

Act 3- Knowledge Organiser

Plot summary

Act III scene i – Macbeth is now king, but Banquo is suspicious about how the witch’s predications have come true. Macbeth arranges to have him murdered.

Act III scene ii – Lady Macbeth tries to get her husband to talk to her about his plans but he refuses.

Act III scene iii – Banquo is murdered but his son, Fleance, escapes.

Act III scene iv – At a feast that night, Macbeth sees the ghost of Banquo. Lady Macbeth tries to calm him down but when this fails cancels the feasts and sends the courtiers away.

Act III scene v – The witches discuss events so far; Hecate, the ruler of the witches, predicts his downfall.

Act III scene vi – suspicion of Macbeth is growing; Macduff has left for England to rouse support against him.

Key Themes:

Ambition seen as a purely negative quality.

Guilt - the play shows the terrible consequences of murdering a king.

Kingship vs tyranny – Duncan and Macbeth embody the qualities of a good king and a tyrant respectively.



Key Terms:

fruitless – pointless

barren – empty or unable to have children

manipulate – make somebody behave a certain way

exploit – take advantage of compassion – feelings of pity

contemplate – think about plagued – bothered

avenge – get revenge for locks – hair

appal – horrify

render – make

vaulting – massive amount accursed - damned



Who is Hecate in the play?

Hecate is the goddess of witchcraft, and we can view her as the ruler of the three witches. In Act 3 scene 5, Hecate appears before the witches and demands to know why she has been excluded from their meetings with Macbeth.

Quotes:

“Thou has it now: king, Cawdor, Glamis, all, As the weird women promised, and, I fear, Thou play’dst most foully for’t.”

“To be thus is nothing But to be safely thus.”

“They hailed him father to a line of kings.”

“If it find heaven, must find it out tonight.”

“We have scorch’d the snake, not kill’d it”

“O, full of scorpions is my mind, dear wife! Thou know’st that Banquo and his Fleance lives.”

“Be innocent of the knowledge...Till thou applaud the deed.”

“Fly good Fleance... Thou may’st revenge –”

“Thy bones are marrowless, thy blood is cold”.

“Thou canst not say I did it. Never shake thy gory locks at me.”

“Ay, and a bold one, that dare look on that Which might appal the devil.”

“Take any shape but that, and my firm nerves Shall never tremble.”

“How did you dare to traffic and trade with Macbeth?”

“May soon return to this our suffering country Under a hand accurs’d.”