








Macbeth by William Shakespeare



Main Characters			KEY VOCABULARY	Plot Overview	
Macbeth 	A loyal warrior who becomes duplicitous as he becomes obsessed with the witches' prophecies of power.	courageous, indecisive, submissive, disloyal, tyrannical, ambitious, remorseful, tormented, deluded, egocentric		Act 1	The play opens with three witches setting the scene and atmosphere for the play. They cast prophecies on Banquo and Macbeth, who have just returned from war. Macbeth was successful in War, so King Duncan decides to stay at their castle when Macbeth returns. Macbeth writes a letter to his wife about the prophecies and being King. Lady Macbeth creates a plan to murder Duncan so they will become King and Queen. Macbeth does not want to kill Duncan, but Lady Macbeth manipulates him into doing so.
Lady Macbeth 	Macbeth's wife who drives his ambition in the beginning but loses her control by the end.	ambitious, commanding, conniving, heartless, malicious, manipulative, ruthless, sinister, guilty, paranoid		Act 2	Macbeth begins to doubt himself about murdering Duncan but finally goes through with the plan. He freaks out afterwards, so Lady Macbeth finishes the plan by wiping blood on the guards. The next morning Malcolm and Donalbain, the kings sons, flee Scotland in order to stay alive. They believe they could be prime suspects and worry someone could target them as they are heirs to the throne.
The Witches 	Three supernatural beings who tempt Macbeth with prophecies which tempt lead to his ultimate tragic end.	Trouble-making, prophetic, evil, eerie, manipulative		Act 3	Banquo begins to suspect Macbeth as the murderer. In order to keep this a secret, Macbeth commissions thugs to kill Banquo and his son, Fleance, who escapes. Macbeth holds a banquet for all the other lords at his castle, where he sees the ghost Banquo. Macbeth begins to rant and rave, making the guest uneasy. He starts to show signs of madness and insanity.
Banquo 	Macbeth's close friend and ally who also receives prophecies. He haunts Macbeth after his murder.	brave, loyal, diplomatic, virtuous, friendly, astute		Act 4	Macbeth becomes obsessed with power and asks the witches for more prophecies. The witches tell him he should be fearful of Macduff; that he cannot be killed by anyone born of woman; and that he should only fear when Dunsinane wood begins to move. Macbeth has Macduff's family slaughtered after Macduff journeys to England to beg Malcolm to defeat the new Scottish king.
Fleance 	Banquo's son, who escapes murder. This infuriates Macbeth, who knows the boy's survival prevents his own dynasty.	Innocence, justice		Act 5	Lady Macbeth begins to go mad with guilt and then kills herself. Soon Scottish lords begin to think that Macbeth is not the rightful King, and begin to help Malcolm in his attempt to kill Macbeth. Macbeth is not overly worried as he believes the prophecy that no man born of woman can kill him. The battle begins and Macbeth learns that Macduff was ripped from his mother's womb. Macduff kills Macbeth and beheads him. Malcolm becomes the rightful king of Scotland.
Duncan 	King of Scotland at the beginning of the play - a strong, respected leader.	divine right of kings, the great chain of being, honourable, trusting			
Macduff 	Macbeth's antagonist: A brave warrior who is loyal to Duncan and is consistently suspicious of Macbeth.	emotional, courageous, strong-willed, righteous, justice oriented, focused, deliberate, heroic, honourable, intuitive			

KEY THEMES



Supernatural/Evil



Power/Ambition



Chaos/Disorder



Masculinity



Fate



Kingship