

***Macbeth* by William Shakespeare** (Published by Washington Square Press)

Approved for use in Honors Communication Arts II and Communication Arts II

Summary

Macbeth, a Scottish thane, upon receiving three witches' prophecy that he will be king, begins to plot (with his wife) the murder of the current king, Duncan. After the death of both the king and a fellow officer, Banquo, he is haunted by both his own conscience and Banquo's ghost. His guilt, the suicide of his wife, and the patriotic actions of Macduff, prove to be his undoing. He is beheaded and Malcolm, Duncan's first-born son, is crowned the rightful king.

Connection to the Curriculum

The play is a piece of classical literature that is a part of the collective knowledge of the educated public. Sophomores enjoy vacillating between love and hatred for the clearest tragic hero in the sophomore curriculum. In addition, young people benefit from the analysis of the effects of overwhelming ambition that suppresses the ability to reason. The play serves as a vehicle for analyzing literary elements such as character development, theme, irony, motif, dialogue, and poetic devices. Students also benefit from an in-depth exploration of the stage directions and language constructs that drive the action of the play, in addition to a review of Shakespearean theater basics.

Standards

Course Objectives (Benchmarks)

Reading: 1.4- The students comprehend a variety of texts.

Literature: 2.1-The students use literary concepts to interpret and respond to text. 2.2- The students understand the significance of literature and its contributions to various cultures.

Writing: 3.1- The students use writing as a tool for learning throughout the curriculum.

Possible Skills Taught (Indicators)

Reading:

1.4.11- The student uses information from the text to make inferences and draw conclusions.

1.4.14- The student explains and analyzes cause-effect relationships in appropriate-level narrative, expository, technical, and persuasive texts.

1.4.15- The student uses paraphrasing and organizational skills to summarize information.

Literature:

2.1.1- The student identifies and describes different types of characters.

2.1.2- The student analyzes the historical, social, and cultural contextual aspects of the setting and its influence on characters and events in the story.

2.1.3- The student analyzes and evaluates how the author uses various plot elements.

2.1.4- The student analyzes themes.

2.1.5- The student identifies, analyzes, and evaluates the use of literary devices.

2.1.6- The student recognizes ways that literature from different cultures presents similar themes.

Writing:

3.1- The student writes effectively for a variety of audiences, purposes, and contexts.

A Note on the Text: (The best way to evaluate and understand a novel is to personally read the book in its entirety.)

The story of Macbeth begins with witches foretelling what will happen to him. Although the play also includes implied violence, including a beheading and other murders, these situations add to the development of the plot, specifically the conflict. The result is Shakespeare's revealing of the dangers of lusting for power. Once again Shakespeare proves himself to be an observer of humans' faults.

AP Connections

Macbeth provides a link to the canon of classics considered essential for college-bound/Advanced Placement students. Shakespeare has been referenced frequently on past AP exams.

Additional Unit Design Connections

Coming soon:

To be completed during future curriculum development activities