



Playwright



William Shakespeare

# The Tragedy of Macbeth, Act II

## Concept Vocabulary

You will encounter the following words as you read Act II of *The Tragedy of Macbeth*. Before reading, note how familiar you are with each word. Then, rank the words in order from most familiar (1) to least familiar (6).

WORD	YOUR RANKING
allegiance	
stealthy	
equivocate	
sacrilegious	
counterfeit	
breach	

After completing the first read, come back to the concept vocabulary and review your rankings. Mark changes to your original rankings as needed.

## First Read DRAMA

### Tool Kit

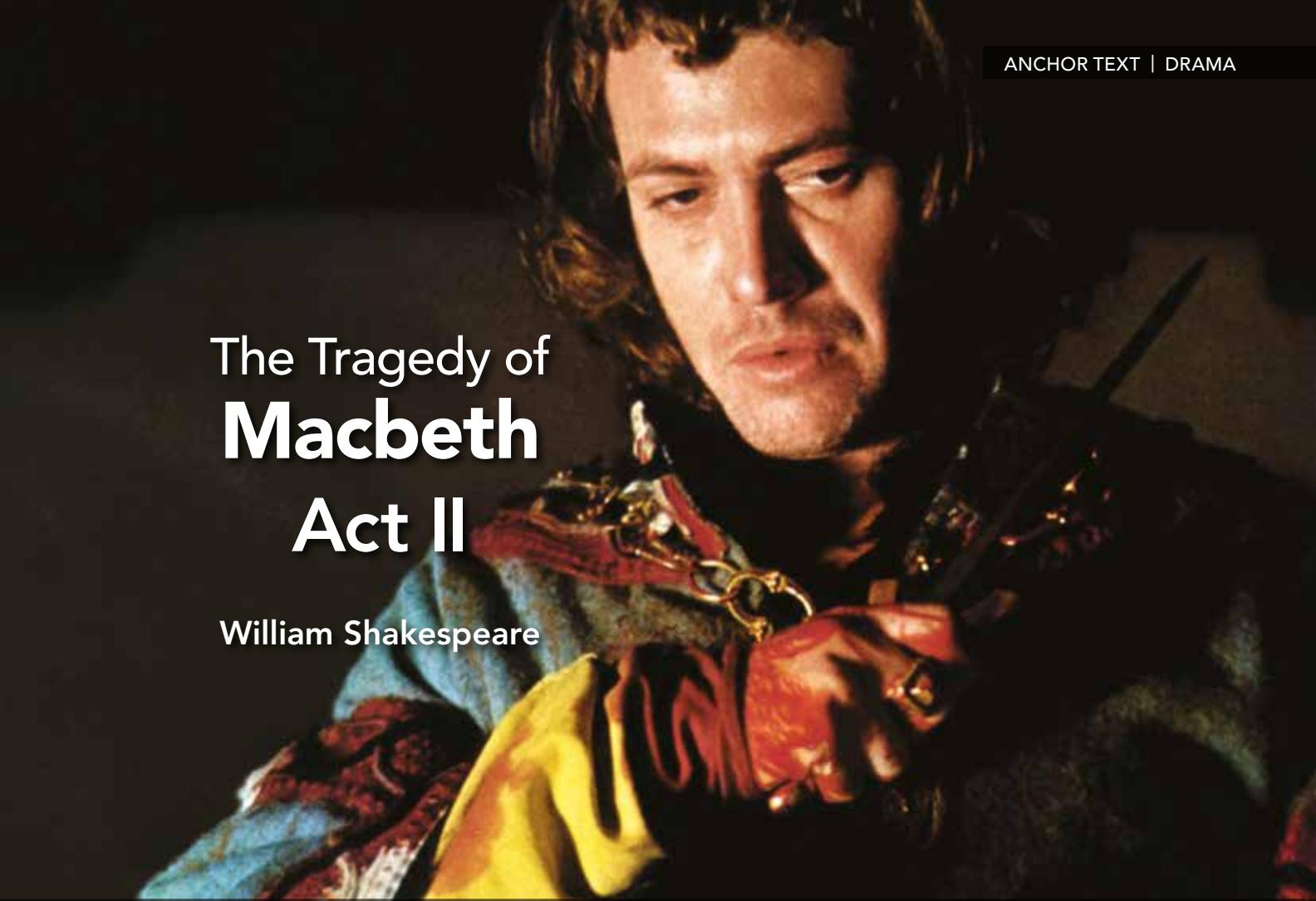
First-Read Guide and Model Annotation



### STANDARDS

Reading Literature

**12.RL.RRTC.10** Read and comprehend a variety of literature throughout the grades 11-12 text complexity band proficiently, with a gradual release of scaffolding at the higher end as needed.



