	P3/1d	Making inferences on the basis of what is being said and done
	P4	Answering and asking questions
Year 3/4	P2/2e	Predicting what might happen from details stated and implied
	P4	Asking questions to improve their understanding
	P5/2d	Drawing inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justifying inferences with evidence
Year 5/6	P2/2e	Predicting what might happen from details stated and implied
	P4	Asking questions to improve their understanding
	P5/2d	Drawing inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justifying inferences with evidence

Language for Effect

Year 1/2	L1	Recognising and joining in with predictable phrases
	L2	Learning to appreciate rhymes and poems, and to recite some by heart with appropriate intonation to make the meaning clear
Year 3/4	L3	Using dictionaries to check the meaning of words they have read
	L4	Preparing poems and play scripts to read aloud and to perform, showing understanding through intonation, tone, volume and action
Year 5/6	L2	Learning a wider range of poetry by heart
	L4	Preparing poems and play scripts to read aloud and to perform, showing understanding through intonation, tone, volume and action so that the meaning is clear to an audience
	L5/2g	Discuss and evaluate the authors' use of language, including figurative language, including the impact on the reader and how meaning is enhanced through the author's choice of words and phrases
	L6/2f	Identify and explain how content is related and contributes to meaning as a whole

*not currently a curriculum objective

Summarising

Year 1/2	S1	Discussing the significance of the title and events
Year 3/4	S2/2c	Identifying main ideas drawn from more than one paragraph and summarising these
Year 5/6	S2/2c	Summarising from more than one paragraph, identifying key details which support the main ideas

Themes and Conventions

Year 1/2	T1/1b	Becoming very familiar with non-fiction and fiction, such as key stories, fairy stories and traditional tales, and retelling them
	T2/1b	Considering the particular characteristics of the above texts
Year 3/4	T3	Reading texts that are structured in different ways and reading for a range of purposes
	T4	Identifying themes and conventions in a wide range of texts
	T5	Recognising some different forms of poetry
Year 5/6	T2	Increasing their familiarity with a wide range of books, including myths, legends and traditional stories, modern fiction, fiction from our literary heritage, and texts from other cultures and traditions
	T4	Identifying and discussing themes and conventions in and across a wide range of writing

Reading for Pleasure

Year 1/2	R1	Listening to and discussing a wide range of fiction and non-fiction texts
	R2	Participate in discussion about texts, poems and other works that are read to them and those that they can read for themselves, taking turns and listening to what others say
	R3	Discussing their favourite words and phrases
Year 3/4	R1	Listening to and discussing a wide range of fiction and non-fiction texts
	R2	Participate in discussion about both texts that are read to them and those they can read for themselves, taking turns and listening to what others say
	R3	Discussing words and phrases that capture the reader's interest and imagination
Year 5/6	R2	Participate in discussions about books that are read to them and those they can read for themselves, building on their own and others' ideas and challenging views courteously
	R3	Discussing words and phrases that capture the reader's interest and imagination
	R4	Recommending texts that they have read to their peers, giving reasons for their choices

First performed in 1606, Macbeth is a very popular play created by the famous playwright, William Shakespeare. Several of Shakespeare's plays are witty comedies, but Macbeth is a dark and terrible tale; a tragedy. The play is set in wild and war-torn Scotland around the same time as the Vikings existed. Imagine yourself in a theatre. As the lights begin to dim a hush settles over the audience. The stage curtain rises slowly. Everything begins with three mysterious witches...

'When shall we three meet again; in thunder, lightning or in rain?' (Macbeth: Act 1, Scene 1)

Thunder booms as forked lightning streaks brightly across the face of the night. In a deserted place, the trio of cackling witches secretly gather. They seek Macbeth.

'We wait until the hurly burly's done; until the battles are lost and won,' they decide, 'before the setting of the sun. We will confront him as he travels homeward.'

Macbeth and his loyal comrade, Banquo, are both experienced generals in King Duncan's Scottish army. They have been engaged in two vicious wars against the invading Irish and Norwegian armies but they are finally victorious! Weary and battle-scarred, but flushed with success, they are wending their way home. A mysterious and ominous storm swirls strangely around them, soaking them to the skin and nearly blinding them. As they continue to trudge through whipping wind and the bitterly heavy downpour, three indistinct shapes begin to emerge in front of them. Slowly the shapes become clear... The three witches have arrived.

'Greetings to Macbeth, soon to be Lord of Cawdor!' one of the ugly witches announces shrilly to the soldiers and the storm.

