

# Shakespeare – Macbeth

## Topic

Shakespeare's *Macbeth*

## Aims

- Learners will practise speaking skills
- Learners will practise listening skills
- Learners will review the use of future tenses
- Learners will practise writing skills

## Age group

Teens

## Level

B1–B2

## Time

45 minutes or three shorter sections

## Materials

- Video from LearnEnglish Teens <http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/uk-now/literature-uk/shakespeare-macbeth>
- Macbeth student worksheet

## Introduction

In this lesson, learners will discuss what they would do if they ruled their country, and reflect on the advantages and disadvantages of having power. They will then watch a video about Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, and check their understanding of the key events in it. Learners will then read a horoscope and guess which character in the play it is about. Finally, they will write their own horoscopes for one of the characters based on what happens to them in the play. There are also suggestions for further follow-up activities.

## Procedure

<b>1. Introduction to one of the play's themes (5–10 minutes)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write on the board: <i>If I were ruler of</i> [insert name of city or country where you are], <i>I would</i> ...</li> <li>• Ask students to complete the sentence with one or more ideas – emphasise that the ideas don't necessarily have to be realistic.</li> <li>• After a couple of minutes, ask students to compare answers in pairs – ask for some suggestions and write them on the board. Who chose to do things that would benefit everyone? Who chose to do things to benefit themselves?</li> <li>• Ask students if they would like to have that much power. What might be the good/bad things about being a ruler?</li> </ul>
<b>2. Preparation activity (5 minutes)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tell students that they are going to watch a video about a play that is all about ambition and power. It is called <i>Macbeth</i>.</li> <li>• Do the preparation activity from the LearnEnglish Teens website. It can be found here: <a href="http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/uk-now/literature-uk/shakespeare-macbeth">http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/uk-now/literature-uk/shakespeare-macbeth</a> and is the first task under 'Preparation'. This can be done by projecting the page, or by printing off the worksheet here: <a href="http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/sites/teens/files/macbeth_-_exercises_1.pdf">http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/sites/teens/files/macbeth_-_exercises_1.pdf</a>.</li> <li>• Alternative: Divide up the words and definitions and put the definitions on one colour card and the words on a different colour card. Ask students to find their partner. Check the answers when students have matched themselves, and check pronunciation.</li> </ul>
<b>3. Watch the video (10–15 minutes)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students watch the video, and then they can do the 'Check your understanding' activities from the LearnEnglish Teens site. Ask students to do the true or false activity and check answers, and then ask them to do the multiple choice activity. Again, this can be projected, or students can work from the worksheet <a href="http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/sites/teens/files/macbeth_-_exercises_1.pdf">http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/sites/teens/files/macbeth_-_exercises_1.pdf</a></li> <li>• Alternative: The 'Check your understanding' activities could be done as a quiz. Read out the questions and students work in groups to write down the answers.</li> <li>• After they have watched the video, ask students who they think is to blame for what happens at the end of the play – write on the board: The witches, Macbeth, Lady Macbeth, Malcolm, someone else. Ask students to think about why each one might be responsible and then take a quick class vote.</li> </ul>
<b>4. Follow-up: writing a horoscope (10– 15 minutes)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask students if they ever read horoscopes. Do they believe that it is possible to tell the future? How did the witches know what would happen to Macbeth? If we think something is going to happen, is it more likely to? Ask students to discuss these ideas briefly in pairs.</li> <li>• Hand out the student worksheet and ask students to read the horoscope. Which character in the play do they think it was written for? (Answer: the guards outside King Duncan's bedroom)</li> <li>• Tell students that they must now write a similar horoscope for another character in the play. Tell students to focus on the tenses used in writing horoscopes by looking at the example (future tenses, will, be going to), and that they should include a warning, and also how the character is going to feel.</li> <li>• Students can work in pairs to write their horoscopes. Monitor and help where necessary.</li> </ul>

	<p>When they are finished, you can display the horoscopes around the room, giving each one a number. Ask students to move around the room, reading the horoscopes and writing down which character they think each numbered horoscope refers to. While they are doing this, make a note of any errors/good language used. At the end, check the answers and give some feedback on the notes you have made.</p>
<b>5. Optional follow-up</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• If you would like to do more work with your learners on Shakespeare, go here: <a href="http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/sites/teacheng/files/Teens%20Shakespeare%20Extension%20Activities.pdf">http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/sites/teacheng/files/Teens%20Shakespeare%20Extension%20Activities.pdf</a> for a series of additional/alternative follow-up exercises.</li></ul>

**Contributed by**

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