

MACBETH

Note: The transactional processes suggested in CISCE curriculum are highlighted in grey.

Learning Outcomes

- To observe how Macbeth charted his own downfall
- To analyse the roles of the characters
- To map the developments in the story
- To familiarise with Shakespearean tales
- To enact the story in the form of a play

Pre-reading



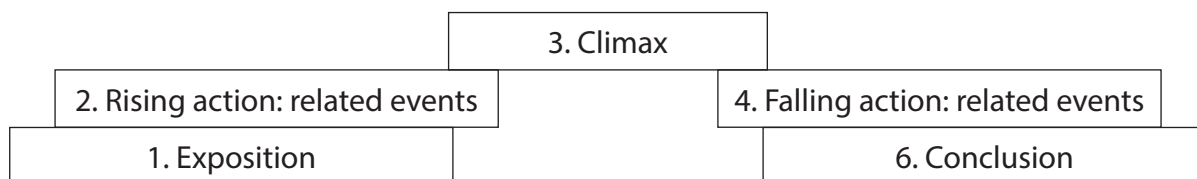
This section focuses on *assessment for learning* as it brings to mind Shakespearean vocabulary that has become an intrinsic part of our English language and prepares the reader for the text that is to follow.

- Guide students to do the Pre-reading task given in the Reader.
- Talk to students about the various features that make up a typical story — the setting, the developments or the rising action, the climax or the turning point, the falling action and the conclusion. (Point out that all features may not be present in every story).

Note: A plot diagram is a tool that is commonly used to organise a story into certain segments. Once the parts of the plot diagram are identified, it is easier to analyse the content. A plot diagram also gives a common framework for analysing and understanding a written story.

Now brainstorm for the different genres of stories. (*Action, adventure, mystery, comedy, romance, tragedy*)

Tell students that they will be reading an abridged version of *Macbeth*, written by Shakespeare. (You may refer to the author note to introduce Shakespeare to the class.)



READING

Students read to predict, analyse, sequence

Write down each feature of the plot diagram on the board through the course of the reading activity. Fill in details against the respective headings, following comprehension checks. Explain at each level how this contributes to the mapping of the story.

1. Exposition (Characters and setting):

- *Cold mists swirled... their faces shone with triumph.*

Ask students the following questions and write the answers on the board against this segment.

How is the scene described? (Cold and misty) Does the scene convey any particular tone or mood? (Allow free response. Suggested answer: 'Cold and misty' foreshadow an element of mystery) Who are the people mentioned here? Where are they coming from? What is their state of mind, at this point in time? (Happy, content, proud...)

2. Rising action:

- Suddenly, a howling ... vanished into the eerie mists.

How is the scene described here? (Menacing: howling wind, shrieking voices of the three witches, eerie mists) Does it foreshadow anything in particular? Do you think the story will be a comedy or a tragedy? (Allow free response but encourage students to explain their stand) What did the witches prophesy? What did they mean by "Lesser than Macbeth, yet greater".



This section focuses on *assessment for learning*. With the given story line, students are invited to get involved in the story by predicting what is to come.

Let students predict what could happen next. Write their predictions on the board. Students can compare their answers to the text later.

- Have we gone mad?... What would happen to the third?

Was the king happy with the two men? What took Macbeth by surprise?

What happens when someone's 'heart stands still'? How do they feel?

This question focuses on *assessment for learning*. It evokes the emotions that the characters experience and invites the readers to imagine being present at the point of action.

(Ans: When someone's heart stands still, they experience very strong emotions and may feel shocked, frightened or worried.)

What do you think the strange look on Macbeth's face revealed?

This question focuses on *assessment for learning*. It reveals to the reader that after Macbeth realises that the first prophecy has come true, he tends to feel that the second prophecy might also come to pass. The reader is given an indication as to the type of character Macbeth is – a person to be easily convinced.

(Ans: The strange look on Macbeth's face revealed ambition. Suggested answer. Accept any logical answer.)



Why did Banquo caution Macbeth? Did he foresee trouble?

