

Edexcel English Literature GCSE

Macbeth - Key Terms

Flashcards

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Define 'allegory'.



Define 'allegory'.

A story, character, place or event is used to convey a hidden meaning, typically moral or political, about real-world events or issues.

For example, Duncan's death is an allegory for the risks of killing your king.



Define 'allusion'.



Define 'allusion'.

An indirect reference to another event, person or work which the writer assumes the reader is familiar.



Define 'archetype'.



Define 'archetype'.

The first real example or prototype of something; an ideal model or the perfect image or something.



Define 'bathos'.



Define 'bathos'.

An anti-climax which is abrupt; usually humour that comes from an odd and sudden change in tone.



Define 'biblical'.



Define 'biblical'.

Relating to the bible; religious connotations.



Define 'blazon'.



Define 'blazon'.

A poem in which the speaker describes a woman's physique by focusing on and listing various individual parts of a woman's body.



Define 'caricature'.



Define 'caricature'.

An imitation where particular notable characteristics are exaggerated to a comic or grotesque effect.



Define 'colloquialism'.



Define 'colloquialism'.

An informal phrase common at its time of utterance.



Define 'comic relief'.



Define 'comic relief'.

Relief from tension caused by the introduction of a comedic element.



Define 'connotation'.



Define 'connotation'.

Using text to create implied meaning without explicitly referring to said meaning.



Define 'dichotomy'.



Define 'dichotomy'.

A division or contrast between two opposed things.



Define 'double entendre.



Define 'double entendre'.

Words or phrases that have a double meaning and is deliberately ambiguous, especially when one of the meanings is risqué.

For example, in Elizabethan England, the use of the word "die" referred to both death and orgasm.



Define 'dysphemism.



Define 'dysphemism'.

A substitution of a more offensive term for one considered less so.



Define 'epithet'.



Define 'epithet'.

A word or phrase applied to a person to describe an actual or credited quality.

For example: “star crossed lovers” for Romeo and Juliet.



Define 'epitome'.



Define 'epitome'.

A perfect example or embodiment of a concept.



Define 'epizeuxis'.



Define 'epizeuxis'.

The repetition of words in succession within the same sentence.



Define 'euphemism'.



Define 'euphemism'.

The substitution of a harmless term for one that is considered as offensively risqué or explicit.



Define 'extended metaphor'.



Define 'extended metaphor'.

A metaphor that continues over many sentences and could even extend throughout the entire play.



Define 'foreshadowing'.



Define 'foreshadowing'.

An indication that an event will occur later in the narrative.

*[Fan says that her father is much “**kinder**” than before which Scrooge’s change].*



Define 'grotesque'.



Define 'grotesque'.

Ugly and distorted, physically or figuratively, in a way that is comic or repulsive.



Define 'hyperbole'.



Define 'hyperbole'.

Use of exaggerated statements.



Define 'imagery'.



Define 'imagery'.

Use of language which is visually descriptive or symbolic.



Define 'irony'.



Define 'irony'.

Embedding a meaning by using language typically implying the opposite of what the writer is intending to express, often for a humorous effect.



Define 'juxtaposition'.



Define 'juxtaposition'.

Comparing two concepts, characters, or clauses, in close proximity in a passage for the effect of contrast.

For example: "Here is much to do with hate, but more to do with love"



Define 'manifestation'.



Define 'manifestation'.

A physical expression or realisation of an abstract idea through a character, object, place or event.



Define 'motif'.



Define 'motif'.

An element that reoccurs, such as a word, phrase, idea, image, action, character or symbol that appears throughout the play for emphasis.



Define 'oxymoron'.



Define 'oxymoron'.

Two opposing terms are placed next to each other.

For example, when Juliet says "O happy dagger"



Define 'parable'.



Define 'parable'.

A story used to teach a moral or spiritual lesson, typically told in the Bible by Jesus.



Define 'pathetic fallacy'.



Define 'pathetic fallacy'.

Attributing human qualities to nonhuman things.



Define 'personification'.



Define 'personification'.

Giving something non-human a human trait, capability, or personality.



Define 'pun'.



Define 'pun'.

A play on words which suggests multiple meanings.



