



**Highsted Knowledge Organiser**  
**Subject: English**  
**Year 11 Terms 1 & 2: Macbeth**

**What I need to know**

- The key themes, characters and plot points in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*
- Key details relating to the political/social/historical context of the Jacobean era
- How theatrical devices e.g. stage directions, lighting, props, scene organisation can be used to create tension and impact the audience
- Features of Shakespeare's tragedy plays
- How language/form and structure can be used to present ideas and achieve purpose
- How to construct a conceptual and effective analytical argument
- How to embed relevant contextual details within analysis to support an argument

**Key Vocabulary**

- Supernatural
- Divine Right of Kings
- Great Chain of Being
- Monologue
- Dialogue
- Soliloquy
- Sacrilegious
- Foil characters
- Epithets
- Equivocations and Oxymorons
- Regicide
- Treason
- Hamartia
- Catharsis
- Hubris
- Tragedy

**Student reference point**

- Read the text and write/ discuss my thoughts and opinions about it
- Show understanding of key characters and events in the text by having detailed mind maps or notes
- Explore the context of Jacobean society by reading about: King James I (particularly his attitudes towards the supernatural), religion in the Jacobean era, social class structure, The Divine Right of Kings, The Great Chain of Being, features of Shakespearean tragedies
- Closely analyse key extracts from the text, focusing on a Shakespeare's use of language/form/structure. Analytical paragraphs will be evident in my book
- Understand the impact of theatrical and dramatic devices by being able to comment on the impact of the: stage directions, director and actor decisions, lighting and staging
- Plan and write analytical essays. Practice writing PETER paragraphs with increasing detail from the text and analysis of devices. Green pen work on assessments will show improvements in my analysis.

**Challenge question**

- Research and explain how *Macbeth* may be seen as a celebration of King James I.
- *Macbeth* implies that human fate is predetermined, and the course of human history is sealed. To what extent do you agree?
- Lady Macbeth is **not** a powerful female figure? To what extent do you agree? Justify your answer using contextual information.

**Suggested reading**

**Top Reads:**

- *Othello*, William Shakespeare
- *King Lear*, William Shakespeare
- *Hamlet*, William Shakespeare