3. Climax/Turn of events:

Explain to the class that they have now reached the turning point in the story.

- The messengers... fearing for their lives.

How did Macbeth feel when he heard about the king's stay at his place? Were his intentions good at this point in time? Why did Macbeth give in to his wife's suggestions? What was the turn of events? Who was responsible for this turn of events? (Macbeth, his wife or both) Why do you think so? Discuss. What was the immediate reaction after Duncan's death? Recall Banquo's word of caution as against Macbeth's wife's. Whose advice would have been better to follow?

Here, have a brief discussion on being ambitious. This will help develop communication skills and interaction in class. Is it a good virtue? Where should we draw a line while chasing dreams?

4. Falling action:

- In time ... to kill Macduff.

Why did the nobles choose Macbeth to be their next king? Why did Macbeth have Banquo killed? Do you think Macbeth imagined the presence of Banquo or did his spirit make an appearance



there? Discuss. Were the witches giving Macbeth good or bad advice? What role do they play here?



What do Macbeth's actions reveal about his state of mind?

This question focuses on *assessment for learning*. It makes the reader take a closer look at the main character and observe his character traits.

(Ans: Macbeth's actions reveal that he wanted to hold on to his position and power at any cost and was very fearful of losing it. This made him suspect everyone and everything.)

5. Conclusion:

A new reign of terror ... The witches had been right.

- *What happened to Macbeth's wife?*



Why did Lady Macbeth behave this way?

This question can be used *as assessment for learning*. The students create opinions of their own, based on facts presented in the text.

(Ans: Lady Macbeth behaved this way because she felt guilty for the murder of King Duncan.)

Was she responsible for her own downfall? How did Birnam Wood come to Macbeth's castle? Was he repentant? Does this kind of repentance serve any purpose? Would he

have repented if he had continued to rule Scotland?

Was justice served in the end? How would you describe Macbeth? How is Banquo's character contrasted with Macbeth's?

(Macbeth is introduced in the play as a brave hero, whose victory wins him great favour from the king. Macbeth is the Thane of Glamis who is led to wicked thoughts by the prophecies of the three witches, especially after the prophecy that he will be made Thane of Cawdor comes true. This is further strengthened by his wife's obsessive persuasion. Macbeth is a brave soldier and a powerful man, but he is not a virtuous person. He is easily tempted into murder to fulfill his ambitions and once he commits his first crime, he indulges in further atrocities with increasing ease. His solution to every problem is murder. However, Macbeth is never comfortable in his role as a criminal and is constantly ridden with guilt.

Banquo is the brave, noble general whose children, according to the witches' prophecy, will inherit the Scottish throne. Banquo's character stands in sharp contrast to Macbeth's, since he chooses to take a path in which ambition need not lead to betrayal and murder. He is a constant reminder to Macbeth that he did not follow Banquo's reaction to the witches' prophecy.)

Post-reading

Group work: Script out dialogues for the various characters and enact the play in class.

GRAMMAR

Subject-Verb agreement

Tell the students that there are three items that work together to form a complete sentence. Allow them time to guess. Write these three items on the board:

* Subject * Verb * A complete thought

Elaborate the following points according to the ability of your class:

- Subject-Verb agreement is necessary for the sentence to be correct.
- In Subject-Verb agreement, subject and verb must agree in number.

Do this as a recap activity. Write the table on the board and ask students to make sentences:

	Singular	Plural
I person	I am	We are
II person	You are	You are
III person	He is / She is / It is	They are

Follow the inputs in the Reader.

Divide the class into two / four groups depending on the class size. Equally distribute the first and second parts of sample sentences among the groups. Tell Group one call out the first part of any sentence and the group that has the second part must answer. At every answer, emphasise the grammar rule that governs the use. Reverse the procedure now. You may use some of these examples. Develop more examples to cover important grammar aspects with *as well as, along with, either...or, neither...nor, nobody*, collective nouns and so on before following up with the exercises in the book.

