Macbeth Act 4, Scene 1.

A desolate place near Forres
In the middle, a boiling cauldron.
Thunder. Enter the three Witches

First Witch
Thrice the brinded cat hath mew'd.

Second Witch
Thrice and once the hedge-pig whined.

Third Witch
Harpier cries 'Tis time, 'tis time.

First Witch
Round about the cauldron go;
In the poison'd entrails throw.
Toad, that under cold stone
Days and nights has thirty-one
Swelter'd venom sleeping got,
Boil thou first i' the charmed pot.

All
Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire burn and cauldron bubble.

Second Witch
Fillet of a fenny snake,
In the cauldron boil and bake;
Eye of newt and toe of frog,
Wool of bat and tongue of dog,
Adder's fork and blind-worm's sting,
Lizard's leg and owlet's wing,
For a charm of powerful trouble,
Like a hell-broth boil and bubble.

All
Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire burn and cauldron bubble.

Third Witch
Scale of dragon, tooth of wolf,
Witches' mummy, maw and gulf
Of the ravin'd salt-sea shark,
Root of hemlock digg'd i' the dark,
Liver of blaspheming Jew,
Gall of goat, and slips of yew
Silver'd in the moon's eclipse,
Nose of Turk and Tartar's lips,
Finger of birth-strangled babe
Ditch-deliver'd by a drab,
Make the gruel thick and slab:
Add thereto a tiger's chaudron,
For the ingredients of our cauldron.

All
Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire burn and cauldron bubble.

Second Witch
Cool it with a baboon's blood,
Then the charm is firm and good.

Assonance is the repetition of vowel sounds.

Listing is piling up words or phrases to increase dramatic effect by intensifying description, atmosphere or argument. It can also add authenticity or show subject knowledge. This list is probably the most famous example of the method.

Dramatic Effect
Stage directions. Describes the setting of the scene. Sound effects of thunder. The witches enter the audiences field of view.
1. What kind of atmosphere would this setting help to achieve?
2. How would the witches enter?

Adverbial clauses are used to contrast or define time and place.

Trust me.
I’m an actor.

Alliteration is the repetition of consonants, usually at the beginning of words. Find another example in this line.

Language Summary
Shakespeare decides to write the spell in rhyming couplets. He doesn't use iambic pentameter (usually 10 syllables with 5 beats per line/ closest meter to natural speech). Instead he uses tetrameter, with less syllables per line (4 beats per line/ The witches' dialogue usually has 4 beats per line too) They are supernatural beings therefore Shakespeare makes them speak in an unnatural way. The combined overall effect of the above, plus alliteration, listing, assonance and onomatopoeia, is a faster, more rhythmic, extremely descriptive (creating visual imagery and aural imagery) form of language ideally suited for spells or chanting.
Enter HECATE to the other three Witches

HECATE
O well done! I commend your pains; And every one shall share i' the gains; And now about the cauldron sing, Live elves and fairies in a ring, Enchanting all that you put in.

Music and a song: 'Black spirits,' &c

HECATE retires

Second Witch
By the pricking of my thumbs, Something wicked this way comes. Open, locks, Whoever knocks!

Enter MACBETH

MACBETH
How now, you secret, black, and midnight hags! What is't you do?

ALL
A deed without a name.

MACBETH
I conjure you, by that which you profess, Howe'er you come to know it, answer me: Though you untie the winds and let them fight Against the churches; though the yesty waves

Hecate appears to be in charge of the other witches. Hecate: the Goddess of sorcery and Witchcraft. The chief symbol of Hecate, oddly enough, is the crossroads, and her name means "She who works from afar". In general, and for obvious reasons, the myth symbology of the ancients dealt with great natural forces or significant human concerns -- the Sun, the Moon, thunder, the hunt, growth of crops, love, sex, childbirth, and so on. Crossroads are psychically potent sites, for at this point travelers center in the triumvirate of time: the past, the road behind; the present, where they stand; and the future, where the roads ahead vanish into the horizon. Different directions, different destinies. It is Hecate who can see down the road not yet taken. She is often depicted with a flaming torch in each hand, bringing light to darkness and clarifying the unknown.

First Witch
Speak.

Second Witch
Demand.

Third Witch
We'll answer.

First Witch
Say, if thou'dst rather hear it from our mouths, Or from our masters?

MACBETH
Call 'em; let me see 'em.

First Witch
Pour in sow's blood, that hath eaten Her nine farrow; grease that's sweaten Into the flame.

ALL
Come, high or low;

Confound and swallow navigation up; Though bladed corn be lodged and trees blown down; Though castles topple on their warders' heads; Though palaces and pyramids do slope Their heads to their foundations; though the treasure Of nature's germens tumble all together, Even till destruction sicken; answer me To what I ask you.

Witches add blood from a pig that ate its young: Macbeth is a tyrant who is ruining or eating up his own kingdom. Macbeth is also a murderer.

If Macbeth was a good king would he risk all these terrible things happening to his kingdom and the people he is responsible for?
Thyself and office deftly show!

_Thunder. First Apparition: an armed Head_

**MACBETH**
Tell me, thou unknown power,--

**First Witch**
He knows thy thought:
Hear his speech, but say thou nought.

**First Apparition**
Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth! beware Macduff;
Beware the thane of Fife.
Dismiss me. Enough.

**MACBETH**
Whate'er thou art, for thy good caution, thanks;
Thou hast harp'd my fear aright: but one word more,--

**First Witch**
He will not be commanded: here's another,
More potent than the first.

**MACBETH**
What'ere thou art, for thy good caution, thanks;
Thou hast harp'd my fear aright: but one word more,--

**First Apparition**
Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth! beware Macduff; _Beware the thane of Fife_. Dismiss me. Enough.