'Greetings to Macbeth, destined for the crown!' cries another cackling voice through the rain.

Confusion is written across Macbeth and Banquo's faces. Who on earth are these hags? Are they soothsayers? Will their predictions actually come to pass? Macbeth is so astounded by their outrageous claims that for a moment he is struck completely dumb! Banquo however is intrigued, and steps forward boldly.

'And what about me, you weird witches?' demands Banquo, eagerly. 'If you really can predict the future, tell me where my path will lead me! I am not afraid.'

'Your future... Hmm... Not so happy but also much happier!' declare the witches cryptically. 'You shall never wear a crown, but your family will rule Scotland!'

Macbeth drags himself out of his shocked silence, desperate to make further enquiries. But like wisps of smoke caught in the wind, the witches abruptly vanish without another word, and Macbeth's cries for answers are lost in the storm. Wondering at what they have just encountered, the two

Did you know?

It is thought to be unlucky to say the word 'Macbeth' in theatre. People call it 'The Scottish Play' instead!

baffled warriors begin to march home again. Distracting questions flashing through their minds, they nearly miss the sound of approaching horses. Mounted messengers from King Duncan arrive with some dumbfounding news; the King has replaced the traitorous former Lord of Cawdor with Macbeth! Macbeth is completely astounded - the wild and weird witches are right!

Genius

Will all their predictions come true? Will Macbeth actually be crowned King? Stunned, he hastily scribbles a note to his wife outlining the astonishing situation.

'Is this a dagger which I see before me, the handle toward my hand?' (Act 2, Scene 1)

A little while later, the generals make a triumphant entrance through the gates of Macbeth's castle, celebrating with King Duncan as their honoured guest. But the welcome is not as genuine as it first appears. Lady Macbeth has read the letter and is consumed by evil desires, which she forces on her husband in secret.

'Assassinate Duncan tonight and claim the throne!' she whispers urgently, greed flickering in her eyes. 'Don't hesitate. No one will uncover the truth if we are careful, and you will be crowned as King!'

At first, Macbeth is reluctant and resists the idea, but his wife keeps pressuring him and accuses him of cowardice. His resistance falters and he eventually agrees to murder the King. Between them, they devise an evil and cunning plot, and despite seeing an ominous vision of a bloody dagger, Macbeth resolves to carry out the plan. Lady Macbeth gets the King's attendants drunk, and their loud snores conceal Macbeth's creeping footsteps as he slinks past them into the slumbering King's bedroom. Heart thumping, the hunter stalks his prey. One step closer... Duncan mutters quietly in his sleep. Another step closer... He settles, peaceful once more. A final step... Tightly grasping the servants' knives, Macbeth stands ready over the King's bed. An owl shrieks in the night. The King draws one... last... breath...

When the corpse is discovered, Macbeth immediately declares the guilt of the two servants and executes them himself, pretending he is outraged at Duncan's death. The murdered King's two sons, Malcolm and Donalbain, fear for their lives and hastily flee to England and Ireland respectively. With no remaining heir to claim King Duncan's throne, a choice is to be made. Macbeth is considered to be a worthy successor and finds himself crowned as the new King of Scotland. The witches are right a second time! Rather than celebrating, however, Macbeth finds himself more anxious than ever. If the witches were right in their predictions about him, perhaps they will be right about Banquo's children ruling over Scotland – will they challenge or even kill Macbeth?

Terrified, Macbeth hires some heartless mercenaries to ambush Banquo and his son Fleance on the way to a feast. Banquo is slain in the attack but Fleance escapes with his life. When the hired murderers report that they have only half succeeded, Macbeth becomes even more paranoid. When he attends the feast that evening, he finds himself confronted with the grisly sight of Banquo's ghost shaking its gory head at him! As only Macbeth is plagued by the vision, his guests begin to wonder if he is losing his mind.

Macbeth is now desperately seeking advice. With few options available he hurries to find the three witches, finally discovering them in a dim cave which gapes like a dark mouth in the side of a mountain. The gruesome trio are busy chanting and throwing vile ingredients into a mysterious, bubbling cauldron.

'Help me, you secret, evil and midnight hags!' demands Macbeth breathlessly, his wide eyes reflecting the witches' flickering fire. Slowly and rhythmically, the witches chant and sway, adding yet more disgusting substances to their potion; pig's blood, the sweat of a murderer...