Write these sentences in jumbled order on the board and ask students to match the columns

Gold and silver	are precious metals.
Bread and butter	is his breakfast.
My friend and guide	has helped me in difficult times.
Neither of the two men	is very strong
Some one	has broken the chair
Neither the principal nor the teachers	were present.

Note: These words are always singular:

each, either, neither, - one words -body words - thing words: anyone, anybody, anything, everyone, everybody, everything, someone, somebody, something, no one, nobody, nothing

VOCABULARY

Expressions with *no*

Divide the class into groups. Write the following expressions with their respective meanings, and the sentences on the board and ask each group to write the sentences with the correct expressions. There is one extra expression.

no way (no possibility) – no wonder (not surprising) – no good (lacking merit) – no use (in vain) – no problem (need not worry) – no need (not necessary) – no doubt (definite)

1. The children have left. _____ it's so quiet.
2. It's too late. There's _____ we are going to be there on time.
3. It's _____ trying to convince her. She is very stubborn.

4. There's _____ to shout. I can hear you loud and clear.
5. 'I'm sorry I spilt water on your shirt.' _____; I will change into another one.
6. There is _____ that our team will win this match. They have already scored enough points.

Award points to the groups that complete the activity.

LISTENING

Dictation – character sketch

Tell students they are going to listen to a passage about Macbeth's character.

Play the audio track and let students listen to the character sketch and fill in the blanks. Play it once again so that students fill in words they may have missed out/ check their work. Monitor the activity.



SPEAKING

Group discussion – Debate

This task can be used for *assessment as learning*. Students share their opinions with the class and the class assesses the opinions shared, while they communicate using the right words and expressions.

Divide the class into two groups for the debate, except four students who would be the scorers of the debate. Guide them with the criteria for scoring.

Give participants a few minutes to prepare the points for the debate.

Explain

The concept:

What is a debate? *A debate is a discussion on a given topic. It involves two sides: one supporting the idea and the other opposing it.*

The rules of a debate:

- A debate opens with the group that supports the idea presenting its arguments, followed by a member of the opposing group presenting its opposing views.
- Each group gets an opportunity for rebutting the arguments of the opponent.
- Speakers should speak slowly and clearly and avoid shouting.

WRITING

Imaginative account

Note: Help students set their objectives (Why do I want to write this?)

Guide students through every step. Share the sample passage and guidelines with them but encourage them to write their own composition.

Describing an imaginative account / situation

Why do I want to write this account?

- to recount an interesting situation
- to convey the experience of the situation

How do I write?

Paragraph 1: Introduction

Paragraphs 2, 3 and 4: Body

Paragraph 5: Conclusion

Guidelines

Paragraph 1

Write down the situation of your choice.

If you choose to write about a unique experience, write a general paragraph to introduce the situation and why it was different.

Example: A strange dream (This is the main idea. Everything else you write should describe this experience.)

I had a crazy dream last night. I normally do not get dreams and this has taken me by surprise. It could be because I could not fall asleep easily and kept imagining all kinds of things...

Paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 (Build up the scenario.)

It began with me watching a film with my friends. It was a thriller and though I am fond of watching films with suspense and adventure, this one kept me on edge...

To add to this, I had to walk back home alone as my bike developed a flat tyre. The still evening---

I reached home after what seemed like an eternity. It felt good to be back with my family. ---

I peeped through the curtains of my window to check if there was an alien lurking in the dark...

Nope, nothing stirred. I jumped into bed and covered myself from head to toe, and tossed and turned until sleep got the better of me.

(Here, describe the dream. Describe the scenes, events and people/characters in the dream)

The creature was all over me. It looked frightening with a strange head.

Conclusion: Sum up the situation.

I finally managed to roll out of bed and reached out desperately to switch on the lamp by the bedside. The room filled with welcome light and I could breathe properly. I looked around. There was no one...

Was it all just a dream? Then why did it feel so real?

Pronunciation

ɪz / s / z

This task can be used for *assessment as learning* as students listen to the audio and repeat. Then they communicate using the right expressions and pronunciation.