Define 'satire'.



Define 'satire'.

Criticizing people through the use of
humour or irony.



Define 'semantic field'.



Define 'semantic field'.

A writer uses words which are linked by a theme or topic throughout a text or passage.



Define 'sibilance'.



Define 'sibilance'.

The repetition of an “s” sound in a word, sentence, or section of text.



Define 'similie'.



Define 'similie'.

Comparing something to something else in a nonliteral way, in order to convey a particular idea or quality of the original thing.



Define 'symbolism'.



Define 'symbolism'.

Using one object or character to represent a wider concept running throughout the novel.



Define 'trope'.



Define 'trope'.

A particular type of character, event or setting that is used frequently in stories.



Define 'zoomorphism'.



Define 'zoomorphism'.

Imagery representing animal forms.



Define 'anaphora'.



Define 'anaphora'.

Repeating a sequence of words at the beginning of adjacent clauses.



Define 'antithesis'.



Define 'antithesis'.

Parallel structure that uses opposites to create emphasis

For example: "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times"



Define 'aside'.



Define 'aside'.

A part of an actor's lines that are not meant to be heard by other characters on stage and intended only for the audience; a short digression.



Define 'blank verse'.



Define 'blank verse'.

Unrhymed poetry written in iambic pentameter.



Define 'couplet'.



Define 'couplet'.

A rhymed pair of lines.



Define 'cyclical'.



Define 'cyclical'.

When the same sequence of events repeats throughout a story.



Define 'dramatic irony'.



Define 'dramatic irony'.

When a character shows that they are oblivious of reality of which the audience is aware.



Define 'dramatic monologue'.



Define 'dramatic monologue'.

A passage of speech in which one person is speaking to an audience or 'thinking out loud'.



Define 'epistophe'.



Define 'epistrophe'.

When the same word (or group of words) is employed at the end of successive sentences with the aim of emphasising it.



Define 'exposition'.



Define 'exposition'.

Information provided through stage directions, narration, dialogue, or description, used to introduce the audience to crucial background information.



Define 'heroic couplet'.



Define 'heroic couplet'.

The last two lines of a Shakespearean Sonnet - a couplet of rhyming iambic pentameter.



Define 'iambic pentameter'.



Define 'iambic pentameter'.

A sentence (ten syllables in total) which is composed of two syllables: the first unstressed; the second stressed.



Define 'In Media Res'.



Define 'In Media Res'.

Starting in the middle of the action.



Define 'microcosm'.



Define 'microcosm'.

Using a place, group of people, or event in the small-scale to represent something much larger.

For example, the battle at the start of Macbeth is a microcosm for the whole play.



Define 'paradox'.



Define 'paradox'.

A statement that seems to contradict itself but is still true.



Define 'parallelism'.



Define 'parallelism'.

Using components that are similar in grammar, structure, or meaning within a sentence or multiple sentences, or throughout the text as a whole.



Define 'refrain'.



Define 'refrain'.

A word, phrase, or sentence that is repeated throughout a text.



Define 'soliloquy'.



Define 'soliloquy'.

A dramatic device whereby a character stands alone on stage and addresses the audience, giving voice to their deepest thoughts and feelings.



Define 'sonnet form'.



Define 'sonnet form'.

A highly stylised form of poetry, with 14 lines written in iambic pentameter.

For example, Romeo and Juliet's first real encounter in the balcony scene.



Define 'stichomythia'.



Define 'stichomythia'.

A dialogue between two characters who speak one after the other in turn.



Define 'anagnorisis'.



Define 'anagnorisis'.

An a moment in a play when a character makes a critical discovery, such as the tragic hero's sudden awareness of a real situation usually as a result of their downfall.



Define 'catharsis'.



Define 'catharsis'.

The process of letting go of or providing liberation from, strong or suppressed emotions.



Define 'foil'.



Define 'foil'.

A character with qualities that are in contrast with other characters.

For example, Rosaline and Juliet, or Macbeth and Banquo.



Define 'hamartia'.



Define 'hamartia'.

A character's tragic flaw.



Define 'hubris'.



Define 'hubris'.

An exaggerated self-pride or self-confidence which often leads to a fatal retaliation.