Colourful fingers of smoke begin to snake and writhe upwards from the pot, twisting and knotting, twisting and knotting. One by one, three strange creatures emerge, delivering cryptic messages.

'Beware Macduff, the Lord of Fife!' moans the first creature grimly. Anxiously, Macbeth rushes to ask a question, but he is instantly silenced by the witches.

'You can't be harmed by any man who has been born from a woman!' screeches the second creature as it rises with a hiss from the scalding liquid. Macbeth is understandably reassured. Surely this means he will never be wounded or defeated! Whom should he fear now? Let Macduff do as he wills!

'You are secure until Birnam Forest marches to Dunsinane castle!' cackles the third creature wildly, and Macbeth is finally calmed. Trees are immovable!

But his happiness is short lived. Before he can protest the witches produce a parade of many golden-crowned kings, who are trailed by Banquo's grinning ghost. These are the noble rulers of Scotland who will rise from Banquo's family! Macbeth flies into a bitter rage, shouting at the witches as they vanish, cursing his terrible visit. His anger swells quickly, blazing like a forest fire until it consumes him and he orders a brutal attack on Macduff's home.

Meanwhile, Macduff has realised how treacherous and unstable Macbeth has become and without suspecting the attack, he flees to England to find an army. He plans to make Scotland safe again by defeating Macbeth. Soon he is reunited with Duncan's son Malcolm, who is living as a guest of King Edward (of England) and has gathered a fearsome army with the help of a nobleman called Lord Siward. While the two of them are discussing the situation, however, a sorrowful messenger arrives bearing terrible news. Macduff's family have been captured and horribly murdered by Macbeth's soldiers.

'Macbeth deserves to die for all the despicable deeds he has committed!' cries Malcolm angrily. 'Let your grief feed your desire for vengeance!'

'Together we will overthrow Macbeth!' howls Macduff, tears of rage and sorrow flooding his eyes. Without further hesitation, the two of them set out, hungry for revenge, marching swiftly with thousands of hard men to Scotland. To Dunsinane. To Macbeth.

'Hail king! For so thou art: behold, where stands the usurper's cursed head' (Act 5, Scene 8)

Macbeth remains in Scotland, preparing for his enemies by fortifying Dunsinane castle. Lady Macbeth is increasingly paranoid that their crimes will be discovered and avenged, and soon her anxiety drives her insane. She is seen sleepwalking, muttering fearfully to herself and vigorously scrubbing at her hands, convinced they are covered in permanent bloodstains. Wracked with pain and guilt she dies, and when Macbeth receives the news he is almost overcome by hopelessness, dismally contemplating the point of life. But he drums up courage and refuses to give in, certain that the witches' messages guarantee his survival.

Then, in the distance, a sight is seen which grips the murderous King's heart in the cold clutch of dread. Beating drums and pounding footsteps begin to make the ground tremble. Malcolm and Macduff are leading their huge army towards Macbeth's fortress. To disguise how many soldiers are with them, the two leaders have cut down tree branches from nearby Birnam Wood and insisted that every soldier carry a large, leafy branch in front of them. The forest is advancing on Dunsinane castle! Many of his soldiers are deserting him. Fear feels like a heavy stone in the King's chest. But still he clings desperately to one, final hope. No man can harm him! The witches said so! They have been correct about everything else!

'The only weapon I fear is the sword carried by a motherless man!' screams Macbeth defiantly, urging his remaining men into a frenzied charge. The two armies smash together in a dramatic battle. The noise of weapons and screams fills the air. Macbeth is like a whirlwind; slashing, cutting, easily defeating every soldier he faces. Macduff is alert, on the hunt, searching eagerly, craving revenge. In the heart of the battle, the two enemies finally come face to face.

'Don't waste your life attempting to fight me! You might as well hack at the air! I can't be wounded by any man who has been born!' Macbeth leers confidently.

Genius

'Ha! Then now is the time for fear to flood your veins! I was not born the normal way!' Macduff shouts scornfully over the wild clanging of blades and armour.

As Macbeth feels his final hope die, he knows that now he will too. With a desperate cry, he charges wildly at Macduff. Their swords and shields crash together violently! Their epic fight rages all over the castle until eventually, Macduff beats Macbeth to the floor. With a howl of victory and a swing of his sword, he severs Macbeth's head. The witches are proved right for the last time!

The lights come on and the stage curtain falls. As they leave the theatre, the audience cannot possibly forget Macbeth. The dark story dramatically shows how one evil and greedy decision leads to events spiralling out of control. So think carefully before you act and make sure to take heed of those three scheming witches!

