

Act 2 - Knowledge Organiser



Plot summary:

Act II scene i – Banquo feels uneasy about what might happen in the night. Macbeth makes his way to Duncan's room to kill him and sees a ghostly dagger floating in the air before him.

Act II scene ii – Macbeth forgets to leave the bloody daggers in Duncan's room after the murder and Lady Macbeth is forced to take charge and put them back.

Act II scene iii – The next morning Duncan's body is discovered by Macduff; Macbeth conveniently kills the servants in pretend rage; Duncan's sons, Malcolm & Donalbain, flee the castle.

Act II scene iv – Macduff reports that suspicion for the murder has fallen on the king's sons; Macbeth has travelled to Scone to be crowned.

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.

Order vs chaos Natural order is disrupted then re-established.

Fate

Masculinity/femininity

Key Terms:

husbandry – household economy
prose – normal written language

signifies – means

proclaims – announces

treason – murdering someone to whom you owe loyalty

flee – run away

anticipate – expect

allude – refer to

heighten – make stronger

justification – reason

coronation – crowning ceremony

feigning – pretending

chamberlains – officers who serve in the King's household

regicide – to kill a monarch

Context:

It was believed that kings were appointed by 'divine right' and were anointed by God. To kill a king was considered the worst sin and a terrible crime.

☐ *Macbeth* is a **tragedy** and the character of Macbeth is a **tragic hero**



Quotes:

"...There's husbandry in heaven;
Their candles are all out."

"Is this a dagger which I see before me,
The handle toward my hand? Come, let me
clutch thee.

I have thee not, and yet I see thee still.

Art thou not, fatal vision, sensible

To feeling as to sight? or art thou but

A dagger of the mind, a false creation,

Proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain?"

"Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this
blood

Clean from my hand? No, this my hand will
rather

The multitudinous seas in incarnadine,
Making the green one red."

"My hands are of your colour; but I shame
To wear a heart so white...

A little water clears us of this deed:"

"...If a man were porter of hell-gate, he should
have old turning the key."

"Most sacrilegious murder hath broke ope

The Lord's anointed temple, and stole thence

The life o' the building!"

"Who can be wise, amazed, temperate and
furious,

Loyal and neutral, in a moment?"

"I'll to England."

"To Ireland, I; our separated fortune

Shall keep us both the safer: where we are,

There's daggers in men's smiles:"

"...this sore night

Hath trifled former knowings."