

12 - BANQUO

What does Banquo's murder tell us about Macbeth?

WHAT YOU NEED

- Some pieces of paper, or a notebook and something to write with.
- A computer with internet connection, ready to play [this clip](#).
- A copy of Act 3 Scene 1 from Macbeth, to read either on the page or onscreen.

ACTIVITY

- Look at Banquo's soliloquy at the start of Act 3 Scene 1. Read the speech out loud, making a note of any words that stand out or that you find interesting, even if you don't know what they mean yet.
- Watch the clip above (from time code 0:00 to 1:30) about Shakespeare's rhythm and copy the exercise, tapping out the rhythm as you read the speech out loud again. Which words land on the stressed beats? Are any of them the words you chose before? What might this tell you about what Banquo is feeling and thinking?
- Imagine you are Banquo and that Macbeth has just been crowned king. These are dangerous times and it is hard to know who to trust. Write a secret diary entry revealing your thoughts and suspicions. Record this secret diary entry to camera. How careful must Banquo be to not be discovered or overheard?
- Ask yourself: Why doesn't Macbeth kill Banquo himself? Why doesn't Macbeth include his wife in this murder when they worked together to devise the best way to kill Duncan?

EXTENSION

- Write a short film script about the murder of Banquo. Macbeth is not there but how is his influence seen? Fleance, Banquo's son, is also there but manages to escape from the murderers by running away. It won't need to be a long script but think about the different choices you could make. You can look up examples of film scripts online to get ideas about how to arrange your script on the page.
- Decide where and when your film will be set – will it be in Scotland? Will it be modern day? Think about how Fleance escapes, if he is chased by the murderers, where he goes and if he meets anyone. How old is Fleance? How does he feel about what's just happened to his father?
- Don't forget to include any action and camera moves! When you've finished your film script, read it out loud to see how it sounds.

PRIMARY ACTIVITY

- Look at Banquo's speech at the start of Act 3 Scene 1. Read the speech out loud, making a note of any words that stand out or that you find interesting, even if you don't know what they mean yet.
- Watch the clip above about Shakespeare's rhythm. Practise tapping out this rhythm, so it sounds like a heartbeat. You can even speak this heartbeat out loud - 'di-dum, di-dum, di-dum'.
- Read Banquo's speech out loud again, tapping out the rhythm like the actors do in the clip. Which words land on the strong beats, the 'dum' beats? Are any of these words the same as the words you chose before? What might these words tell you about what Banquo is feeling?
- Imagine you are Banquo and that Macbeth has just been made king. These are dangerous times and it is hard to know who to trust. Write a secret diary entry revealing your thoughts and suspicions.
- Ask yourself: Why doesn't Macbeth kill Banquo himself? Why doesn't Macbeth include his wife in this murder?

PRIMARY EXTENSION

- As above