# The Tragedy of **Macbeth**

## Act II

William Shakespeare

### REVIEW AND ANTICIPATE

In Act I, we learn that Macbeth has distinguished himself in battle. Returning from the battlefield, he and Banquo meet three witches who predict not only that Macbeth will be rewarded by King Duncan, but also that he will become king himself. However, the witches also greet Banquo as the father of kings. Motivated by the witches' prophecies, Macbeth considers killing Duncan. The assassination becomes more likely when the king decides to visit Macbeth's castle. Lady Macbeth, on hearing about the witches' predictions and the king's visit, resolves that she and her husband will kill Duncan. When Macbeth hesitates, she urges him on. As Act II begins, they are about to perform this evil deed.

Scene i • Inverness. Court of Macbeth's castle.

[Enter Banquo, and Fleance, with a torch before him.]

**Banquo.** How goes the night, boy?

**Fleance.** The moon is down; I have not heard the clock.

**Banquo.** And she goes down at twelve.

### NOTES

1. **husbandry** thrift.  
 2. **that** probably his sword belt.  
 3. **summons** weariness.

4. **largess . . . offices** gifts to your servants' quarters.  
 5. **shut up** retired.

6. **Being . . . wrought** Because we did not have enough time to prepare, we were unable to entertain as lavishly as we wanted to.

7. **cleave . . . 'tis** join my cause when the time comes.  
 8. **So** provided that.  
 9. **bosom franchised** heart free (from guilt).

**allegiance** (UH LEE juhns) *n.* loyalty

### CLOSE READ

**ANNOTATE:** In Macbeth's soliloquy beginning on line 31, mark the pronouns, including older pronoun forms such as *thou*, *thee*, and *thy*.

**QUESTION:** Whom or what is Macbeth addressing in this speech?

**CONCLUDE:** What does the soliloquy suggest about Macbeth's state of mind?

**Fleance.** I take't, 'tis later, sir.

**Banquo.** Hold, take my sword. There's husbandry<sup>1</sup> in heaven.

- 5 Their candles are all out. Take thee that<sup>2</sup> too.  
 A heavy summons<sup>3</sup> lies like lead upon me,  
 And yet I would not sleep. Merciful powers,  
 Restraine in me the cursed thoughts that nature  
 Gives way to in repose!

[Enter Macbeth, and a Servant with a torch.]

Give me my sword!

- 10 Who's there?

**Macbeth.** A friend.

**Banquo.** What, sir, not yet at rest? The King's a-bed:

He hath been in unusual pleasure, and

Sent forth great largess to your offices:<sup>4</sup>

- 15 This diamond he greets your wife withal,  
 By the name of most kind hostess: and shut up<sup>5</sup>  
 In measureless content.

**Macbeth.** Being unprepared,  
 Our will became the servant to defect,  
 Which else should free have wrought.<sup>6</sup>

**Banquo.** All's well.

- 20 I dreamt last night of the three weird sisters:  
 To you they have showed some truth.

**Macbeth.** I think not of them.

Yet, when we can entreat an hour to serve,  
 We would spend it in some words upon that business,  
 If you would grant the time.

**Banquo.** At your kind'st leisure.

- 25 **Macbeth.** If you shall cleave to my consent, when 'tis,<sup>7</sup>  
 It shall make honor for you.

**Banquo.** So<sup>8</sup> I lose none  
 In seeking to augment it, but still keep  
 My bosom franchised<sup>9</sup> and **allegiance** clear.  
 I shall be counseled.

**Macbeth.** Good repose the while!

- 30 **Banquo.** Thanks, sir. The like to you!

[Exit Banquo with Fleance.]

**Macbeth.** Go bid thy mistress, when my drink is ready.  
 She strike upon the bell. Get thee to bed.

[Exit Servant.]

Is this a dagger which I see before me,  
 The handle toward my hand? Come, let me clutch thee.

- 35 I have thee not, and yet I see thee still.

Art thou not, fatal vision, sensible<sup>10</sup>  
 To feeling as to sight, or art thou but  
 A dagger of the mind, a false creation,  
 Proceeding from the heat-oppressèd brain?  
 40 I see thee yet, in form as palpable  
 As this which now I draw.  
 Thou marshal'st<sup>11</sup> me the way that I was going;  
 And such an instrument I was to use.  
 Mine eyes are made the fools o' th' other senses,  
 45 Or else worth all the rest, I see thee still:  
 And on thy blade and dudgeon<sup>12</sup> gouts<sup>13</sup> of blood.  
 Which was not so before. There's no such thing.  
 It is the bloody business which informs<sup>14</sup>  
 Thus to mine eyes. Now o'er the one half-world  
 50 Nature seems dead, and wicked dreams abuse<sup>15</sup>  
 The curtained sleep; witchcraft celebrates  
 Pale Hecate's<sup>16</sup> offerings; and withered murder,  
 Alarumed by his sentinel, the wolf,  
 Whose howl's his watch, thus with his **stealthy** pace,  
 55 With Tarquin's<sup>17</sup> ravishing strides, towards his design  
 Moves like a ghost. Thou sure and firm-set earth,  
 Hear not my steps, which way they walk, for fear  
 Thy very stones prate of my whereabout,  
 And take the present horror from the time,  
 60 Which now suits with it.<sup>18</sup> Whiles I threat, he lives:  
 Words to the heat of deeds too cold breath gives.  
 [A bell rings.]  
 I go, and it is done: the bell invites me.  
 Hear it not, Duncan, for it is a knell  
 That summons thee to heaven, or to hell.

