

19 – THE DOWNFALL

Do we have any sympathy for Macbeth at the end?

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 5 Scene 5 from Macbeth, to read either on the page or online.

ACTIVITY

- Shakespeare packs Act 5 full of short, punchy action scenes. Take a look through Act 5 and make a list of all the action that happens. Think of 3 words to sum up Macbeth's reaction to each. Then think of 3 words to sum up the audience's reaction to each. Compare the audience's experience in Act 5 to what Macbeth is going through.
- As you read through Act 5, find any moments where the action stops to allow a speech or a conversation. What is happening in this moment? Why does Shakespeare include these breaks in the action?
- Watch the above clip of Macduff's confrontation with Macbeth.
- Ask yourself: When does Macbeth realise he didn't fully understand the witches' prophecies? What journey is Shakespeare taking the audience on in Act 5?
- Look at Macbeth's Wall of Delusions you started in module 4, The Thane of Cawdor. How close did Macbeth get to achieving his dream? What went wrong? Do you think Shakespeare meant us to see him as a hero or a villain? How has your opinion of Macbeth changed throughout the play?

EXTENSION

- Choreograph the fight between Macduff and Macbeth as if you were a fight director for the theatre. Decide what weapons your actors will use – swords, knives? It might help to draw the stage as a floor plan and create models to represent the characters and move them around.
- Use the lines from the text in [this link](#) to work out where your fight moves happen. Remember, this is a stage fight and not a real fight so no-one must really get hurt!
- If you are feeling particularly creative, try filming a section of your fight as a stop motion animation. You can use a mobile phone or tablet to do this. Look online to see simple methods. Stop motion animation takes time so make sure to choose a short section of your fight to start with! Use modelling clay to make your Macbeth and Macduff, you can move them in whatever positions you need.

PRIMARY ACTIVITY

- Watch the above clip of Macduff's confrontation with Macbeth. How have the witches used Macduff to trick Macbeth? How do you think this make Macbeth feel?
- Take a look at Act 5 Scene 5 and find the bit where the Messenger enters. Read the scene out loud from the messenger's entrance to the end. Make a list of all the words to describe Macbeth's reactions to the news.
- Imagine you are the messenger. Record a video diary, describing the very moment you saw Birnam wood begin to move. How did you feel? What did you do?!
- Ask yourself: Does Macbeth realise he has not fully understood the witches? When do you think he realises this?

PRIMARY EXTENSION

- As above.