

[Sample]

***Macbeth* (1606)**

By William Shakespeare (1564-1616)

Textbook: Act One

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Notes

This textbook will be most useful if it is printed out as a booklet so that students can take notes on the relevant pages in preparation for writing.

Blank pages have been added so that students cannot see the exemplar paragraphs when they are writing their own.

Act One: The Prophecies and the Murder Plot

Scene One: 'Fair is Foul'

Summary: Three witches plan to meet Macbeth once a battle has finished.

SCENE I. A desert place¹.

Thunder and lightning. Enter three witches

First Witch

When shall we three meet again
In thunder, lightning, or in rain?

Second Witch

When the hurlyburly's² done,
When the battle's lost and won.

Third Witch

That will be ere the set of sun³.

First Witch

Where the place?

Second Witch

Upon the heath⁴.

Third Witch

There to meet with Macbeth.

First Witch

I come, Graymalkin!⁵

Second Witch

Paddock⁶ calls.

Third Witch

Anon.

ALL

Fair⁷ is foul⁸, and foul is fair:
Hover through the fog and filthy air.

*Exeunt*⁹

¹'A desert place' – a wild, empty place in the countryside.

²'hurlyburly' – noise and bustle (of battle).

³'ere the set of sun' – before the sun goes down.

⁴'heath' – a wild, empty piece of ground.

⁵'Graymalkin' – grey cat. The First Witch harbours a familiar (Satanic spirit) in the form of a cat.

⁶'Paddock' – Toad (the form of the Second Witch's familiar).

⁷'Fair' – beautiful.

⁸'Foul' – ugly.

⁹'Exeunt' – Latin for 'they leave'. This stage direction means that a group of characters leave the stage. If no character names are mentioned, as here, it means that all characters leave the stage.

Shakespeare's Portrayal of the Three Witches: Planning Framework

Starting Sentence	Quotations	Vocabulary
Shakespeare opens the play by introducing the audience to the three witches.	'Graymalkin' 'Paddock'	evil, sinister, familiar spirit, Jacobean audience, Satanic
Notes:		
Starting Sentence	Quotations	Vocabulary
Just before leaving stage, the witches chant 'Fair is foul, and foul is fair'.	'these detestable slaves of the Devil'	reversal, moral perversity, Catholic worldview, clear, good, evil, Heaven, Hell, James I, <i>Daemonologie</i>
Notes:		

Shakespeare's Portrayal of the Three Witches: Exemplar Paragraphs

Shakespeare opens the play by introducing the audience to the three witches. Unlike the 'fairies' of Holinshed's *Chronicles*, the witches are portrayed as thoroughly evil and sinister. This is made clearest at the end of the first scene, where they call to their familiar spirits, 'Graymalkin' and 'Paddock'. Shakespeare's Jacobean audience would have recognised this as aligning them with evil forces, as familiar spirits were believed to be sent by Satan himself.

Just before leaving stage, the witches chant 'Fair is foul, and foul is fair'. This reversal of ugliness and beauty symbolises their moral perversity: whatever they consider to be good is considered to be evil by others, and vice versa. Within the Catholic worldview of the play, there is a clear and unambiguous distinction between good and evil, between those who are on the side of Heaven and those who are on the side of Hell. The witches are firmly placed by Shakespeare with the evil side, which fits into James I's description of witches in his book *Daemonologie* as 'these detestable slaves of the Devil'.