

Warmer – Discussing and sequencing events in *Macbeth*



A scene from William Shakespeare's play *Macbeth*

Have you ever watched this play or seen a filmed version? What do you know about it?

*Your teacher will give you a jumbled-up version of the plot of *Macbeth*.*

Work with a partner to see if you can arrange the events in the correct order.

Task 1 – Vocabulary: adjectives of personality

*You will now know that Lady Macbeth plays an important part in shaping the plot of *Macbeth*. Choose five words from the box which, in your opinion, best describe the character of Lady Macbeth.*

ruthless submissive manipulative ambitious violent feminine sensitive caring
strong intelligent confident

Task 2 – Shakespearean English

Shakespearean English is quite different from the English we speak today.

Can you match Lady Macbeth's lines (1–5) with their translation into modern English (a–e)?

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| 1. <i>He has almost supped</i> | a. Are you too scared to go and get what you really want? |
| 2. <i>Art thou afeared to be the same in thine own act and valour as thou art in desire?</i> | b. When Duncan is asleep I'll get his two servants so drunk that they won't remember a thing the next day. |
| 3. <i>When you durst do it then you were a man</i> | c. He has almost finished dinner. |
| 4. <i>But screw your courage to the sticking place and we'll not fail.</i> | d. You were manly when you were brave enough to do it. |
| 5. <i>When Duncan is asleep his two chamberlains will I with wine and wassail so convince that memory, the warder of the brain will be a fume.</i> | e. Set your mind on what you want to do and we'll not fail. |

Task 3 – Reading *Macbeth* Act 1, Scene 7

You are going to read Act 1, Scene 7 from *Macbeth*. As you read, think about the adjectives you chose to describe Lady Macbeth in **Task 1 – Vocabulary: adjectives of personality**. Do you still agree with your choices?

Task 4 – Identifying Lady Macbeth's persuasive techniques

Lady Macbeth has to work very hard to persuade her husband to kill King Duncan. In the scene you have just read, she uses a number of persuasive techniques to make absolutely sure she gets her way. Here are some examples:

- Flattery
- Reassurance
- Putting someone down
- Emphasising determination

For extracts 1–4, decide which of the persuasive techniques a–d she is using.

- I have given suck, and know how tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me. I would, while it was smiling in my face, have plucked my nipple from his boneless gums and dashed the brains out, had I so sworn as you have done to this.*
- Was the hope drunk wherein you dressed yourself? Hath it slept since? And wakes it now to look so green and pale on what it did so freely?*
- When you durst do it then you were a man.*
- But screw your courage to the sticking place and we'll not fail.*

Task 5 – Role play

Your teacher will give you a role play card. It will be your job to persuade someone to do something you want them to do. Use the persuasive techniques you have learned about. How successful are they?

Task 6 – Pitching a modern-day film version of *Macbeth*

Do you think similar events to those in the play Macbeth could take place today, in our times? What would be different?

Working in groups, decide on a storyline for a modern-day film version of Macbeth. The story should be similar but the characters, setting, dialogue, etc. should all be adapted for our times. Which actors would play the lead roles? What would the soundtrack be? Where would your film be set?

Take it in turns to 'pitch' your film idea to the rest of the class. Vote for the film which sounds the most interesting.



Macduff and Macbeth