[Exit.]



## Scene ii • Macbeth's castle

[Enter Lady Macbeth.]

**Lady Macbeth.** That which hath made them drunk hath made  
me bold:

What hath quenched them hath given me fire. Hark! Peace!  
It was the owl that shrieked, the fatal bellman,  
Which gives the stern'st good-night.<sup>1</sup> He is about it.  
5 The doors are open, and the surfeited grooms<sup>2</sup>  
Do mock their charge with snores. I have drugged their possets,<sup>3</sup>  
That death and nature do contend about them,  
Whether they live or die.

**Macbeth.** [Within] Who's there? What, ho?

### NOTES

**10. sensible** able to be felt.

**11. marshal'st** leads.

**12. dudgeon** wooden hilt.

**13. gouts** large drops.

**14. informs** takes shape.

**15. abuse** deceive.

**16. Hecate's** (HEHK uh tee) Greek goddess of witchcraft.

**stealthy** (STEHL thee) *adj.* slow and secretive

**17. Tarquin's** Roman tyrant.

**18. take . . . it** remove the horrible silence that suits this moment.

**1. bellman . . . good-night** It was customary for a bell to be rung at midnight outside a condemned person's cell on the night before an execution.

**2. surfeited grooms** overfed servants.

**3. possets** warm bedtime drinks.

**4. Confounds** ruins.**CLOSE READ**

**ANNOTATE:** In lines 16–25, mark the short sentences.

**QUESTION:** What do these sentence structures suggest about the pace and emotions with which characters speak these lines?

**CONCLUDE:** What is the effect of this series of short sentences?

**5. sorry** miserable.**6. two** Malcolm and Donalbain, Duncan's sons.**7. knits . . . sleeve** straightens out the tangled threads.**8. second course** main course; sleep.

**Lady Macbeth.** Alack, I am afraid they have awaked  
 10 And 'tis not done! Th' attempt and not the deed  
 Confounds<sup>4</sup> us. Hark! I laid their daggers ready:  
 He could not miss 'em. Had he not resembled  
 My father as he slept, I had done 't.  
 [Enter Macbeth.]

My husband!

**Macbeth.** I have done the deed. Didst thou not hear a noise?  
 15 **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.** Donalbain.

20 **Macbeth.** This is a sorry<sup>5</sup> sight.

**Lady Macbeth.** A foolish thought, to say a sorry sight.

**Macbeth.** There's one did laugh in 's sleep, and one cried  
 "Murder!"

That they did wake each other. I stood and heard them.  
 But they did say their prayers, and addressed them

25 Again to sleep.

**Lady Macbeth.** There are two<sup>6</sup> lodged together.

**Macbeth.** One cried "God bless us!" and "Amen" the other.  
 As they had seen me with these hangman's hands:  
 List'ning their fear, I could not say "Amen."  
 When they did say "God bless us!"

30 **Lady Macbeth.** Consider it not so deeply.

**Macbeth.** But wherefore could not I pronounce "Amen"?  
 I had most need of blessing, and "Amen"  
 Stuck in my throat.

**Lady Macbeth.** These deeds must not be thought  
 After these ways; so, it will make us mad.

35 **Macbeth.** Methought I heard a voice cry "Sleep no more!  
 Macbeth does murder sleep"—the innocent sleep.  
 Sleep that knits up the raveled sleeve<sup>7</sup> of care.  
 The death of each day's life, sore labor's bath,  
 Balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course,<sup>8</sup>  
 Chief nourisher in life's feast—

40 **Lady Macbeth.** What do you mean?



^ Macbeth murders Duncan, the king of Scotland.

**Macbeth.** 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."

**Lady Macbeth.** Who was it that thus cried? Why, worthy Thane.  
45 You do unbend<sup>9</sup> your noble strength, to think  
So brainsickly of things. Go get some water,  
And wash this filthy witness<sup>10</sup> from your hand.  
Why did you bring these daggers from the place?  
They must lie there: go carry them, and smear  
The sleepy grooms with blood.

50 **Macbeth.** I'll go no more.  
I am afraid to think what I have done;  
Look on 't again I dare not.

**Lady Macbeth.** Infirm of purpose!  
Give me the daggers. The sleeping and the dead  
Are but as pictures. 'Tis the eye of childhood

NOTES

9. unbend relax.

10. witness evidence.

**11. gild** paint.

**12. incarnadine** (ihn KAHR nuh deen)  
redden.

**13. Your constancy . . . unattended**  
Your firmness of purpose has  
left you.

**14. watchers** up late.

55 That fears a painted devil. If he do bleed,  
I'll gild<sup>11</sup> the faces of the grooms withal,  
For it must seem their guilt. [Exit. Knock within.]