The pronunciation of the S at the end of words in English

Tell students:

The pronunciation of S at the end of plural nouns, verbs in third person can be pronounced in three different ways: ***/ ɪz /, / s / or / z /***.

The pronunciation depends on the last sound of the verb or noun which is usually a consonant.



The ending is pronounced /s/ **after a voiceless sound**: *carts, tracks*

The ending is pronounced /z/ **after a voiced sound**: *bells, straws*

The ending is pronounced /ɪz/ **after a sibilant (a hissing sound) sound**: *gases, brushes*

Let students get into groups. In their groups let them pronounce the words aloud and let the others in the group check them if incorrect. Go around the class and guide students if required.

STUDENTS' BOOK ANSWER KEY

Macbeth

Pre-reading

1. fashionable
2. unreal
3. resolve
4. defeat
5. upstairs
6. priceless
7. belongings
8. amazement

B	E	L	O	N	G	I	N	G	S	T	U
C	P	R	I	C	E	L	E	S	S	P	P
F	A	S	H	I	O	N	A	B	L	E	S
W	U	A	M	A	Z	E	M	E	N	T	T
U	N	R	E	A	L	D	Z	K	S	A	A
P	R	D	E	F	E	A	T	H	D	S	I
W	R	E	S	O	L	V	E	W	K	L	R
Z	T	Q	P	Z	H	W	F	Y	F	Q	S

Comprehension

- A.**
1. When Macbeth and Banquo were returning from the war, three strange witches appeared out of nowhere. They danced around a large cauldron and saluted Macbeth as the Thane of Glamis, the Thane of Cawdor and the future King of Scotland. They addressed Banquo as 'lesser than Macbeth, yet greater' and added that he would father the future line of kings though he would never be one himself.
 2. Macbeth was puzzled by the second and third prophecies because he was the Thane of Glamis, not the Thane of Cawdor. To become the King of Scotland was not a possibility since King Duncan was alive and so were his sons, Malcolm and Donalbain.
 3. Macbeth's desperate ambition to become the King of Scotland and his wife's fierce determination to make her husband ascend the throne by any means possible made Macbeth put aside the horror of killing his king.
 4. After ascending the throne, Macbeth held a feast for all his nobles. Banquo, whom he had cleverly arranged to be murdered, appeared as a ghost smeared with blood

to take his seat at the table. Upon seeing this, Macbeth's horror knew no bounds and he began to 'go mad with fear'.

5. Lady Macbeth began to have nightmares about the murder of King Duncan. She dreamed that she had blood-marks on her hands all the time—marks that would never come off. She became depressed and unhappy, and finally took her own life.
6. Yes, it does appear that Macbeth regretted his actions. During the gruesome battle with Macduff, Macbeth realised that his end was near and that he should never have trusted the witches. This incident suggests that perhaps Macbeth regretted his actions.

- B.**
1.
 - a. Banquo said this to Macbeth.
 - b. Banquo refers to the three witches as 'evil powers'. The three witches tried to mislead them by saluting Macbeth as the Thane of Glamis, the Thane of Cawdor and the future King of Scotland. They sowed the seeds of ambition in Macbeth's mind. They tried to mislead Banquo by saying that he would be the father of future kings though he would never be king himself. But Banquo was not misled by the witches' words at all.
 - c. Macbeth's trust in the witches' prophecies made him desperate to ascend the throne by any means possible. In the process, he and his wife devised a plot to murder King Duncan while he was a guest in their castle. Despite becoming king and queen, neither could escape from guilt and depression. In the end, Lady Macbeth killed herself and Macbeth lost his life in the battle against Macduff's army. Banquo, prophesied to be the father of the future line of kings, lost his life as Macbeth saw him as a threat and cleverly arranged for his murder.
 2.
 - a. One of the witches said this to Macbeth.
 - b. This prediction reassured Macbeth as he took it literally and thought that Birnam Wood, a forest, could not possibly move like a person to his castle, and thus he was safe.
 - c. Macduff, while leading Malcolm's army to battle against Macbeth, ordered his soldiers to carry branches from Birnam Wood as a disguise to prevent the enemy from counting their numbers. Thus, Birnam Wood moved to Macbeth's castle and the prophecy came true.
 3.
 - a. This statement refers to the period in which Macbeth was king as the 'reign of terror'.
 - b. This period was a reign of terror because anyone whom Macbeth considered a threat was murdered just like Banquo and Macduff's wife and children.
 - c. The ruler, Macbeth, could not be at peace during his reign because he was troubled by the witches' prophecy about Banquo's descendants becoming the future kings of Scotland and cleverly arranged his murder. Soon after that, he saw Banquo's ghost at the feast to which he had invited all the nobles. Later, out of a sense of insecurity, he made sure that Macduff's wife and children were murdered. So was anyone who seemed to be a danger to Macbeth. Meanwhile, Lady Macbeth who was the one person who supported his cruel actions, took her own life. In the end, Macbeth himself had to face Macduff in a battle where he lost his life.

