

Characters		Plot	
Macbeth	Protagonist, ambitious, ruthless, flawed	Act 1	M and Banquo meet witches, they tell Macbeth is told he will be Thane of Cawdor and King of Scotland / they tell Banquo his children will be king/ Cawdor executed as a traitor and Macbeth has his role, Macbeth writes to Lady M, who reads his letter and then appeals to the evil spirits to help her support M. Duncan arrives, fully trusting his hosts. M has doubts about murdering King D – LM taunts him and helps persuade him to act.
Lady Macbeth	Strong and ambitious, has more ‘male’ qualities, goes mad		
Witches	Supernatural beings, they can see into the future, cannot be trusted		
Banquo	Macbeth’s friend, sons prophesied to rule, killed and returns as ghost		
Duncan	Good king (audience believed was chosen by God), trusts M, murdered		
Macduff	Wife and children killed by M’s armies; born by caesarian, he kills Macbeth		
Malcolm	Heir to throne (oldest son of Duncan), good man, crowned king at end of play		
Fleance	Banquo’s son, the witches suggest he could be King, nearly murdered by M/		
Dramatic/Stylistic Devices		Act 2	Macbeth kills Duncan. After, he is afraid he will never sleep again. He leaves the daggers in the room and LM has to return them. She is annoyed that he is afraid and tells him that a little water will clear their hands and hide the evidence of the murder. Malcolm and Donaldbain fear for their lives and flee. M crowned king of Scotland.
Soliloquy	One character speaking to audience; M uses to make audience agree with his plans (be complicit)	Act 3	Banquo suspects Macbeth of wrongdoing. Macbeth orders the murder of Banquo; B is killed but Fl escapes. M haunted by B’s ghost at a banquet. LM has to dismiss the guests because of M’s hallucinations.
Pathetic fallacy	Link between the weather and the mood	Act 4	Witches seeks the witches’ advice: they warn him to be careful of sons of Banquo and Macduff, but reassure him no-one born of woman can harm him, and that he is safe until Birnam Wood comes to Dunsinane castle (his home). He orders the murder of Macduff’s wife and children
Iambic pentameter	A line of 10 syllables , following a pattern of unstressed/ stressed emphasis throughout	Act 5	Lady M is going mad. She is haunted by her actions and imagines seeing blood on her hands. She later kills herself. Macduff realises that the witches have tried him, as Birnam Wood appears to be moving towards Dunsinane castle, and that Macduff was born by caesarean section. Macduff kills M, Malcolm is restored as King of Scotland. Macbeth’s head is put on a stake.
Trochaic metre	A line of poetry that follows a line of stressed and then stressed emphasis – the witches uses this metre / it highlights how different and ‘unnatural’ they are		
Caesura	A break in a line of poetry – indicates pause, hesitation, reflection, uncertainty		
Exclamatives	A word or phrase that uses an exclamation mark at the end to show surprise/ shock/ fear		
Imperatives	A command – uses to show power	Key Vocabulary:	
Context		Power	The desire to have control
1. James I	It is likely that Shakespeare was trying to seek the King’s approval when he wrote the play. King James was fascinated by witchcraft and it is likely that the witches were included to please him. James I wrote a pamphlet on witches called ‘ <i>Demenology</i> ’.	Usurped	To take power from someone by force
2. Divine Right of Kings	James I believed in the Divine Right of Kings: It was believed that the king or queen was chosen directly by God and that they were the most important person in the country.	Manipulative	To get one’s own way by tricking someone skilfully
3 . The Gunpowder Plot	The play was first performed not long after the Gunpowder Plot . Shakespeare shows the murderers of a king tormented by their own guilt and driven to their doom. James I was given a medal to commemorate the gunpowder plot which featured the image of a serpent.	Tyrannical	A cruel misuse of power
		Cathartic	The realease of an audience’s emotions at the end of a story/ play – the relief that Macbeth is no longer king
		Exploitation	Taking advantage of someone - Witches exploit Macbeth and trick him
		Tragedy	A play that revolves around the downfall of a character that is caused by a key character flaw: Macbeth’s excessive ambition