

## 0.8

### Literature – Drama

# William Shakespeare: „Macbeth“ – A character study in ambition and terror

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In dieser Einheit analysieren die Schülerinnen und Schüler William Shakespeares Tragödie „Macbeth“ mit Fokus auf Macbeth und Lady Macbeth anhand ausgewählter Szenen. Der Schwerpunkt der Untersuchung liegt auf den Charakterstrukturen der Figuren sowie deren Beziehung zueinander im Verlauf der Handlung. Mithilfe vielfältiger Methoden werden inhaltliche und emotionale Zugänge zu der Tragödie geschaffen, insbesondere in Hinblick auf die Reaktionen, Motive und Seelenzustände der beiden Protagonisten.

## Auf einen Blick

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### 1. Stunde

**Thema:** Previous knowledge about Shakespeare and “Macbeth”

**M 1a** **What do I know about Shakespeare and “Macbeth”?** – Basic / Satzanfänge und -enden einander zuordnen

**M 1b** **What do I know about Shakespeare and “Macbeth”?** – Intermediate / Einen Lückentext ausfüllen

**M 1c** **What do I know about Shakespeare and “Macbeth”?** – Advanced / Sich zu Aussagen positionieren und diese diskutieren

**Hausaufgabe:** Ggf. M 2, Aufgabe 1

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### 2.–4. Stunde

**Thema:** The plot of the tragedy

**M 2** **The plot of “Macbeth” – Essential incidents** / Den Inhalt von „Macbeth“ zusammenfassen; einzelne Ereignisse in „Macbeth“ interpretieren und diskutieren; ein Erklärvideo erstellen

**Hausaufgabe:** Das Video drehen und fertigstellen

**Benötigt** Digitale Endgeräte und Internetzugang zum Erstellen des Videos

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### 5./6. Stunde

**Thema:** Focus on Macbeth

**M 3** **Who is Macbeth? – Tracing the protagonist’s development** / Zitate von Macbeth suchen, erläutern und interpretieren; eine Charakterisierung von Macbeth verfassen

**Hausaufgabe:** Ggf. die Charakterisierung fertigstellen

## 7./8. Stunde

**Thema:** Analysis of a scene

**M 4** **Analysing a scene – Macbeth as king** / Ein Selbstgespräch Macbeths zusammenfassen; den Textauszug analysieren und in den Kontext der Tragödie einordnen; einen *comment* verfassen

**Hausaufgabe:** Ggf. den *comment* fertigstellen

## 9.–11. Stunde

**Thema:** Focus on Lady Macbeth

**M 5** **Analysing Lady Macbeth – Working with extracts** / Den Charakter und das Verhalten Lady Macbeths erarbeiten; eine Präsentation zu Lady Macbeths Entwicklung erstellen; eine Debatte durchführen

## 12./13. Stunde

**Thema:** Characteristics of the genre

**M 6** **Play, tragedy and tragic hero – Describing the play “Macbeth”** / Einen Sachtext lesen und einen Lückentext dazu ausfüllen; die Informationen des Sachtextes auf „Macbeth“ anwenden

## LEK

**Thema:** **Analysis of a scene and comment** / Einen Textauszug in die Gesamthandlung einordnen und analysieren; einen *comment* verfassen

## Erklärung zu den Symbolen



Dieses Symbol markiert differenziertes Material. Wenn nicht anders ausgewiesen, befinden sich die Materialien auf mittlerem Niveau.



einfaches Niveau



mittleres Niveau



schwieriges Niveau

## M 2 The plot of “Macbeth” – Essential incidents

### Tasks

1. Use your knowledge of the play as well as the information from the grid to briefly summarise the plot of “Macbeth” in your own words (ca. 150 words).
2. Write down your interpretation/evaluation of the individual incidents in the right column of the grid.
3. Get together in groups of three to four students and discuss your findings.
4. Creating an explanatory video:
  - a) In groups, choose one essential incident from the plot of “Macbeth”.
  - b) Plan and create an explanatory video on the incident and its consequences. Your video should cover about three to five minutes. Use the guidelines in the TIP box.
  - c) After showing your videos in class, use the feedback sheet to give each other feedback.

