

AP Brit Lit: Lesson Plans - Macbeth

Week Two: 2/9 – 2/13/09

Day One: Act I, scene i-ii

Duration

One 35-minute class period (5-7 minutes pre-factored in for prayer, announcements, assignment collection, pack-up and dismissal)

Standards

This lesson is aligned with the Iowa Department of Education's Grade 12 Standards for Literacy (2008).

- Content Standard 1: Students can comprehend what they read in a variety of literary and informational texts.
  - Benchmark B: Students can determine the literal meaning of specific words.
  - Benchmark C: Students can draw conclusions, make inferences, and deduce meaning.
  - Benchmark D: Students can infer traits, feelings, and motives of characters or individuals.
  - Benchmark F: Students can interpret nonliteral language used in a text.
  - Benchmark G: Students can determine the main idea, topic, or theme and make generalizations.
  - Benchmark J: Students can recognize aspects of a passage's style and structure and can recognize literary techniques.

Objectives

- Students will discuss the events of Act I, scene i-ii, focusing mainly on Shakespeare's careful crafting of the plot and circumstances of the play, as well as characterization.

Materials

- Copies of student textbooks (school-provided);
- Copies of “Motifs, Themes & Oddities” hand-out (Appendix D)
- Alfred Harbage article on *Macbeth* (Appendix E)
- Writing utensils

### Purpose

Students will discuss the carefully laid plans of Shakespeare in crafting the play, and how his characters are victims of circumstance and their own misplaced ambitions.

### Model

- Students will discuss the beginnings of the play – specifically, how Shakespeare masterfully crafts circumstances and events.
- Students will discuss the Three Witches/Weird Sisters, using the “Motifs, Themes & Oddities” hand-out (Appendix D) as a guide.
  - Gender ambiguity – beards, but called the 'Weird Sisters', so obviously meant to be female;
  - Witch stereotypes/Shakespeare's purported use of 'real' curses/the 'Macbeth'/'Scottish Play' curse;
  - The witches' representing the three fates from Norse/Greek mythology.
- Students will discuss the characterization of Macbeth, using Alfred Harbage's article (Appendix E) as a guide.
  - Macbeth is 'noble' – he deserves his initial promotion to Thane of Cawdor due to his candor on the battlefield. Does he come across as sympathetic? When does this start to lapse? Is his power lust immediately apparent?

### Closure

- The ST will remind students that they have a quiz on Act I on Friday (2/13).

Day Two: Act I, scene iii

Duration

One 35-minute class period (5-7 minutes pre-factored in for prayer, announcements, assignment collection, pack-up and dismissal)

Standards

This lesson is aligned with the Iowa Department of Education's Grade 12 Standards for Literacy (2008).

- Content Standard 1: Students can comprehend what they read in a variety of literary and informational texts.
  - Benchmark B: Students can determine the literal meaning of specific words.
  - Benchmark C: Students can draw conclusions, make inferences, and deduce meaning.
  - Benchmark D: Students can infer traits, feelings, and motives of characters or individuals.
  - Benchmark F: Students can interpret nonliteral language used in a text.
  - Benchmark G: Students can determine the main idea, topic, or theme and make generalizations.
  - Benchmark J: Students can recognize aspects of a passage's style and structure and can recognize literary techniques.

Objectives

- Students will discuss the witches' prophecies in Act I, scene iii, and how characters' personalities and reactions to this information sets in place the grisly actions of the rest of the play.

Materials

- Copies of students' textbooks (school-provided)

### Purpose

- Students will discuss the witches' prophecies in scene iii, and the effect they have on both Macbeth and Banquo.

### Model

- The ST will ask students clarifying questions about the scene:
  - What are the witches' prophecies?
  - How does Macbeth react vs. Banquo?
  - How is Banquo a foil to Macbeth?

### Closure

- The ST will remind students that they have a quiz on Act I on Friday (2/13).

## Day Three: Act I, scene iv-v

### Duration

One 35-minute class period (5-7 minutes pre-factored in for prayer, announcements, assignment collection, pack-up and dismissal)

### Standards

This lesson is aligned with the Iowa Department of Education's Grade 12 Standards for Literacy (2008).

- Content Standard 1: Students can comprehend what they read in a variety of literary and informational texts.
  - Benchmark B: Students can determine the literal meaning of specific words.
  - Benchmark C: Students can draw conclusions, make inferences, and deduce meaning.
  - Benchmark D: Students can infer traits, feelings, and motives of characters or individuals.

