

Macbeth

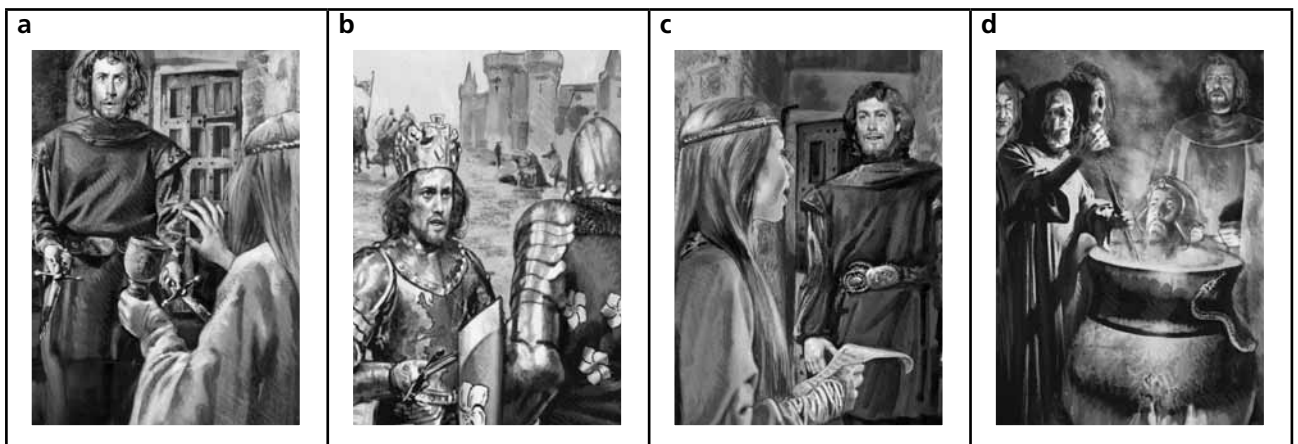
William Shakespeare

A Before Reading

- 1 Two major themes in *Macbeth* are ambition and the supernatural. In what ways can ambition be a positive or negative quality? And why was the theme of the supernatural important at the time the play was written?
- 2 Decide if the following statements about the play are True (T) or False (F).
 - a King Duncan loved and trusted Macbeth. T / F
 - b Macbeth didn't believe in the supernatural. T / F
 - c Lady Macbeth was not as ambitious as her husband. T / F
 - d Macbeth committed his first murder alone. T / F
 - e The witches tricked Macbeth. T / F

Read page 8 to check your answers.

- 3 a Here are some pictures of key scenes in the play. What can you see in each and in what order do you think they happen?



- b Match the following quotes from the play to the pictures in 3a. Write the correct letter (a–d) next to each quote.
 - 1 'You were not born of woman – yet I'll fight.' ____
 - 2 'Why did you bring these daggers from the room?' ____
 - 3 'Great Glamis! Worthy Cawdor! Greater than both As the three sisters promised!' ____
 - 4 'Macbeth, Macbeth, Macbeth! Beware Macduff! Beware the Thane of Fife!' ____

Check your answers as you read.

B While Reading

- 4 There are a lot of deaths in the play. As you read, make a note of who was killed and the person responsible. The first one is an example.

Who was killed?	Who was responsible?
<i>The rebels' leader</i>	<i>Macbeth</i>

- 5 a What adjectives can you use to describe these characters?

noble weak guilty trusting wicked ambitious brave loving fair loyal

- a Macbeth: _____
- b Lady Macbeth: _____
- c Banquo: _____
- d Duncan: _____

- b How do the characters of Macbeth and his wife change through the play?

- 6 a Things are not what they seem! Hallucinations – things that you see but are not really there – occur throughout the play. Make a note of the ones that Macbeth and Lady Macbeth had in these scenes.

Scene	Hallucination
Act 2, Scene 1	
Act 3, Scene 4	
Act 5, Scene 1	

- b Why do you think they have these hallucinations?

- 7 Read Macbeth's speech on page 87 and answer the questions.
- How does he see death?
 - What does he compare life to?
 - What does he compare people to?
 - What is the feeling of the speech?

C After Reading

- 8
- Imagine you are a film director. What actors would you cast in the roles of the main characters in *Macbeth*? Give reasons for your choices.
 - You are going to adapt your film to a modern-day setting. Decide these things:
 - Where is it set?
 - When is it set?
 - What are the main locations?
 - What do the characters do for a living?
 - Would you change any of the murders for different crimes?
- 9 In the scene in the picture the servant woman told the doctor about Lady Macbeth's strange behaviour.

Imagine you are Lady Macbeth's servant and you are concerned about her. Write a letter to a friend and tell her what has happened at the castle. Include how you heard about Duncan's murder and how Lady Macbeth has changed. Start your letter like this:

Dear Sally,

Things here at the castle have changed so much. First there was the terrible murder of the King. I was ...