#### Tips for creating an explanatory video on “Macbeth”

1. **Choose wisely:** Pick one key incident that has a major impact on the plot or characters. Ask yourself: How does this moment change the course of the play?
2. **Understand before you explain:** Make sure you fully understand what happens in your chosen scene and why it matters. Think about the motives, emotions and themes (e.g., ambition, guilt, fate vs. free will).
3. **Plan your structure:** A clear structure helps your audience to follow the video:
  - Introduction – What happens in this scene? Where does it appear in the play?
  - Analysis – Why is it important? What are the consequences for the characters or the plot?
  - Conclusion – What message or theme does this moment highlight?
4. **Use clear and engaging language:** Speak clearly and confidently. Avoid just summarising – instead, explain and interpret.
5. **Visual and creative elements:** For example, you can use short reenactments or voice-overs, text overlays for key quotations, illustrations or simple animations, background music to set the mood. Be creative but make sure every element supports your explanation.
6. **Keep it focused:** Your video should last 3–5 minutes – enough to explain your scene clearly without losing focus. Rehearse and time it before recording.
7. **Teamwork counts:** Distribute roles (speaker, editor etc.) and collaborate. Respect everyone’s ideas and make sure all group members contribute equally.

## M 5 Analysing Lady Macbeth – Working with extracts



### Tasks

1. In a placemat activity, collect characteristics of an ambitious woman in the 21st century.
2. Extract 1: Read the extract and name all the expressions and images conjuring up a sense of blackness or darkness.
3. Extract 2: What does Lady Macbeth blame her husband for and how does she go about it psychologically?
4. Extract 3: Describe Lady Macbeth's reaction in this moment of crisis.
5. Extract 4: Rephrase this passage in modern English and explain what is weighing on Lady Macbeth's mind so heavily.
6. In pairs, create a visual presentation or poster titled "The rise and fall of Lady Macbeth" showing her development from ambition to guilt. Use quotations and images to show how Shakespeare's language reflects her inner state.
7. In class, carry out a debate on the following question: Who bears greater responsibility for the tragedy in "Macbeth" – Macbeth or Lady Macbeth?



### Procedure – Carrying out a debate

#### Preparation:

- Revisit your notes and findings on Lady Macbeth and Macbeth.
- Collect evidence (quotations, actions, turning points) that show each character's role in the tragedy.
- Think about how each character changes over the course of the play.
- Prepare at least three arguments supporting your position and one counterargument you can respond to.

#### Focus questions to guide your argumentation:

- Who first gives voice to the idea of murdering Duncan?
- How does each character influence the other?
- How do ambition, manipulation and guilt differ between them?
- At what point does each character lose control?
- Who suffers more from the consequences of their actions?

#### Debate format:

- Divide the class into two groups: Team A argues that Macbeth is more responsible. Team B argues that Lady Macbeth is more responsible.
- Each team presents an opening statement (2–3 minutes).
- Then both sides take turns presenting and responding to arguments.

## Play, tragedy and tragic hero – Describing the play “Macbeth”

M 6



### Tasks

1. Read the text and highlight important information.
2. Look at the terms used when dealing with plays, tragedies and tragic heroes. Choose the correct term and fill in the gaps.

dimensions – soliloquy – existence – pity – Greek – restored – monologues – misery – hybris – Elizabethan – inner – stage directions – motives

- a) The function of a \_\_\_\_\_ consists in the revelation of a character's thoughts, emotions and \_\_\_\_\_ to the audience.
- b) One of the functions of a tragedy is to arouse the reader's or viewer's \_\_\_\_\_ for the hero's \_\_\_\_\_.
- c) Traditionally, \_\_\_\_\_ was the significant feature of the hero in the \_\_\_\_\_ tragedy.
- d) \_\_\_\_\_ can serve the function to illustrate the characters' appearances.
- e) Usually, Shakespeare's tragedies start in an atmosphere of relative order. At the end of the play, it is (partially) \_\_\_\_\_.
- f) In a play, the characters' personalities are illustrated by dialogues and \_\_\_\_\_.
- g) The hero of \_\_\_\_\_ times traditionally struggles with an \_\_\_\_\_ conflict.
- h) The ending of a tragedy is captivating for most people as it makes the \_\_\_\_\_ of the human \_\_\_\_\_ come to the surface.