C. 1. *Free response*

2. *Free response*

Grammar

A. 2. collect 3. want 4. welcomes 5. knows 6. visits 7. are 8. has

- B.** 2. knows 3. comes 4. gather 5. is 6. bring
 7. begins 8. continues 9. is 10. look 11. are

Vocabulary

1. no way 2. no choice 3. no chance 4. no need
 5. no good 6. no use 7. No matter 8. no doubt

Listening

Listen to Lady Macbeth's character sketch. As you listen, complete the passage.

Lady Macbeth is one of Shakespeare's most famous and frightening female characters. When we first see her, she is already plotting King Duncan's murder. She appears to be stronger, crueller and more ambitious than her husband. She seems fully aware of this and pushes Macbeth into committing the murder. Afterwards, however, she begins a slow slide into madness. Just as ambition affects her more strongly than Macbeth before the crime, so does guilt affect her more strongly afterwards. By the close of the play, she has been reduced to sleepwalking through the castle, desperately trying to wash away invisible bloodstains. In the end, her guilt affects her to such an extent that she kills herself.

Answers:

1. most famous 2. appears to be 3. committing the murder
 4. more strongly than 5. to wash away 6. kills herself

Speaking

Free response

Writing

Free response

Dictionary Work

1. supernatural 2. tempt 3. descendants
 4. uncertainly 5. predict 6. prophesise

ANSWER KEY TO WORKSHEET 5

- A.** 1. are 2. has 3. are 4. belongs
 5. play 6. sings 7. helps 8. knows

- B.** 1. no better 2. No matter 3. no question
 4. no idea 5. No wonder 6. no way

- C.** 1. a. came from or began
 b. not allowed to do something
 c. to take part in a race or competition
 2. The Heraean Games was the name for an athletic contest in ancient Greece organised in honour of the goddess Hera and supervised by a committee of sixteen women. Women of the same age group competed against each other in the races. Though these games were not as prestigious as the Olympics, the winners were awarded olive crowns and were allowed to place their portraits at the sacred grove at Olympia.

3. Cynisca was the first woman champion at the Olympic Games. She won the four-horse chariot race twice in 396 BCE and 392 BCE. In addition, she was the first woman champion horse-trainer as her horses and chariot competed and won in the Olympic Games.
4. Stamatha Revithi was not allowed to compete against the men in the marathon at the Olympics of 1896. Though she ran the full stretch of the marathon outside the stadium, she was prevented from entering the stadium for the final lap the next day. She had to complete the race outside the stadium.
5. Women in Sport in Ancient Greece
In ancient Greece, Olympic Games only allowed male competitors. The only woman to compete and win at the ancient Olympics was the Spartan princess Cynisca who won two chariot racing competitions at the Olympics in 396 and 392 BCE. Even the first modern Olympic Games in 1896 did not allow women. Stematha Revithi competed unofficially in the marathon race and ran the entire race. The participation of women in the Olympics was finally allowed in 1900.
Suggested answer. Accept any logical answer.

