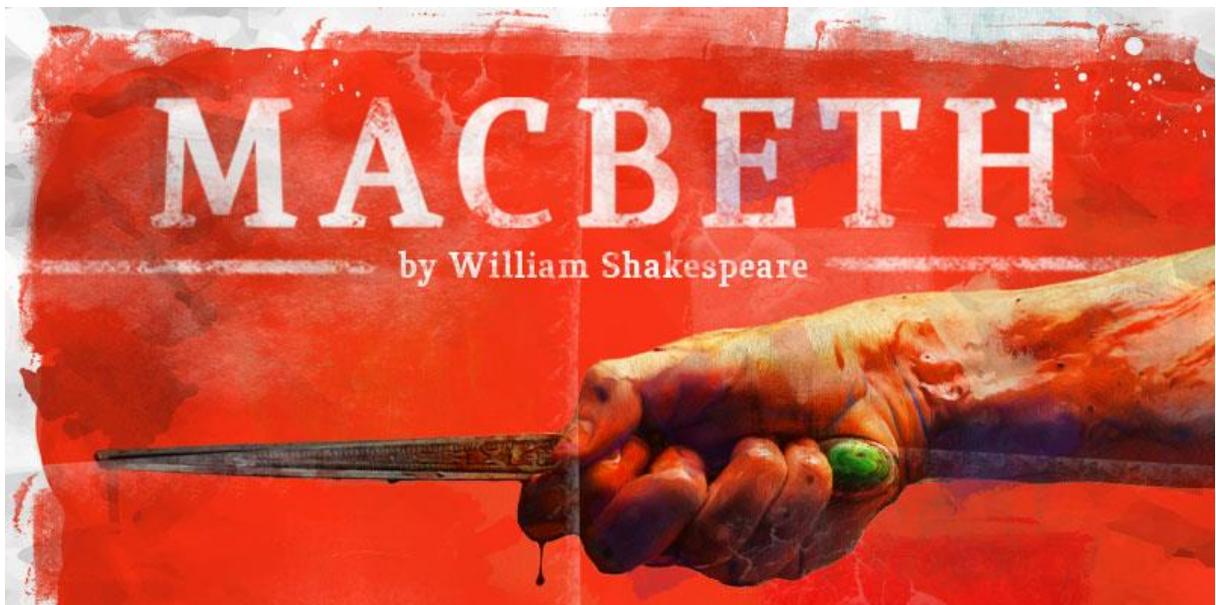




Outwood Grange Academies Trust

Macbeth

Key Quotes



Act, Scene	Who said this?	Why? What does it show?
<p>I, i</p> 	<p><b>“Fair is foul, and foul is fair” (The Witches)</b></p>	<p>The witches capture a key theme of <i>Macbeth</i> – everything is upside down, things are never as they seem. Macbeth betrays the King, Lady Macbeth does not value the fact he is kind and true as well as loyal. She wants the strength of a man rather than a woman and would kill her child to achieve her ambition. This quote establishes a link between the witches and Macbeth (his first line echoes this – “So foul and fair a day I have not seen”).</p>
<p>I, ii</p>	<p><b>“Unseam’d him from the nave... to the chops” (The sergeant talking about Macbeth)</b></p>	<p>Before even meeting Macbeth we learn of his violence and his determination. He is capable of great brutality.</p>
<p>I, iii</p>	<p><b>“So wither'd and so wild in their attire, / That look not like the inhabitants o' the earth, / And yet are on't” (Banquo)</b></p>	<p>Banquo describes the witches – they don’t seem to belong to the human world. They are supernatural and frightening.</p> 
<p>I, v</p>	<p><b>“Come, you spirits / ...unsex me here, / ... make thick my blood; / Stop up the access and passage to remorse” (Lady Macbeth)</b></p>	<p>Lady Macbeth wants to be more like a man than a woman – she thinks she needs the strength of mind and body to be successful in achieving her ambition. She is conjuring of the spirits of darkness and is disturbing and distinctly unfeminine. She is powerful and single-minded.</p>
<p>I, vii</p>	<p><b>“I have given suck... / I would, while it was smiling in my face, / Have pluck'd my nipple from his boneless gums, / And dash'd the brains out” (Lady Macbeth)</b></p>	<p>Suggesting, again, that everything has been turned upside down. Lady Macbeth is not displaying the maternal qualities we expect of a woman. She also shows she is capable if imagining great violence against those who are vulnerable.</p>
<p>2, i</p>	<p><b>“Is this a dagger which I see before me...” (Macbeth)</b></p>	<p>The core question of the text: does Macbeth see a dagger? If so, it suggests that the witches /other supernatural forces are at work and, to an extent,</p>