Did you know?

Shakespeare wrote 'Macbeth' when King James I ruled England and Scotland. King James thought he was descended from Banquo. Could King James be one of the kings shown by the witches? Some people think Shakespeare put that vision in the play to make himself popular with the King!

Put these events in the order that they happen in the story. (S2/2c)

- A. Macbeth is killed.
- B. Macbeth and Banquo see the witches.
- C. Macbeth's wife goes mad.
- D. Macbeth kills the king.
- E. Macbeth sees the witches.

The witches only say one thing to Banquo, but it scares Macbeth.

1. Why would Macbeth be worried about Banquo's children becoming kings? (P5/2d)

2. Why would Fleance's escape make Macbeth even more scared? (P5/2d)

Why does Macbeth go to the witches for a second time? (P5/2d)

In the whole play the witches say that six things will happen or be true in the future.

1. What is the sixth thing they say? (C6/2b)

2. What happens which shows the sixth thing they say is true? (C6/2b)

Macbeth is a play full of interesting characters.

1. Who do you think is the best or nicest character in the play? Why? (C4)

2. Who do you think is the worst or meanest character in the play? Why? (C4)

Two of these sentences about the story are true and two are false. Put 'True' or 'False' next to the right sentences. (C6/2b)

Genius

- A. The story takes place in Ireland. _____
- B. William Shakespeare wrote the play. _____
- C. Macduff was not born the normal way. _____
- D. Macbeth kills Macduff. _____

In this story the writer shows that every time a person decides to do something, other things happen because of what they do. What do you think is the biggest decision made by a character in the story? Why is the decision so important? Remember to think about what the decision leads to. (S2/2c)

Whose body is found before Macbeth blames the servants? (C6/2b)

The text you have just read does not just tell a story. Find and explain one way that the writer has used a different type of writing. (T4)

When she is speaking to Macbeth about killing King Duncan, Macbeth's wife 'whispers' to him. What does the word 'whispers' tell you about the plan and how she is feeling? (C1/2a)

Using the right tense is very important as a writer. Different tenses change how readers understand a text.

1. What tense has the writer used when telling the actual story of Macbeth? (T4)

2. How does using this tense help to make a reader feel like they are in a theatre watching the play? (C7)

Tick one word from the list which you think best describes Macbeth. Find and copy a sentence from the text and explain why you chose your word. (P5/2d)

Genius

- A. cruel
- B. clever
- C. foolish
- D. weak-minded
- E. strong-minded

'Behold, where stands the usurper's cursed head'.

Read the last section of the story again. Who do you think the 'cursed head' belonged to? (P5/2d)

What does the word 'trudge' tell you about Macbeth and Banquo as they walk through the storm? (C1/2a)

'With no heir to claim King Duncan's throne Macbeth is crowned as the new King of Scotland!'

1. What is an 'heir'? (C1/2a)

2. Which famous person has an heir in Britain today? (C3)

Find and explain one way which the writer creates suspense and tension when describing the scene where King Duncan is murdered. (L5/2g)

What does it mean that the messengers from King Duncan are ‘mounted’? (C1/2a)

The four subheadings are each a quotation from William Shakespeare’s play script for ‘Macbeth’. What is useful about the writer of this text putting ‘Act’ and ‘Scene’ numbers after the quotation? Tick one answer. (L6/2f)

Genius

- A. It helps you to know who says the words.
- B. It helps you to know how many people are on stage.
- C. It helps you to look up where the quotation appears in the play script.
- D. It helps you to understand how many sentences are in the play script.

At the start of the story, Macbeth and Banquo are both trusted and honourable generals. But as the story moves on one is shown to be good, loyal and worthy while the other is revealed to be evil, treacherous and despicable. How does including the ‘Did you know?’ boxes help you to understand why Shakespeare chose to write about the characters this way? (L6/2f)

Put these events in the order that they happen in the story. (S2/2c)

- | | |
|--|---|
| A. Macbeth is killed. | 5 |
| B. Macbeth and Banquo see the witches. | 1 |
| C. Macbeth's wife goes mad. | 4 |
| D. Macbeth kills the king. | 2 |
| E. Macbeth sees the witches. | 3 |

The witches only say one thing to Banquo, but it scares Macbeth.

