

Macbeth

(published in 1623)

by William Shakespeare

Approved for use in Grade 10 and 12 AP Literature and Composition

Summary of the Work: <i>Macbeth</i> is a tragedy by William Shakespeare about a Scottish general who, spurred by ambition and prophecies from witches, murders King Duncan to seize the throne. The drama follows Macbeth's descent into madness and tyranny, ultimately leading to his downfall. The play explores the themes of ambition, the supernatural, guilt, and the corrupting influence of power.	Rationale: <i>Macbeth</i> utilizes rich language, giving students the opportunity to read and analyze a wide array of literary and poetic devices. The narrative is multi-layered, featuring complex characters and profound themes that are still relevant today. The play also provides students the opportunity to delve into the beauty and complexity of Shakespearean English, enhancing language proficiency and comprehension skills. This play is often considered a gateway to the Elizabethan era. Studying <i>Macbeth</i> offers insights into the socio-political realities of Shakespeare's time, including concepts of monarchy, societal hierarchy, and other prevailing belief systems. The examination of ethical dilemmas challenges students to evaluate value systems and the consequences of personal choices.
Professional Reviews and/or Critical Essays:	Noted Distinctions: <i>Macbeth</i> has been adapted across film, television, and even musical theater, which is evidence of its continued cultural significance.
Notes on the Text: This play is included in our <i>Collections</i> textbook at Grade 10.	Connection to the Curriculum: At the grade 10 level students read Act I and write a literary analysis and essay, arguing for who is most responsible for the murder of King Duncan. AP students read and analyze the full text with close passage analysis and annotation in preparation for the Grade 12 AP exam.

Additional Connections: