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Introduction



This GCSE pack is designed as a 'route through' *Macbeth*, with teaching ideas, accompanying resources and suggestions for differentiation. The pack is based on core assessment objectives for GCSE English Literature (2015) and is designed to be flexible, creative and engaging. It contains all of the resources you need for teaching this unit of work, most of which were written specifically for this pack.

The pack has been devised for use with the AQA, Edexcel, OCR and WJEC Eduqas specifications for GCSE English Literature. The activities and ideas will help students to develop a close understanding of the text, explore its social, cultural and historical contexts, consider Shakespeare's intentions and staging options, and analyse his use of language and structure.

The pack has five lessons per act, with a selection of starter, main and plenary activities (that you can mix and match), as well as exam practice questions specific for each exam board.

Throughout the pack you'll find activities which directly address the various assessment objectives for the GCSE English Literature exam. To help you select activities relevant to the outcomes for which you're teaching, we've included specification grids and matched the activities outlined in the route through to the appropriate assessment objectives.

Accessing the resources in this pack

We've included links to resources and interactive resources on the Teachit English site where applicable.

Our thanks go to contributor Angela Topping who has written this pack and the accompanying resources.

If you have any questions about the pack, please get in touch: email support@teachit.co.uk or call us on 01225 788850. Alternatively, you might like to give some feedback for other Teachit members - you can do this by adding a comment on the [Macbeth teaching pack page](#) on Teachit English.

Lesson 10 - Shakespeare's language (Act 2 Scenes 1-3)

Starter activities

- Language adaptation: Ask students to answer the following questions in response to being asked by a) a close friend or b) the head teacher:
 1. What did you do at the weekend?
 2. What plans do you have for the next school holiday?

They should think about how their topic and language choices varied according to their audience. Shakespeare considers his audience using word choices too. Display the following quotation on the whiteboard, and ask students to consider the question that follows. When Macbeth's hands are covered with blood after the murder, he says:

*'Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood
Clean from my hand? No: this my hand will rather
The multitudinous seas in incarnadine,
Making the green one red.'*

'Incarnadine' means to make red, so why does the next line say the same thing in simpler words? You could suggest that Shakespeare was writing for a wide audience and he has included both for clarity of meaning. (A02)

- 'Look like th'innocent flower, / But be the serpent under't': Using the interactive Matching activity [Look like the innocent flower \(Resource 19\)](#), students should match up Macbeth's words throughout Act 2 with the truth he hides beneath them. You could ask students to find further examples and explain the connection with the theme of appearance and reality in the play. (A01, A02)

Main activities

- Levels of language: Using [Levels of language \(Resource 20\)](#), explore the contrasts between prose and poetry in the play so far. In task three, students may well think that Macbeth and Lady Macbeth speak in prose, but in fact Shakespeare splits an iambic pentameter between his two speakers. (A02)

- **Themes:** Ask students to mind map the development of the key themes in the play so far. You could use [Themes in the play \(Resource 21\)](#) to help students begin, as well as providing quotations for students who need support. More able students could be given fewer quotations as a starting point, and include their own quotations or key events as evidence. You could return to this activity at a later point in the play, or complete it as a revision activity. (A01, A02)
- **Theme sorting:** As an alternative to creating mind maps for themes, students could sort the quotations in the resource [Themes in the play \(Resource 21\)](#) into relevant themes, and consider the context of some of the quotations to discuss their importance and how they contribute to the relevant theme's development. (A01, A02)

Plenary activities

- **Recap on language levels:** More able students could look back over the two acts they have studied and identify examples of different types of language levels used in specific sections. They suggest ideas about why this level was chosen at that point. (A02)
- **Just a Minute:** In pairs, students talk about their understanding of each theme from either of the theme tasks. Based on the rules of the popular Radio 4 show, give them a one minute time limit per person, and remind them that they can't repeat, hesitate or deviate! Their partner should take over if they don't manage it. (A01)

Like the innocent flower



We've included a screenshot of the interactive version here so you can see the resource. To access this resource please log in to the [Teachit English website](#) and type '26804' into the search bar.

Drag the tiles on the right up or down to match Macbeth's words with the truth he is hiding.

'I think not of them'	Macbeth says that Duncan was superior to other mortals (yet he killed him).
'I'll bring you to him'	Macbeth uses language full of elaborate imagery to describe the brutal murder he committed.
'What is't you say, the life?'	Macbeth knows what has happened to the king, and pretends that nothing has happened.
'The wine of life' / 'The mere lees'	Macbeth has been haunted by the words of the weird sisters.
'silver skin laced with his golden blood'	Macbeth makes an understatement of the weather (as well as what he has done).
'Twas a rough night'	Macbeth pretends to not understand Macduff's news that the king is dead.

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Levels of language

Shakespeare's plays were written to be played in daylight on an open air stage. To give a range of intensity and focus, whereas in modern times a director might use lighting, and a film director would use different shots, such as close up and long shots, Shakespeare uses different styles of language.

Auditorium of the Garden Theatre at Herrenhausen, Hanover / Credit: Lebrecht / Universal Images Group / Universal Images Group / Copyright © Lebrecht Music & Arts/ For Education Use Only. This and millions of other educational images are available through Britannica Image Quest. For a free trial, please visit www.britannica.co.uk/trial



The levels are (in increasing levels of intensity):

- Prose - most like normal speech, it is often used for comedy characters and moments of relaxed talk.
- Blank verse - iambic pentameter without rhyme, used for the bulk of a play and lines are easier to remember.
- Rhymed verse - also iambic pentameter, but with the addition of rhyme.
- Song - used to give texture and variety, rhymed but not usually iambic. Mostly used by the witches in *Macbeth*.

Task one

Prose

The Porter's speeches in Act 2 Scene 3 are in prose. Read the reasons for this below, and decide on which is the strongest argument for the Porter speaking in prose. Rank these from 1-4 (1 being the strongest reason, 4 being the weakest).

Low born character	
Relief of tension	
Comedy	
Contrast from how noble characters speak	

Task two

Blank verse

Look at Macbeth's soliloquy 'Is this a dagger which I see before me'. Macbeth is under the spotlight here. Why is this written in blank verse? List some reasons.

-
-
-
-

Rhymed verse

At the end of this speech some rhymes appear. Find them. Why do you think they are used?

.....
.....

Task three

Look back at the dialogue between Lady Macbeth and Macbeth after he has killed Duncan. Using your knowledge, what level of language do you think Shakespeare is using here?

Macbeth: I have done the deed. Didst thou not hear a noise?
Lady Macbeth: I heard the owl scream and the crickets cry.
Did not you speak?
Macbeth: When?
Lady Macbeth: Now.
Macbeth: As I descended?
Lady Macbeth: Ay.
Macbeth: Hark, who lies i'th'second chamber?
Lady Macbeth: Donaldbain.
Macbeth: This is a sorry sight.

Why do you think he does this? How would you deliver these lines on stage?

.....
.....
.....

Themes in the play

Shakespeare introduces and develops themes throughout the play.

Here are some of the themes introduced in Act 1 and Act 2:

Appearance and reality	what is real and what only seems real, what lies are told, who is fooled
Order and disorder	how stable the government is, the weather, people's minds
Ambition	how the desire to be rich or important affects people
Evil and the supernatural	how someone can be corrupted by wickedness
Violence	threats, emotions and actual violence
Guilt and conscience	Macbeth is a focus for this theme, along with Lady Macbeth
What makes a king?	this question is asked throughout the play
Loyalty	Banquo and Macduff are important for this theme

Create a mind map of the themes.

Use a different colour for each theme, and add characters and quotations or events on the branches.

Quotation cards

In every point twice done and then done
double,
Were poor and single business to contend
Against those honours deep and broad
wherewith
Your majesty loads our house.

I have no spur
To prick the sides of my intent, but only
Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself
And falls on th'other -

Your face, my thane, is as a book where men
May read strange matters. To beguile the
time,
Look like the time, bear welcome in your eye,
Your hand, your tongue; look like th'innocent
flower,
But be the serpent under't.

Stars, hide your fires,
Let not light see my black and deep desires,
The eye wink at the hand. Yet let that be,
Which the eye fears when it is done to see.