**Macbeth.** Whence is that knocking?

How is 't with me, when every noise appalls me?  
What hands are here? Ha! They pluck out mine eyes!

60 Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood  
Clean from my hand? No; this my hand will rather  
The multitudinous seas incarnadine,<sup>12</sup>  
Making the green one red.

[Enter Lady Macbeth.]

**Lady Macbeth.** My hands are of your color, but I shame

65 To wear a heart so white. [Knock.] I hear a knocking  
At the south entry. Retire we to our chamber.  
A little water clears us of this deed:  
How easy is it then! Your constancy  
Hath left you unattended.<sup>13</sup> [Knock.] Hark! more knocking.

70 Get on your nightgown, lest occasion call us  
And show us to be watchers.<sup>14</sup> Be not lost  
So poorly in your thoughts.

**Macbeth.** To know my deed, 'twere best not know myself.

[Knock.]

Wake Duncan with thy knocking! I would thou couldst!

[Exit.]



1. **porter** doorkeeper.
2. **should have old** would have plenty of.
3. **Beelzebub** (bee EHL zuh buhb) chief devil.
4. **a farmer . . . plenty** a farmer who hoarded grain, hoping the prices rise after a bad harvest.
5. **enow** enough.
6. **an equivocator . . . scale** a liar who could make two contradictory statements and swear both were true.
- equivocate (ih KWIHV uh kayt) v. speak in a way that hides the truth
7. **stealing . . . hose** stealing some cloth from the hose while making them.
8. **goose** pressing iron.

### Scene iii • Macbeth's castle.

[Enter a Porter. Knocking within.]

**Porter.** Here's a knocking indeed! If a man were porter<sup>1</sup> of hell gate, he should have old<sup>2</sup> turning the key.

[Knock.] Knock, knock, knock! Who's there, i' th' name of Beelzebub?<sup>3</sup> Here's a farmer, that

5 hanged himself on th' expectation of plenty.<sup>4</sup> Come in time! Have napkins enow<sup>5</sup> about you; here you'll sweat for 't. [Knock.] Knock, knock! Who's there, in th' other devil's name? Faith, here's an equivocator, that could swear in both the scales against

10 either scale;<sup>6</sup> who committed treason enough for God's sake, yet could not equivocate to heaven. O, come in, equivocator. [Knock.] Knock, knock, knock! Who's there? Faith, here's an English tailor come hither for stealing out of a French hose:<sup>7</sup>

15 come in, tailor. Here you may roast your goose.<sup>8</sup>

[Knock.] Knock, knock; never at quiet! What are you? But this place is too cold for hell. I'll devil-porter it no further. I had thought to have let in some of all professions that go the primrose way to th' everlasting bonfire. [Knock.] Anon, anon!

20 [Opens an entrance.] I pray you, remember the porter.

[Enter Macduff and Lennox.]

**Macduff.** Was it so late, friend, ere you went to bed, That you do lie so late?

**Porter.** Faith, sir, we were carousing till the second cock:<sup>9</sup> and drink, sir, is a great provoker of three things.

**Macduff.** What three things does drink especially provoke?

**Porter.** Marry, sir, nose-painting, sleep, and urine. 30 Lechery, sir, it provokes and unprovokes; it provokes the desire, but it takes away the performance: therefore much drink may be said to be an equivocator with lechery: it makes him and it mars him; it sets him on and it takes him off: it persuades him 35 and disheartens him; makes him stand to and not stand to; in conclusion equivocates him in a sleep, and giving him the lie, leaves him.

**Macduff.** I believe drink gave thee the lie<sup>10</sup> last night.

**Porter.** That it did, sir, i' the very throat on me: but I 40 requited him for his lie, and, I think, being too strong for him, though he took up my legs sometime, yet I make a shift to cast<sup>11</sup> him.

**Macduff.** Is thy master stirring?

[Enter Macbeth.]

Our knocking has awaked him; here he comes.

**Lennox.** Good morrow, noble sir.

45 **Macbeth.** Good morrow, both.

**Macduff.** Is the king stirring, worthy Thane?

**Macbeth.** Not yet.

**Macduff.** He did command me to call timely<sup>12</sup> on him: I have almost slipped the hour.

**Macbeth.** I'll bring you to him.

**Macduff.** I know this is a joyful trouble to you; 50 But yet 'tis one.

**Macbeth.** The labor we delight in physics pain.<sup>13</sup> This is the door.

9. second cock 3:00 A.M.

10. gave thee the lie laid you out.

11. cast vomit.

12. timely early.

13. labor . . . pain labor we enjoy cures discomfort.

**14. limited service** assigned duty.

**15. combustion** confusion.

**16. obscure bird** bird of darkness, the owl.

**17. Confusion** destruction.

**sacrilegious** (sak ruh LIHJ uhs) *adj.*  
treating a religious object, person, or belief with disrespect

**18. The Lord's anointed temple** the King's body.

**19. Gorgon** Medusa, a mythological monster whose appearance was so ghastly that those who looked at it turned to stone.

