

How to write notes for Shakespeare

Shakespeare's plays tend to have **protagonists** (main characters) that the play is based around. For Macbeth, as suggested by the title this is Macbeth (by extension Lady Macbeth is too due to her name being alluded to in the title and her also driving the plot). The same with Romeo and Juliet, the title tells us who the protagonists are.

MINOR CHARACTERS

- For more minor characters we'd recommend **2-3 quotes** for each
- If they're not the protagonist, but still contribute largely to the plot of the play (e.g. the Witches from Macbeth) go for the higher amount of quotes, for example around 3 (4 if you want to be on the safer side) as you could be asked a question just on them
- If you look at R+ J it is unlikely you'd just be asked a question on Lady Capulet, perhaps she may be in the extract they give you, but she would link to larger themes of familial feuds etc. Therefore **2-3 quotes** is sufficient

PROTAGONIST

- We'd recommend **5-6 key quotes per protagonist** (7-8 if you're pushing yourself and want to ensure you're extra prepared for any question!)
- So we'd roughly recommend **1 key quote per theme** (look at our theme tables for help, then look at our documents of analysis for more detailed analysis on each quote)
- Each quote doesn't have to be exactly from each theme, but as long as you've got quotes that you could explain to fit different themes then that works!

CONTEXT

- Know each bit of context and roughly how it links.
- Off the top of your head you should be able to name the 5-6 main bits of context and what it means
- Look at our context sheets for these!

LUCKILY

The hub has all the **analysis and context done for you**. We'd recommend **summarising it**, writing it in your **own words** in your tables/ sheets and then revising it (see the different revision methods we have on this section). If you're struggling with which quote goes with which theme, have a look at the **theme tables on the hub**. With most quotes too, they will fit into more than one theme. So as long as you can link and explain that in the exam, then you'll be absolutely fine!

Example from Macbeth:

VIOLENCE	AMBITION	SUPERNATURAL	APPEARANCE VS REALITY	GUILT	GENDER
<p><u>"Before my body, I throw my war like shield"</u></p> <p>As a 'shield' connotes protection, it shows Macbeth desperately wants to protect and preserve his former noble image of him being a "worthy" and "valiant" soldier. As his last words contain a violent semantic field, it shows how his ambitious and violent nature has directly caused his fall from grace.</p>	<p>Look at theme table on the hub and watch videos on there to make these tables :)</p>	<p>Look at theme table on the hub and watch videos on there to make these tables :)</p>	<p>Look at theme table on the hub and watch videos on there to make these tables :)</p>	<p>Look at theme table on the hub and watch videos on there to make these tables :)</p>	<p>Look at theme table on the hub and watch videos on there to make these tables :)</p>