QUESTION BANK

Macbeth

A. Answer in brief.

1. What were the prophecies of the witches for Macbeth?
Ans: The first witch hailed Macbeth as the Thane of Glamis, which he was, the second hailed him as the Thane of Cawdor and the third witch called him the future king.
2. How did Macbeth's wife react when she learnt about the witches and their prophecies?
Ans: When Lady Macbeth learnt about the prophecies, she started dreaming of power. It was all she could talk about. The thought of her husband becoming king excited her so much that she was ready to do anything to make it happen.

B. Answer in detail.

Why did Banquo warn Macbeth when the messengers gave him the good news?
Ans: Banquo was Macbeth's trusted friend and both the men were returning triumphant from a war. It was at this moment that the three witches appeared with their prophecies. Banquo saw the strange look in Macbeth's eyes when the second prophecy of Macbeth becoming the Thane of Cawdor, came true. Banquo warned Macbeth because he knew that evil powers could mislead and cause harm. He was aware that the greed for power and fame could make a loyal man choose the path to disaster. Being a good friend, he did not want Macbeth to make such a serious mistake.

C. Choose the correct answer.

And we can't lose this opportunity. What is the opportunity mentioned here?

- a. The opportunity to invite Banquo to a feast and kill him.
- b. The opportunity to kill their guest, King Duncan.
- c. The opportunity to meet and consult the witches again.

Ans: b

D. Read the lines and answer the questions.

The terrible deed was done.

- a. What was the terrible deed?
- b. Who had done the deed?
- c. What ensued after the deed was done?

Ans: a. The terrible deed was the murder of King Duncan.

b. Macbeth had killed the king on the instigation of his wife.

c. There was terror and horror everywhere. Duncan's sons and the rightful heirs to the throne fled from Scotland fearing for their lives and Macbeth was crowned the King of Scotland.

E. Answer in brief. (Think and answer)

1. What transformed Macbeth from a loyal general to a brutal murderer of King Duncan?

Ans: When one of the prophecies came true, Macbeth started dreaming of becoming a king, as that was the next prophecy. Lady Macbeth was more ambitious and encouraged Macbeth into killing King Duncan who was visiting them that night. Macbeth's hunger for power made him give in to his wife's evil desires and overnight he was transformed from a loyal general to a brutal murderer.

2. Macbeth had committed the heinous crime of murdering his king who loved him a lot. How did this deed affect him the rest of his life?

Ans: After becoming the king, every single day was hell for Macbeth as he lived in constant fear and guilt and could never sleep in peace. He continued killing everyone who he thought was a threat to him. His wife too became depressed and took her own life, and in the end he too was killed in the war.

E. Answer in detail. (Think and answer)

Do you agree that it was Lady Macbeth who paved the way for Macbeth's downfall? Justify.

Ans: *Free response*

Suggested Ans: Yes, it was Lady Macbeth who was responsible for Macbeth's downfall. Macbeth was a loyal general to King Duncan. He was indeed thrilled at the thought of becoming a king but never thought of killing the king to attain the crown. He felt quite honoured that the king was going to stay with him as his guest. But things took a turn for the worse the moment he met his wife. She was so ambitious and greedy that she forced him to kill the king that very night when he was staying with them as a guest. This one act was enough to make Macbeth evil and nothing stopped him from committing crime after crime. It was Lady Macbeth who was the first force behind all his misdeeds. Macbeth would not have taken such a hasty step paving way for his own downfall, but for his wife's instigation.

Or

No, I do not agree that Lady Macbeth was responsible for Macbeth's downfall. I think the witches and Macbeth himself were responsible. Macbeth was ambitious. The prophecies of the witches made him greedy. The strange look on his face suggesting greed was seen by Banquo and that was the reason he warned him against succumbing to evil powers. Lady Macbeth's encouragement just added fuel to the already burning desire in Macbeth. He could have easily stopped her, if he wanted to. However, the thought of becoming a king was so strong in him that he committed the crime without any hesitation. Hence Lady Macbeth cannot be held responsible for his downfall.