**counterfeit** (KOWN tuhr fihrt) *n.* false imitation

**20. great doom's image** likeness of Judgment Day.

**21. sprites** spirits.

**22. countenance** be in keeping with.

**23. parley** war conference.

**Macduff.** I'll make so bold to call.

For 'tis my limited service.<sup>14</sup>

[*Exit Macduff.*]

**Lennox.** Goes the king hence today?

**Macbeth.** He does: he did appoint so.

55 **Lennox.** The night has been unruly. Where we lay,  
Our chimneys were blown down, and, as they say,  
Lamentings heard i' th' air, strange screams of death.  
And prophesying with accents terrible  
Of dire combustion<sup>15</sup> and confused events

60 New hatched to th' woeful time: the obscure bird<sup>16</sup>  
Clamored the livelong night. Some say, the earth  
Was feverous and did shake.

**Macbeth.** 'Twas a rough night.

**Lennox.** My young remembrance cannot parallel  
A fellow to it.

[*Enter Macduff.*]

65 **Macduff.** O horror, horror, horror! Tongue nor heart  
Cannot conceive nor name thee.

**Macbeth and Lennox.** What's the matter?

**Macduff.** Confusion<sup>17</sup> now hath made his masterpiece.  
Most **sacrilegious** murder hath broke ope  
The Lord's anointed temple,<sup>18</sup> and stole thence  
The life o' th' building.

70 **Macbeth.** What is 't you say? The life?

**Lennox.** Mean you his Majesty?

**Macduff.** Approach the chamber, and destroy your sight  
With a new Gorgon:<sup>19</sup> do not bid me speak;  
See, and then speak yourselves. Awake, awake!

[*Exit Macbeth and Lennox.*]

75 Ring the alarm bell. Murder and Treason!  
Banquo and Donalbain! Malcolm! Awake!  
Shake off this downy sleep, death's **counterfeit**,  
And look on death itself! Up, up, and see  
The great doom's image!<sup>20</sup> Malcolm! Banquo!

80 As from your graves rise up, and walk like sprites,<sup>21</sup>  
To countenance<sup>22</sup> this horror. Ring the bell.

[*Bell rings. Enter Lady Macbeth.*]

**Lady Macbeth.** What's the business,  
That such a hideous trumpet calls to parley<sup>23</sup>  
The sleepers of the house? Speak, speak!

**Macduff.** O gentle lady,

85 'Tis not for you to hear what I can speak:  
The repetition, in a woman's ear,

Would murder as it fell.

[Enter Banquo.]

O Banquo, Banquo!  
Our royal master's murdered.

**Lady Macbeth.** Woe, alas!  
What, in our house?

**Banquo.** Too cruel anywhere.  
90 Dear Duff, I prithee, contradict thyself,  
And say it is not so.

[Enter Macbeth, Lennox, and Ross.]

**Macbeth.** Had I but died an hour before this chance,  
I had lived a blessed time; for from this instant  
There's nothing serious in mortality:<sup>24</sup>  
95 All is but toys.<sup>25</sup> Renown and grace is dead,  
The wine of life is drawn, and the mere lees<sup>26</sup>  
Is left this vault<sup>27</sup> to brag of.

[Enter Malcolm and Donalbain.]

**Donalbain.** What is amiss?

**Macbeth.** You are, and do not know 't.  
The spring, the head, the fountain of your blood  
100 Is stopped; the very source of it is stopped.

**Macduff.** Your royal father's murdered.

**Malcolm.** O, by whom?

**Lennox.** Those of his chamber, as it seemed, had done 't:  
Their hands and faces were all badged<sup>28</sup> with blood;  
So were their daggers, which unwiped we found  
105 Upon their pillows. They stared, and were distracted.  
No man's life was to be trusted with them.

**Macbeth.** O, yet I do repent me of my fury,  
That I did kill them.

**Macduff.** Wherefore did you so?

**Macbeth.** Who can be wise, amazed, temp'rate and furious,  
110 Loyal and neutral, in a moment? No man.  
The expedition<sup>29</sup> of my violent love  
Outrun the pauser, reason. Here lay Duncan,  
His silver skin laced with his golden blood,  
And his gashed stabs looked like a **breach** in nature  
115 For ruin's wasteful entrance: there, the murderers,  
Steeped in the colors of their trade, their daggers  
Unmannerly breeched with gore.<sup>30</sup> Who could refrain,  
That had a heart to love, and in that heart  
Courage to make 's love known?

## NOTES

**24. serious in mortality** worthwhile in mortal life.

**25. toys** trifles.

**26. lees** dregs.

**27. vault** world.

**28. badged** marked.

### CLOSE READ

**ANNOTATE:** Mark the adjectives in Macbeth's question on lines 109 and 110.

**QUESTION:** What relationship do the adjectives have to each other?

**CONCLUDE:** What excuse for his actions do these words provide Macbeth?

**29. expedition** haste.

**breach** (breech) *n.* hole made by breaking through

**30. breeched with gore** covered with blood.

- 31.** **That most . . . ours** who are the most concerned with this topic.
- 32.** **auger-hole** tiny hole, an unsuspected place because of its size.
- 33.** **Our tears . . . motion** We have not yet had time for tears nor to turn our sorrow into action.