		controlling him – and therefore he cannot be held entirely responsible for his actions. Or perhaps he is hallucinating the image, so distressed and guilty is he at his betrayal of Duncan.
2, ii	<b>“Macbeth does murder sleep” (Macbeth)</b>	Sleep is only available to the pure and innocent, now we associate Macbeth with darkness; his guilt is so much he will not sleep again, instead being left to while away the nights scheming and plotting.
2, ii	<b>“Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood / Clean from my hand?” (Macbeth)</b> 	A rare reference to any form of god in the text. Macbeth realises he will never be free from the consequences of his action (unlike Lady Macbeth who says that “A little water clears us of this deed”).
2, ii	<b>“My hands are of your colour; but I shame To wear a heart so white.” (Lady Macbeth)</b>	One of the many times Lady Macbeth accuses Macbeth of cowardice following Duncan’s murder.
2, iii	<b>“There’s daggers in men’s smiles” (Donaldbain)</b>	Donaldbain understands the true nature of power in Macbeth’s Scotland – lies and betrayal, such as that which led to his father’s murder. The image of the dagger links back to 2, i.
3, iv	<b>“Never shake / Thy gory locks at me” (Macbeth)</b>	This is Macbeth’s horrified reaction to the appearance of Banquo’s ghost at the banquet. It also reminds us of the blood and horror which runs through this play.
3, iv	<b>“blood will have blood” (Macbeth)</b>	Macbeth knows his killing of Banquo is only to lead to more slaughter.
3, iv	<b>“I am in blood / Stepp’d in so far that, should I wade no more, / Returning were as tedious as go o’er” (Macbeth)</b>	This is a strong use of blood imagery, Macbeth is a man wading through a river of blood.

<p>5, i</p>	<p><b>“Out, damned spot!” (Lady Macbeth)</b></p>	<p>A nice contrast to her earlier declaration that “A little water clears us of this deed” – Lady Macbeth, in her madness, realises that the guilt can never be removed. She can never wash the blood from her hands.</p> 
<p>5, i</p>	<p><b>“Yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him” (Lady Macbeth)</b></p>	<p>An insight into the reality of murder. Lady Macbeth draws attention to how the blood of Duncan was shocking even to her. Of course, “so much blood” is an indication of how much guilt she now feels.</p>
<p>5, i</p>	<p><b>“Foul whisperings are abroad: unnatural deeds / Do breed unnatural troubles” (The Doctor)</b></p>	<p>The Doctor reflects on the words of Lady Macbeth and her revelations as she sleeps. He says she has an “infected mind” and adds that the infection comes out in the form of dreams and sleepwalking.</p>
<p>5, ii</p>	<p><b>“Seyton, I say” (Macbeth)</b></p>	<p>Macbeth has a servant called Seyton. Is it the Devil who has caused the deaths, or Macbeth, or Lady Macbeth or The Witches, or simply fate?</p>
<p>5, iii</p>	<p><b>“I’ll fight till from my bones my flesh be hack’d” (Macbeth)</b></p>	<p>Macbeth will continue to fight until his death. He realises that the only outcome from this situation is his death.</p>
<p>5, iii</p>	<p><b>“Out, out, brief candle! Life’s but a walking shadow, a poor player That struts and frets his hour upon the stage And then is heard no more: it is a tale Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, Signifying nothing.” (Macbeth)</b></p>	<p>Macbeth’s words before he rides out to his death. Such a sad quote – Macbeth believes that life has no value, our existences are pointless and will not be remembered. Nothing matters – we all die in the end.</p> 