- Benchmark F: Students can interpret nonliteral language used in a text.
- Benchmark G: Students can determine the main idea, topic, or theme and make generalizations.
- Benchmark J: Students can recognize aspects of a passage's style and structure and can recognize literary techniques.

### Objectives

- Students will discuss the role of ambitions and keeping up appearances in scenes iv and v of

### Act I.

### Materials

- Copies of students' textbooks (school-provided)

### Purpose

- Students will discuss multiple characters' attempts to affect a particular role to the outside world, while secretly intending something entirely different.

### Model

- The ST will ask students leading questions regarding the motivations of various characters, and whether or not they are apparent to the outside world:
  - Macbeth – In scene iv, he expresses gratitude to King Duncan for being named the Thane of Cawdor, and vows to continue serving him loyally. Yet at the end of the scene, Macbeth's aside speaks of darker intentions (“Stars, hide your fires; / Let not light see my black and deep desires”).
  - Lady Macbeth – Unabashedly power-hungry. She immediately accepts that murder will be involved in order for her husband to ascend to the throne, and even cautions him against giving this away (“Only look up clear. / To alter favor ever is to clear.”)

- The ST will ask students to speculate about the relationship between Macbeth and Lady Macbeth.

#### Closure

- Students have a quiz on Act I on 2/13 (Friday).

#### Day Four: Act I, scene vi – vii

#### Duration

One 35-minute class period (5-7 minutes pre-factored in for prayer, announcements, assignment collection, pack-up and dismissal)

#### Standards

This lesson is aligned with the Iowa Department of Education's Grade 12 Standards for Literacy (2008).

- Content Standard 1: Students can comprehend what they read in a variety of literary and informational texts.
  - Benchmark B: Students can determine the literal meaning of specific words.
  - Benchmark C: Students can draw conclusions, make inferences, and deduce meaning.
  - Benchmark D: Students can infer traits, feelings, and motives of characters or individuals.
  - Benchmark F: Students can interpret nonliteral language used in a text.
  - Benchmark G: Students can determine the main idea, topic, or theme and make generalizations.
  - Benchmark J: Students can recognize aspects of a passage's style and structure and can recognize literary techniques.

#### Objectives

- Students will discuss the conclusion of Act I, and how it acts as a 'point of no return' for the rest of the play.

#### Materials

- Copies of students' textbooks (school-provided)

#### Purpose

- Students will discuss the nature of Macbeth's having second thoughts about going through with his plan to murder Duncan, and how Lady Macbeth's unflagging support keeps him on track.

#### Model

- The ST will ask students a number of clarifying questions about scenes vi and vii:
  - Duncan comments that the Macbeth castle “hath a pleasant seat” at the beginning of scene vi. How is this ironic?
  - Why is Lady Macbeth's choice of words so poignant in scene vi (“In every point twice done and then done double”)? (The ST will point out Lady Macbeth's other bit of double-speak towards the end of the scene, and also how her words sound like a witches' incantation.)
  - How does Macbeth talk himself out of going through with his plan in scene vii? What tactics does Lady Macbeth use to convince him otherwise? (The ST will point out the ghastly determination of Lady Macbeth, epitomized in her speech about dashing an infants' brains out.)
  - How is it ironic that Macbeth is telling his wife at the end of the scene to “mock the time with fairest show”?

#### Closure

- Students will have a quiz on Act I on Friday (2/13).

### Duration

One 35-minute class period (5-7 minutes pre-factored in for prayer, announcements, assignment collection, pack-up and dismissal)

### Standards

This lesson is aligned with the Iowa Department of Education's Grade 12 Standards for Literacy (2008).

- Content Standard 1: Students can comprehend what they read in a variety of literary and informational texts.
  - Benchmark G: Students can determine the main idea, topic, or theme and make generalizations.

### Objectives

- Students will show understanding of the events in Act I of *Macbeth* via a short-answer quiz (Appendix F).

### Materials

- Copies of Act I quiz (Appendix F)
- Writing utensils
- Copies of student textbooks (school-provided)

### Purpose

- Students will take a quiz on Act I of *Macbeth*.

### Model

- The ST will explain that each quiz question must be answered with a direct quote from the play. Students will be given the duration of the class period to take the quiz.
- If students get done early, they can begin reading Act II quietly.

Closure

- Students should read Act II of the play for Monday (3/16).