**34.** **when . . . hid** when we have put on our clothes.

**35.** **question** investigate.

**36.** **scruples** doubts.

**37.** **undivulged pretense** hidden purpose.

**38.** **briefly** quickly.

**39.** **office** function.

**40.** **the near . . . bloody** The closer we are in blood relationship to Duncan, the greater our chance of being murdered.

**41.** **lighted** reached its target.

**42.** **warrant** justification.

**43.** **that theft . . . itself** stealing away.

**Lady Macbeth.** Help me hence, ho!

**120 Macduff.** Look to the lady.

**Malcolm.** [Aside to Donalbain] Why do we hold our tongues, That most may claim this argument for ours?<sup>31</sup>

**Donalbain.** [Aside to Malcolm] What should be spoken here, Where our fate, hid in an auger-hole,<sup>32</sup>

**125 May** rush, and seize us? Let's away: Our tears are not yet brewed.

**Malcolm.** [Aside to Donalbain] Nor our strong sorrow Upon the foot of motion.<sup>33</sup>

**Banquo.** Look to the lady.

[Lady Macbeth is carried out.]

And when we have our naked frailties hid,<sup>34</sup> That suffer in exposure, let us meet

**130 And question<sup>35</sup>** this most bloody piece of work, To know it further. Fears and scruples<sup>36</sup> shake us. In the great hand of God I stand, and thence Against the undivulged pretense<sup>37</sup> I fight Of treasonous malice.

**Macduff.** And so do I.

**All.** So all.

**135 Macbeth.** Let's briefly<sup>38</sup> put on manly readiness, And meet i' th' hall together.

**All.** Well contented.

[Exit all but Malcolm and Donalbain.]

**Malcolm.** What will you do? Let's not consort with them.

To show an unfelt sorrow is an office<sup>39</sup>

Which the false man does easy. I'll to England.

**140 Donalbain.** To Ireland, I; our separated fortune Shall keep us both the safer. Where we are There's daggers in men's smiles; the near in blood, The nearer bloody.<sup>40</sup>

**Malcolm.** This murderous shaft that's shot Hath not yet lighted,<sup>41</sup> and our safest way

**145 Is** to avoid the aim. Therefore to horse; And let us not be dainty of leave-taking, But shift away. There's warrant<sup>42</sup> in that theft Which steals itself<sup>43</sup> when there's no mercy left.

[Exit.]



Scene iv • Outside Macbeth's castle.

NOTES

[Enter Ross with an Old Man.]

**Old Man.** Threescore and ten I can remember well:  
Within the volume of which time I have seen  
Hours dreadful and things strange, but this sore<sup>1</sup> night  
Hath trifled former knowings.

1. **sore** grievous.

**Ross.** Ha, good father,  
5 Thou seest the heavens, as troubled with man's act,  
Threatens his bloody stage. By th' clock 'tis day,  
And yet dark night strangles the traveling lamp:<sup>2</sup>  
Is 't night's predominance, or the day's shame,  
That darkness does the face of earth entomb,  
When living light should kiss it?

2. **traveling lamp** the sun.

10 **Old Man.** 'Tis unnatural,  
Even like the deed that's done. On Tuesday last  
A falcon, tow'ring in her pride of place,<sup>3</sup>  
Was by a mousing owl hawked at and killed.

3. **tow'-ring . . . place** soaring at its summit.

**Ross.** And Duncan's horses—a thing most strange  
and certain—  
15 Beauteous and swift, the minions of their race,  
Turned wild in nature, broke their stalls, flung out,  
Contending 'gainst obedience, as they would make  
War with mankind.

4. **eat** ate.

20 **Ross.** They did so, to th' amazement of mine eyes,  
That looked upon 't.

[Enter Macduff.]

Here comes the good Macduff.  
How goes the world, sir, now?

**Macduff.** Why, see you not?

**Ross.** Is 't known who did this more than bloody deed?

**Macduff.** Those that Macbeth hath slain.

**Ross.** Alas, the day!  
What good could they pretend?<sup>5</sup>

5. **pretend** hope for.

25 **Macduff.** They were suborned:<sup>6</sup>  
Malcolm and Donalbain, the king's two sons,  
Are stol'n away and fled, which puts upon them  
Suspicion of the deed.

6. **suborned** bribed.

**Ross.** 'Gainst nature still.  
Thriftless ambition, that will ravin up<sup>7</sup>  
30 Thine own life's means! Then 'tis most like  
The sovereignty will fall upon Macbeth.

7. **ravin up** devour greedily.