Define 'peripeteia'.



Define 'peripeteia'.

The leading character in the play.



Define 'protagonist'.



Define 'protagonist'.

The leading character in the play



Define 'tragic hero'.



Define 'tragic hero'.

A character who is usually depicted as perfect and honourable yet has one 'fatal flaw' or hamartia.



Define 'Arthurian Legend'.



Define 'Arthurian Legend'.

The stories of King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table, popular for how they celebrate chivalry and patriotism.



Define 'autonomy'.



Define 'autonomy'.

The right and ability to be able to govern yourself, including your actions and decisions.



Define 'code of chivalry'.



Define 'code of chivalry'.

The moral, religious, and social code of Medieval knights, including bravery, honour and courtesy.



Define 'convention'.



Define 'convention'.

The traditional way of doing things.



Define 'dehumanise'.



Define 'dehumanise'.

Denying someone their humanity,
including their emotions and independent
thought.



Define 'Divine Order / Great Chain of Being'.



Define 'Divine Order / Great Chain of Being'.

The belief in Medieval Christianity that all life and matter on Earth was organised into a hierarchy by God.



Define 'facade'.



Define 'facade'.

A front or mask that is put up to disguise something or someone's true character.



Define 'fate'.



Define 'fate'.

The development of events outside an individual's control, it is sometimes said to be determined by a supernatural power.



Define 'Globe Theatre'.



Define 'Globe Theatre'.

A theatre in London associated with William Shakespeare where all of his plays were performed. It was built in 1599 by Shakespeare's playing company and has been rebuilt and reconstructed since.



Define 'Heathen'.



Define 'Heathen'.

Someone who isn't a Christian,
particularly someone who is a pagan or
lacks moral principles.



Define 'infallible'.



Define 'infallible'.

Never failing, incapable of making mistakes.



Define 'melodrama'.



Define 'melodrama'.

A dramatic piece that includes exaggerated characters and exciting events.



Define 'misogyny'.



Define 'misogyny'.

Hatred, contempt, or prejudice towards women for no reason other than their gender.



Define 'morality'.



Define 'morality'.

Principles, either personal or social, concerning the difference between right and wrong, going beyond legality and often religion.



Define 'mythology'.



Define 'mythology'.

A collection of stories, specially belonging to a particular religion or culture such as the Ancient Greeks, that teach moral lessons or explain aspects of our world.



Define 'nihilism'.



Define 'nihilism'.

Believing life is pointless and meaningless.



Define 'paganism'.



Define 'paganism'.

A non-Christian or pre-Christian religion, which particularly worships nature.



Define 'patriarchy'.



Define 'patriarchy'.

A system of society whereby men have ultimate authority which they use to oppress women who are largely excluded from the male dominated society.



Define 'prejudice'.



Define 'prejudice'.

Having a negative view or opinion of someone that is not based on experience or logic.



Define 'remorse'.



Define 'remorse'.

The feeling of intense regret and guilt for doing a bad deed.



Define 'repent'.



Define 'repent'.

To feel or/and express great regret for sinning or committing a crime, particularly in a religious context.



Define 'stereotype'.



Define 'stereotype'.

A view or preconception of a person or thing that is fixed and oversimplified, held by most of a population.



Define 'The Gunpowder Plot'.



Define 'The Gunpowder Plot'.

An assassination attempt on the King of England, King James I, in 1605, where a group of Catholics tried to blow up the Houses of Parliament with gunpowder.



Define 'The Renaissance'.



Define 'The Renaissance'.

A period of time from the 14th to the 17th century where artists, writers and philosophers revisited the works of the ancient greeks and romans.



Define 'Toxic Masculinity'.



Define 'Toxic Masculinity'.

The concept that traditional male gender roles restrict emotion in men which encouraging negative, often violent traits.



Define 'tragedy'.



Define 'tragedy'.

A branch of drama that usually depicts the downfall and the reversal of fortune for a good person; suffering usually awaits many of the characters, especially the tragic hero.



Define 'vice'.



Define 'vice'.

A behaviour or trait that is immoral.



Define 'virtue'.



Define 'virtue'.

A behaviour or trait that is moral.