1. Why would Macbeth be worried about Banquo's children becoming kings? (P5/2d) **The other things the witches said have come true. If Banquo's children are going to become kings, they will have to get rid of Macbeth and his children.**
2. Why would Fleance's escape make Macbeth even more scared? (P5/2d) **Fleance escaping means that there is still a chance that what the witches said will come true. There is still someone from Banquo's family who could become king, and who might kill Macbeth to do it.**

Why does Macbeth go to the witches for a second time? (P5/2d) **He needs their help and is worried.**

In the whole play the witches say that six things will happen or be true in the future.

1. What is the sixth thing they say? (C6/2b) **That Macbeth is safe until trees move towards his castle.**
2. What happens which shows the sixth thing they say is true? (C6/2b) **Macduff and Malcolm's army arrives at Macbeth's castle carrying tree branches.**

Macbeth is a play full of interesting characters.

1. Who do you think is the best or nicest character in the play? Why? (C4) **Various answers; must be justified.**
2. Who do you think is the worst or meanest character in the play? Why? (C4) **Various answers; must be justified.**

Two of these sentences about the story are true and two are false. Put 'True' or 'False' next to the right sentences. (C6/2b)

Genius

- A. The story takes place in Ireland. **False**
- B. William Shakespeare wrote the play. **True**
- C. Macduff was not born the normal way. **True**
- D. Macbeth kills Macduff. **False**

In this story the writer shows that every time a person decides to do something, other things happen because of what they do. What do you think is the biggest decision made by a character in the story? Why is the decision so important? Remember to think about what the decision leads to. (S2/2c) **Various answers; must be justified.**

Whose body is found before Macbeth blames the servants? (C6/2b) **King Duncan's body**

The text you have just read does not just tell a story. Find and explain one way that the writer has used a different type of writing. (T4) **The writer has written a factual/non-fiction introduction before starting the fictional narrative. The writer has included quotations from the play.**

When she is speaking to Macbeth about killing King Duncan, Macbeth's wife 'whispers' to him. What does the word 'whispers' tell you about the plan and how she is feeling? (C1/2a) **She wants the plan to remain a secret and is nervous/concerned about being overheard and discovered. She knows how terrible it would be for their treachery to be discovered.**

Using the right tense is very important as a writer. Different tenses change how readers understand a text.

1. What tense has the writer used when telling the actual story of Macbeth? (T4) **Present tense**

2. How does using this tense help to make a reader feel like they are in a theatre watching the play? (C7) **The story is presented as happening live before the reader in real time, just as the action and dialogue of a play takes place in front of an audience live.**

Tick one word from the list which you think best describes Macbeth. Find and copy a sentence from the text and explain why you chose your word. (P5/2d)

Genius

- A. cruel
- B. clever
- C. foolish
- D. weak-minded
- E. strong-minded

Any selection is valid as long as it is justified by the copied sentence and explanation.

‘Behold, where stands the usurper’s cursed head’.

Read the last section of the story again. Who do you think the ‘cursed head’ belonged to? (P5/2d) **Macbeth**

What does the word ‘trudge’ tell you about Macbeth and Banquo as they walk through the storm? (C1/2a) **Various answers possible along the lines of the following: they are tired; they are finding it slow and tedious to walk through the storm; they are discouraged by the harshness of the weather; they are determined to get home and have set their minds to keeping going in spite of their weariness and the weather.**

‘With no heir to claim King Duncan’s throne Macbeth is crowned as the new King of Scotland!’

1. What is an ‘heir’? (C1/2a) **A person who is entitled to become King or Queen when the previous monarch dies.**
2. Which famous person has an heir in Britain today? (C3) **The Queen**

Find and explain one way which the writer creates suspense and tension when describing the scene where King Duncan is murdered. (L5/2g) **Various answers; must be justified. Some examples: short sentences; use of ellipses to mimic the King’s breathing; others are possible.**

What does it mean that the messengers from King Duncan are 'mounted'? (C1/2a) **It means they are riding horses.**

The four subheadings are each a quotation from William Shakespeare's play script for 'Macbeth'. What is useful about the writer of this text putting 'Act' and 'Scene' numbers after the quotation? Tick one answer. (L6/2f)

Genius

- A. It helps you to know who says the words.
- B. It helps you to know how many people are on stage.
- C. It helps you to look up where the quotation appears in the play script.**
- D. It helps you to understand how many sentences are in the play script.