**8. Scone** (skoon) where Scottish kings were crowned.

**9. Fife** where Macduff's castle is located.

**10. benison** blessing.

**Macduff.** He is already named, and gone to Scone<sup>8</sup>  
To be invested.

**Ross.** Where is Duncan's body?

**Macduff.** Carried to Colmekill,

35 The sacred storehouse of his predecessors  
And guardian of their bones.

**Ross.** Will you to Scone?

**Macduff.** No, cousin, I'll to Fife.<sup>9</sup>

**Ross.** Well, I will thither.

**Macduff.** Well, may you see things well done there. Adieu,  
Lest our old robes sit easier than our new!

40 **Ross.** Farewell, father.

**Old Man.** God's benison<sup>10</sup> go with you, and with those  
That would make good of bad, and friends of foes!

[Exit.]

## Comprehension Check

Complete the following items after you finish your first read.

1. As Macbeth waits for the signal from Lady Macbeth that the king's guards are asleep, what does he imagine he sees?

2. How is the murder of the king discovered?

3. What strange and unnatural things do Ross and the old man talk about in Scene iv?

4.  **Notebook** Confirm your understanding of the text by writing a summary.

## RESEARCH

**Research to Clarify** Choose at least one unfamiliar detail from the text. Briefly research that detail. In what way does the information you learned shed light on an aspect of the play?

**Research to Explore** Choose something from the text that interested you, and formulate a research question. Write your question here.



## Close Read the Text

Reread the first two lines of Act II, Scene ii. Mark the words following the repeated word *hath*. What is significant or interesting about those words in each line?



THE TRAGEDY OF MACBETH,  
ACT II

## Analyze the Text

CITE TEXTUAL EVIDENCE  
to support your answers.

**Notebook** Respond to these questions.

1. (a) Describe Macbeth's and Lady Macbeth's reactions to Duncan's murder immediately after it is done. (b) **Interpret** How do these reactions reflect each character's personality and motivations?
2. (a) **Draw Conclusions** Why is Macbeth upset about not being able to say "Amen" to the men's prayers? (b) **Evaluate** Why is this ironic?
3. (a) What gate does the porter pretend to be opening instead of the gate to Macbeth's castle? (b) **Make Inferences** In what ways is the porter's playful fantasy a comment on Macbeth's situation?

## LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

### Concept Vocabulary

allegiance

equivocate

counterfeit

stealthy

sacrilegious

breach



### WORD NETWORK

Add interesting words related to time from the text to your Word Network.

**Why These Words?** These concept words relate to the ideas of loyalty and betrayal. For example, Banquo swears his *allegiance* to Macbeth, as long as that allegiance, or devotion, does not violate his conscience. Find two other words in Act II that relate to the concept of betrayal.

### Word Study

**Patterns of Word Changes** Adding a suffix to a word can change it from one part of speech to another. The noun *sacrilege*, meaning "desecration" or "profanity," becomes the adjective *sacrilegious* when the final e is changed to i and the suffix -ous is added. The word *allegiance* is derived from the medieval term *liege*, which refers to the relationship between a feudal vassal and his lord. *Liege* means "loyal." A change in spelling and the addition of the suffix -ance creates a noun that means "loyalty."

Turn each of these words into an adjective using the suffix -ous: *vice*, *danger*, *marvel*. Turn each of these words into a noun using the suffix -ance: *remit*, *rely*, *vigilant*. Make whatever adjustments to spelling are required. Use a dictionary to verify the accuracy of your work. Also, use the dictionary to check the pronunciations of the words you form.

### STANDARDS

#### Language

**11-12.L.VAU.4** Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on 11th -12th grade-level text by choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

- b.** Use common grade-appropriate morphological elements as clues to the meaning of a word or a phrase.
- c.** Consult reference materials, both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or phrase.

THE TRAGEDY OF MACBETH,  
ACT II

### STANDARDS

Reading Literature

**11-12.RL.CS.5** Analyze how an author's choices concerning the structure of specific parts of a text contribute to its overall structure, meaning, and aesthetic impact.

## Analyze Craft and Structure

**Author's Choices: Structure** Shakespeare is a master of structure, beginning with his use of meter, or the rhythmic organization of his lines. He uses three types of feet, or metrical units.

- An **iambic foot** consists of an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable. "Our will" is an example of an iambic foot.
- A **trochaic foot** consists of a stressed syllable followed by an unstressed syllable. "List'ning" is an example of a trochaic foot.
- An **anapestic foot** consists of two unstressed syllables followed by a stressed syllable. "If a man" is an example of an anapestic foot.

Shakespeare frequently uses five iambic feet per line, a structure called **iambic pentameter**, to reflect natural speech, as in this line:

"Göod sír, | whý dó | yóu stárt, | ánd séem | tō féar" (I.iii.52)

Notice that the stressed syllables often fall on the most important words. Several lines of unrhymed iambic pentameter are called **blank verse**. In general, Shakespeare's high-born characters speak in blank verse.

Sometimes Shakespeare interrupts his blank verse with **prose**, or unmetered dialogue. In his tragedies, lower-ranking characters often speak in prose. In many cases, these characters also provide **comic relief**, a humorous break from the tension of the tragedy. At other times, Shakespeare uses simple prose to communicate urgency.