**Descends**

**MACBETH**
Then live, Macduff; what need I fear of thee?
But yet I'll make assurance double sure,
And take a bond of fate: thou shalt not live;
That I may tell pale-hearted fear it lies,
And sleep in spite of thunder.

**Thunder. Third Apparition: A bloody Child**

**Second Apparition**
Be bloody, bold, and resolute; laugh to scorn
The power of man, for none of woman born
Shall harm Macbeth.

**Descends**

**MACBETH**
Be lion-mettled, proud; and take no care
Who chafes, who frets, or where conspirers are:
Macbeth shall never vanquish'd be until
Great Birnam wood to high Dunsinane hill
Shall come against him.
Descends

MACBETH

That will never be
Who can impress the forest, bid the tree
Unfix his earth-bound root? Sweet bodements! good!
Rebellion's head, rise never till the wood
Of Birnam rise, and our high-placed Macbeth
Shall live the lease of nature, pay his breath
To time and mortal custom. Yet my heart
Throbs to know one thing: tell me, if your art
Can tell so much: shall Banquo's issue ever
Reign in this kingdom?

ALL

Seek to know no more.

MACBETH

I will be satisfied: deny me this,
And an eternal curse fall on you! Let me know.
Why sinks that cauldron? and what noise is this?

Hautboys

First Witch

Show!

Second Witch

Show!

Macbeth sees all the descendants of Banquo. The second prophecy from the first meeting with the witches will still come true. Remember Fleance (Banquo's son) escaped Macbeth's assassins and will have children who will be kings. King James 1st, the king this play was especially designed to appeal to was thought to be one of those descendants. The glass (a mirror) would have allowed King James 1st to see his reflection being carried on the stage as he watched the play. A very clever stage trick. He was also considered an expert on the subject of witches.

But then he asks this question which disappoints him. The witches try to convince him not to ask the question.

Third Witch

Show!

ALL

Show his eyes, and grieve his heart;
Come like shadows, so depart!

A show of Eight Kings, the last with a glass in his hand;
GHOST OF BANQUO following

MACBETH

Thou art too like the spirit of Banquo: down!
Thy crown does sear mine eye-balls. And thy hair,
Thou other gold-bound brow, is like the first.
A third is like the former. Filthy hags!
Why do you show me this? A fourth! Start, eyes!
What, will the line stretch out to the crack of doom?
Another yet! A seventh! I'll see no more:
And yet the eighth appears, who bears a glass
Which shows me many more; and some I see
That two-fold balls and treble scepters carry:
Horrible sight! Now, I see, 'tis true;
For the blood-bolter'd Banquo smiles upon me,
And points at them for his.

Apparitions vanish

What, is this so?

First Witch

Ay, sir, all this is so: but why
Stands Macbeth thus amazedly?
Come, sisters, cheer we up his sprites,

This line is directed right at King James 1st

Macbeth is very disturbed by what he sees. He was warned that he would not like it too.

The witches ask why he is surprised, everything they have said so far has come true.
And show the best of our delights:
I'll charm the air to give a sound,
While you perform your antic round:
That this great king may kindly say,
Our duties did his welcome pay.

Music. The witches dance and then vanish, with HECATE

MACBETH
Where are they? Gone? Let this pernicious hour
Stand aye accursed in the calendar!
Come in, without there!

Enter LENNOX

LENNOX
What's your grace's will?

MACBETH
Saw you the weird sisters?

LENNOX
No, my lord.

MACBETH
Came they not by you?

LENNOX
No, indeed, my lord.

MACBETH
Came they not by you?

LENNOX
No, my lord.

MACBETH
Infected be the air whereon they ride;
And damn'd all those that trust them! I did hear
The galloping of horse: who was't came by?

LENNOX
'Tis two or three, my lord, that bring you word
Macduff is fled to England.

MACBETH
Fled to England!

LENNOX
Ay, my good lord.

MACBETH
Time, thou anticipatest my dread exploits:
The flighty purpose never is o'ertook
Unless the deed go with it; from this moment
The very firstlings of my heart shall be
The firstlings of my hand. And even now,
To crown my thoughts with acts, be it thought and done:
The castle of Macduff I will surprise;
Seize upon Fife; give to the edge o' the sword
His wife, his babes, and all unfortunate souls
That trace him in his line. No boasting like a fool;
This deed I'll do before this purpose cool.
But no more sights!--Where are these gentlemen?
Come, bring me where they are.

Macduff has fled to England where Duncan’s son, Malcolm, the rightful King of Scotland, is hiding out. Macbeth acts on the first apparition’s prophecy and decides to attack Macduff’s castle in Scotland. Macbeth shows just how much of an evil tyrant he has become. He orders the execution of innocent women and babies.

Macbeth really didn’t have a reason to fear Macduff before he ordered this attack. Later in the play, when Macduff hears about the slaughter of his entire family he wants revenge. He wants to kill Macbeth. Macbeth, by killing Macduff’s family, has given himself a reason to fear Macduff. Remember that nobody knows at this point that Macduff was born by caesarean section and therefore technically “not born of woman”: he can kill Macbeth. Malcolm and Macduff’s men will chop down Birnam wood and carry it as camouflage when they attack Dunsinane Castle. The Apparitions’ prophecies come true but not as Macbeth expects. They have double meanings and they are equivocations of the truth.