RAISING ACHIEVEMENT · MACBETH · DRILL 1

Two truths are told

Macbeth

Today: how Macbeth reacts when the first prophecy comes true

25 minutes

Do Now

Know

1. Who tells Duncan about “brave Macbeth” in Act 1 Scene 2?
2. Which title does Macbeth already hold at the start of the play?
3. What three things do the witches call Macbeth in Act 1 Scene 3?
4. In which year was Macbeth probably first performed?
5. What does “the divine right of kings” mean?

Do Now: answers

Know

1. Who tells Duncan about “brave Macbeth” in Act 1 Scene 2?
   The wounded Captain (a sergeant) who fought in the battle

2. Which title does Macbeth already hold at the start of the play?
   Thane of Glamis

3. What three things do the witches call Macbeth in Act 1 Scene 3?
   Thane of Glamis, Thane of Cawdor and king hereafter

4. In which year was Macbeth probably first performed?
   1606

5. What does “the divine right of kings” mean?
   The belief that a king is chosen by God and answers only to God

Focus reminder

Know

What the Macbeth question asks you to do

Start with the extract. Pick a short quotation and zoom in on one word or method.

Write “Shakespeare presents Macbeth as…”. He is a character Shakespeare built, not a real person.

Then link to the play as a whole: how is Macbeth different earlier or later?

Say why: what does Shakespeare want his Jacobean audience to think or feel?

Macbeth’s aside after Ross’s news

Read

William Shakespeare · 1606 · Act 1 Scene 3

MACBETH.
Two truths are told,
As happy prologues to the swelling act
Of the imperial theme.
I thank you, gentlemen.
This supernatural soliciting
Cannot be ill; cannot be good. If ill,
Why hath it given me earnest of success,
Commencing in a truth? I am Thane of Cawdor:
If good, why do I yield to that suggestion
Whose horrid image doth unfix my hair,
And make my seated heart knock at my ribs,
Against the use of nature? Present fears
Are less than horrible imaginings.
My thought, whose murder yet is but fantastical,
Shakes so my single state of man
That function is smother’d in surmise,
And nothing is but what is not.