

# GCSE Study - 'Macbeth' - Parental Knowledge Organiser

## Expectations and Content

### **What is this unit about and why do we teach it?**

Shakespeare's most popular play 'Macbeth' teaches us all how greed and ambition can be destructive. Macbeth struggles with his anxiety and demons after committing multiple murders for his own selfish gains. Students will be transported in time to the Jacobean era under the rule of James I.

### **Key terminology taught:**

- analytical paragraph
- context
- prose and verse
- comedic relief
- comparative sentences
- rhyme
- antithesis

### **Key vocabulary taught:**

- hamartia
- ambition
- domineering
- emasculating
- hypocritical
- patriarchal
- brutality
- spectre
- apparition
- supernatural

## If your child needs support

### **Suggested activities to help:**

- Re-read the play
- Summarise each act with five bullet points - showing a clear understanding of the key elements of each act
- Watch the animated tales version of the play to understand the plot:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qfnUq2\\_0FOY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qfnUq2_0FOY)
- Make a list of all the characters in the play and write a list of ambitious adjectives to describe them
- Revise the key terminology and key vocabulary
- Learn key quotations for each character and theme
- Randomly turn to a page in your core texts to analyse. Try to identify the themes shown on this page and explain how they are shown. Your answer could be written up in full paragraphs. Remember you must include terminology (devices), the effect on the reader and text, as well as context and cross-references to other parts of the text
- Create posters with lots of detail on how themes are shown in the text; each character's role/personality - include key quotations for these
- Encourage your child to access the resources on Google Classroom

## If your child needs extension

### **Questions to discuss with your child:**

- Is having power over someone or something good? Why?
- Identify examples in the play where Shakespeare is encouraging the audience not to be easily influenced?
- Are there any current or historical examples similar to Macbeth's rise and fall?
- Discuss what 'blood with have blood' could mean

### **Challenge activities to complete:**

- Research the 'great chain of being' and how this may have influenced some of Shakespeare's writing in 'Macbeth'
- Research James I's book: 'Demonology' and look at how witches were treated in the Jacobean era - why may Shakespeare have included them in his play?

### **Suggested further reading:**

- Modern version of the play:  
<https://nosweatshakespeare.com/plays/modern-macbeth/>
- 'Animal Farm' by George Orwell - classic allegory about an animal farm revolution which is filled with power struggles and deceit
- 'Lord of the Flies' by William Golding - complex allegory packed into a tale of struggle and survival
- 'The Weird Sisters' by Eleanor Brown - a tale of three sister coming back together after news of their mother's illness