

Shakespeare's Macbeth

Name: _____

Date: _____


The Tragedy of Macbeth

- ★ Some debate the exact date that _____ wrote the play, but most agree it was _____.

Holinshed's Chronicles

- ★ Macbeth is believed to be based on an account of Scottish history, published in _____, about a Scottish king names _____, who reigned in the _____ century. But, just as Hollywood today will "glamorize" stories, so too did Shakespeare.

Fortunetellers ~~and~~ Nostradamus

-  Do you believe in fortunetellers? Have you ever had your tea leave/palm/tarot cards read? -or do you know someone who has? How accurate was it? Do you think humans can foresee the future?

- ★ Nostradamus is a famous _____ who lived during the 16th century. He wrote a series of _____, four line poems that have been credited with naming many historical events.

- ★ Some of these events include:

-  Do you think Nostradamus had the power to foresee the future or were his words just interpreted after the fact to fit the situation?

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Historical Background

📖 Whether you believe these things or not, it's important, when you study a work from a different time, to be able to see the world the way the people of that time did. Why is this so important?

- ★ _____ loved the theater and was a great patron of Shakespeare. When she died in _____, she was childless and thus her throne was passed on to _____, who was James VI of Scotland, a cousin of Elizabeth.
- ★ Most people would say that Shakespeare used _____ as an opportunity to impress his new king, as his patronage would be valuable, just as it was with Elizabeth.
- ★ For example, _____ plays a huge part in the play, and King James fancied himself an expert on the subject. In fact, he wrote a book called _____ about the practice of witchcraft and supporting witch hunting.

Witchcraft

- ★ Witches of Shakespeare's time were not quite like our image of them today. They certainly weren't the type that we see at Hogwarts.
- ★ In Shakespeare's time, witches were often

----- --this made them easy targets. Also, those women who were known as healers, wise in the use of plants and herbs, were huge targets. Only doctors or men of God were seen to have the ability to cure; if a lonely old woman could do so, she was believed to be working with the -----.

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- ★ What is this plant? What do we use it for?
.....
- ★ Today we are well aware of many ways to treat illness and so we are not surprised to hear of the healing that happens outside of the office of a doctor, or without the aid of a prescription. The Elizabethans and Jacobean were not nearly so educated, and as a result often relied on fear and suspicion to explain things.
- ★ For example, today, if a young, healthy teenage guy suddenly drops dead, there would be many theories that people would instantly think of: a heart attack, a brain aneurism, a drug overdose, etc.
- ★ But if a young and healthy teen was walking down the cobble stone streets of 17th century London and suddenly dropped dead, people would quickly jump to conclusions, fearing that sorcery could be at play.
- ★ Anytime an unexplained event occurred -drought, fires, storms, shipwrecks, plagues etc. people were quick to blame
- ★ Shakespeare's people believed very much in God, and as a result, in the devil. were thought to be in cahoots with the devil, and he would send, in animal form, to serve them. These were called "....." and are the reason that witches are often depicted with black cats or toads.
- ★ Unfortunately, due to the hysteria surrounding witches, many women were
.....

Divine Right of Kings ~~is~~ The Great Chain of Being

- ★ There is more evidence that Shakespeare is trying to impress his new king with his play. *Macbeth* puts a lot of emphasis on the concept of and
..... The great chain of being was a hierarchical way of viewing the world, where everyone has his/her place, with God on top, followed by earthly beings, in order of "importance"; most of the Elizabethans and Jacobean believed that people belonged in their station, and to try to rise above it was an affront to God.

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- ★ The _____ held that God divinely appointed a king/queen. Thus, it was a grave sin to attempt to usurp a king, as God bestowed his title upon him.

The Gunpowder Plot

- ★ The gunpowder plot of _____ was lead by a group of _____, disappointed that James was not supporting them. Their assassination attempt on the king failed, and a short time later, Shakespeare's play illustrates the dangers of taking a title that _____.

The Setting

- ★ The play is set in 11th century _____, 600 years before it was written.
- ★ When the play opens, _____ is king of Scotland and _____ thane of Glamis.
- ★ The king is fighting a civil war against _____ and _____, two of his thanes.