### Practice

CITE TEXTUAL EVIDENCE  
to support your answers.

#### Notebook Respond to these questions.

1. Read lines 33–39 of Scene i aloud, taking note of stressed words. (a) For the most part, what type of foot appears in this passage? (b) Consider the words stressed by the meter. What mood do these stressed words help create?
2. Read aloud lines 1–2 of Scene ii. (a) What two types of feet are prominent in these lines? (b) What contrast does the structure of the lines emphasize? (c) What insight do these lines offer into Lady Macbeth's character?
3. Analyze the structure of the lines given in the chart. Note the primary foot each line uses. Then, explain how the metrical stresses emphasize meaning or mood.

LINE	PRIMARY TYPE OF FOOT	EFFECT ON MEANING OR MOOD
<i>I have done the deed</i> (Act II, Scene ii, line 14)		
<i>Had I but died an hour before this chance</i> (Act II, Scene iii, line 91)		
<i>Even like the deed that's done</i> (Act II, Scene iv, line 11)		



## Writing to Sources

A character's motivations for feeling, thinking, and behaving as he or she does may be powerful. This is certainly true in *The Tragedy of Macbeth*.

### Assignment

Suppose you are a psychologist who has just met with a new patient, either Macbeth or Lady Macbeth. Write a **psychological report** describing what you discovered during your session as you listened to what your patient had to say. Consider the following points:

- what your patient has done
- what your patient has told you
- your patient's motivations for feeling, thinking, and behaving as he or she does

Write an explanation of your patient's behavior, including a clear statement of his or her main problem. Use quotations from the play to support your evaluation of the character's issues.

**Vocabulary Connection** Consider including several of the concept vocabulary words in your writing.

allegiance

equivocate

counterfeit

stealthy

sacrilegious

breach



### EVIDENCE LOG

Before moving on to a new selection, go to your Evidence Log and record what you learned from Act II of *The Tragedy of Macbeth*.

### Reflect on Your Writing

After you have drafted your report, answer these questions.

1. Did you include a clear statement of your character's primary problem? Does that evaluation account for most, if not all, of the character's conflicts?
2. Which evidence from the play did you use in your report? Is there other evidence you might have used? Explain.



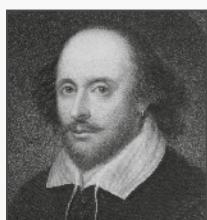
### STANDARDS

#### Writing

**11-12.W.TTP.1** Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning supported by relevant and sufficient evidence.



Playwright



William Shakespeare

# The Tragedy of Macbeth, Act III

## Concept Vocabulary

You will encounter the following words as you read Act III of *The Tragedy of Macbeth*. Before reading, note how familiar you are with each word. Then, rank the words in order from most familiar (1) to least familiar (6).

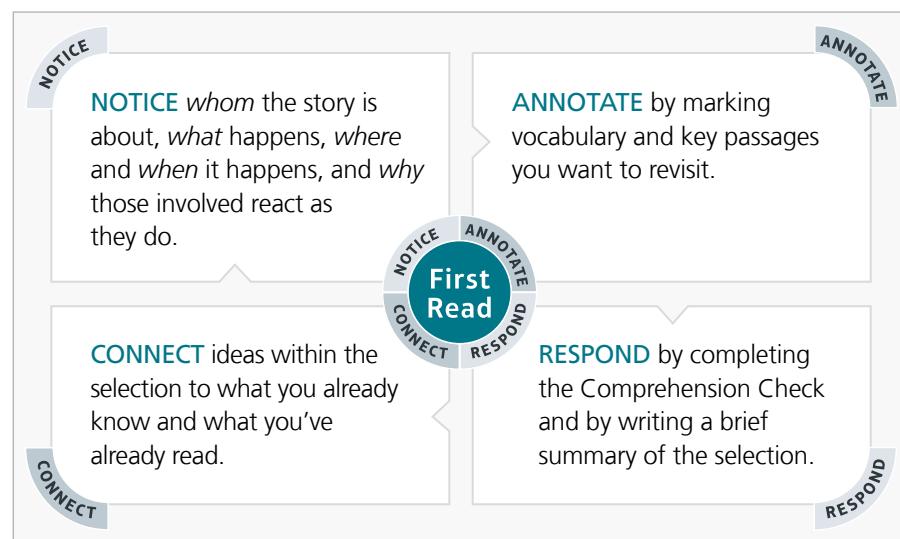
WORD	YOUR RANKING
fouly	
rancors	
incensed	
malice	
enrages	
malevolence	

After completing the first read, come back to the concept vocabulary and review your rankings. Mark changes to your original rankings as needed.

## First Read DRAMA

### Tool Kit

First-Read Guide and Model Annotation



### STANDARDS

Reading Literature

**12.RL.RRTC.10** Read and comprehend a variety of literature throughout the grades 11-12 text complexity band proficiently, with a gradual release of scaffolding at the higher end as needed.