At the start of the story, Macbeth and Banquo are both trusted and honourable generals. But as the story moves on one is shown to be good, loyal and worthy while the other is revealed to be evil, treacherous and despicable. How does including the 'Did you know?' boxes help you to understand why Shakespeare chose to write about the characters this way? (L6/2f)

Including facts about the play alongside the story helps a reader to understand how Shakespeare's motives might have influenced his writing. He would want to portray the ancestors of the king as brave, trustworthy and honourable (and their enemies as wicked) because that would please the king and make Shakespeare more popular.

Comprehension

Year 1/2	C1/1a	Discussing word meanings, linking new meanings to known vocabulary
	C2	Answer simple, information retrieval questions about texts*
	C3	Drawing on what they already know from background information and vocabulary provided by the teacher
	C4	Discussing and expressing views about a wide range of texts
	C5/1c	Discussing the sequence of events in texts and how items of information are related
Year 3/4	C1/2a	Explaining the meaning of words in context
	C4	Discussing and expressing views about a wide range of texts
	C6/2b	Retrieve and record information from fiction and non-fiction
	C7	Identifying how language, structure and presentation contribute to meaning
Year 5/6	C1/2a	Exploring the meaning of words in context
	C4	Discussing and expressing views about a wide range of texts
	C6/2b	Retrieve, record and present information from fiction and non-fiction
	C7	Identifying how language, structure and presentation contribute to meaning
	C8/2h	Making comparisons within and across texts
	C9	Distinguish between statements of fact and opinion

Predictions and Making Inferences

Year 1/2	P1	Link the text to their own experiences
	P2/1e	Predicting what might happen on the basis of what has been read so far
	P3/1d	Making inferences on the basis of what is being said and done
	P4	Answering and asking questions
Year 3/4	P2/2e	Predicting what might happen from details stated and implied
	P4	Asking questions to improve their understanding
	P5/2d	Drawing inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justifying inferences with evidence
Year 5/6	P2/2e	Predicting what might happen from details stated and implied
	P4	Asking questions to improve their understanding
	P5/2d	Drawing inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justifying inferences with evidence

Language for Effect

Year 1/2	L1	Recognising and joining in with predictable phrases
	L2	Learning to appreciate rhymes and poems, and to recite some by heart with appropriate intonation to make the meaning clear
Year 3/4	L3	Using dictionaries to check the meaning of words they have read
	L4	Preparing poems and play scripts to read aloud and to perform, showing understanding through intonation, tone, volume and action
Year 5/6	L2	Learning a wider range of poetry by heart
	L4	Preparing poems and play scripts to read aloud and to perform, showing understanding through intonation, tone, volume and action so that the meaning is clear to an audience
	L5/2g	Discuss and evaluate the authors' use of language, including figurative language, including the impact on the reader and how meaning is enhanced through the author's choice of words and phrases
	L6/2f	Identify and explain how content is related and contributes to meaning as a whole

*not currently a curriculum objective

Summarising

Year 1/2	S1	Discussing the significance of the title and events
Year 3/4	S2/2c	Identifying main ideas drawn from more than one paragraph and summarising these
Year 5/6	S2/2c	Summarising from more than one paragraph, identifying key details which support the main ideas

Themes and Conventions

Year 1/2	T1/1b	Becoming very familiar with non-fiction and fiction, such as key stories, fairy stories and traditional tales, and retelling them
	T2/1b	Considering the particular characteristics of the above texts
Year 3/4	T3	Reading texts that are structured in different ways and reading for a range of purposes
	T4	Identifying themes and conventions in a wide range of texts
	T5	Recognising some different forms of poetry
Year 5/6	T2	Increasing their familiarity with a wide range of books, including myths, legends and traditional stories, modern fiction, fiction from our literary heritage, and texts from other cultures and traditions
	T4	Identifying and discussing themes and conventions in and across a wide range of writing

Reading for Pleasure

Year 1/2	R1	Listening to and discussing a wide range of fiction and non-fiction texts
	R2	Participate in discussion about texts, poems and other works that are read to them and those that they can read for themselves, taking turns and listening to what others say
	R3	Discussing their favourite words and phrases
Year 3/4	R1	Listening to and discussing a wide range of fiction and non-fiction texts
	R2	Participate in discussion about both texts that are read to them and those they can read for themselves, taking turns and listening to what others say
	R3	Discussing words and phrases that capture the reader's interest and imagination
Year 5/6	R2	Participate in discussions about books that are read to them and those they can read for themselves, building on their own and others' ideas and challenging views courteously
	R3	Discussing words and phrases that capture the reader's interest and imagination
	R4	Recommending texts that they have read to their peers, giving reasons for their choices