Fair is foul, and foul is fair:

Glamis, and Thane of Cawdor:
The greatest is behind.

Were such things here as we do speak about?
Or have we eaten on the insane root,
That takes the reason prisoner?

Nature seems dead, and wicked dreams abuse
The curtained sleep. Witchcraft celebrates
Pale Hecate's off'rings, and withered murder,
Alarumed by his sentinel, the wolf,
Whose howl's his watch, thus with his
stealthy pace,
With Tarquin's ravishing strides, towards his
design
Moves like a ghost.

Why, worthy thane,
You do unbend your noble strength to think
So brain-sickly of things.

Come to my woman's breasts
And take my milk for gall, you murd'ring
ministers,
Wherever in your sightless substances
You wait on nature's mischief.

By th'clock, 'tis day
And yet dark night strangles the travelling
lamp.
Is't night's predominance, or the day's
shame,
That darkness does the face of earth entomb
When living light should kiss it?

But 'tis strange,
And oftentimes, to win us to our harm,
The instruments of darkness tell us truths;
Win us with honest trifles, to betray's
In deepest consequence.

I have given suck and know
How tender 'tis to love the babe that milks
me:
I would, while it was smiling in my face,
Have plucked my nipple from his boneless
gums
And dashed the brains out, had I so sworn
As you have done to this.

Our eldest, Malcolm, whom we name
hereafter
The Prince of Cumberland, which honour
must
Not unaccompanied invest him only,
But signs of nobleness like stars shall shine
On all deservers.

Come, thick night,
And pall thee in the dunnest smoke of hell,
That my keen knife see not the wound it
makes,

Duncan
Hath borne his faculties so meek, hath been
So clear in his great office, that his virtues
Will plead like angels, trumpet-tongued
against
The deep damnation of his taking-off.

with his brandished steel
Which smoked with bloody execution,
Like Valour's minion carved out his passage
Till he faced the slave,
Which ne'er shook hands, nor bade farewell
to him,
Till he unseamed him from the nave to
th'chaps
And fixed his head upon our battlements.

A little water clears us of this deed.

He's here in double trust:
First, as I am his kinsman and his subject,
Strong both against the deed; then, as his
host,
Who should against his murderer shut the
door,
Not bear the knife myself.

There's no art
To find the mind's construction in the face.
He was a gentleman on whom I built
An absolute trust.

merciful powers,
Restrain in me the cursèd thoughts that
nature
Gives way to in repose.

Knock, knock, knock. Who's there, i'th' name
of
Beelzebub? Here's a farmer, that hanged
himself on th' expectation of plenty. Come in
time - have napkins enough about you, here
you'll sweat for't.

Still it cried 'Sleep no more' to all the house;
'Glamis hath murdered sleep', and therefore
Cawdor
Shall sleep no more: Macbeth shall sleep no
more.

still keep
My bosom franchised and allegiance clear,

Teacher's answer sheet

These are the suggested themes for the quotations, although of course there is not an exact fit with a single theme.

Appearance and reality

'In every point twice done and then done double ...'
'Your face, my thane, is as a book ...'
'Fair is foul, and foul is fair:'
'There's no art ...'

Order and disorder

'Were such things here as we do speak about? ...'
'Why, worthy thane ...'
'By th'clock, 'tis day ...'

Ambition

'I have no spur ...'
'Stars, hide your fires ...'
'Glamis, and Thane of Cawdor ...'

Evil and the supernatural

'Nature seems dead ...'
'Come to my woman's breasts ...'
'But 'tis strange ...'
'Knock, knock, knock. Who's there, i'th' name of Beelzebub? ...'

Violence

'I have given suck and know ...'
'Come, thick night, ...'
'with his brandished steel ...'

Guilt and conscience

'A little water clears us of this deed.'
'He's here in double trust: ...'
'merciful powers, ...'
'Still it cried 'Sleep no more' to all the house; ...'

What makes a king?

'Our eldest, Malcolm, whom we name hereafter ...'
'Duncan / Hath borne his faculties so meek ...'

Loyalty

'still keep
My bosom franchised and allegiance clear,'