

English language: shakespeare: macbeth (ca)

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----- A major conflict in Macbeth is the struggle between his ambition and his sense of right and wrong. Explore how conflict arises in Macbeth after the first prophecy proves true particular reference to Act 1 and act 2 Macbeth is a famous play by William Shakespeare known for its violence. The story begins as one of a loyal and honorable hero of Scotland. However, Macbeth's character changes gradually during the play. A powerful ambition for power caused him to make sinister decisions that created for him only despair, guilt, and madness. At the end of the play he was no longer honorable and, instead, a tyrant. The witches play a key role in Macbeth; weird sisters are given the power to influence the behavior of others. In Shakespeare times the Convicted witches were regularly tortured and executed. Almost everyone believed in witches and there was hardly any opposing persecution. King James the 1st was also interested in the superstition, and he interrogated the accused witches himself. The play starts with a prologue scene given by the three witches who occasionally appear between major scenes to foreshadow or comment on events. The first scene is the witches planning to meet Macbeth. The setting of this scene is shows that they are evil; they meet on a moor in thunder and lightning. These surroundings show an evil image; the moor is a very empty place, while thunder and lightning make it even more haunting which all adds to the evil imagery. So even though the first scene has been shown, we already know there will be lots of evil in the play. The witches use rhyming sentences which contradict each other and each sentence has a lot of meaning. " Fair is foul, and foul is fair' This quote tells us about the

witches' hatred for all things good, and their love for things that are evil. Shakespeare adds rhyme and rhythm to the witches' language to enhance their wickedness. The first meeting between Macbeth and the witches is significant as they make two predictions, "Hail to thee thane of Cawdor" and more importantly, "That shalt be king hereafter." These predictions astonish Macbeth due to their sudden nature. This enables the witches to be able to lure Macbeth into a false sense of security and make Macbeth do their evil dirty work. Shakespeare introduces Macbeth as a strong, power wanting and noble fighter. Macbeth talks to the witches in the start of Act 1 scene 3 by commanding them to speak to him and for them to tell him what they are. "Speak if you can. What are you?" Macbeth talks authority indicating that he has power over the witches, as he does not politely ask the witches. The way that Macbeth is speaking here is by using imperative verbs. Shakespeare here uses language to show us what Macbeth's character is like. He also tells us by using language that Macbeth is respected by others at the start of the play. In Act 1 scene 2 it states "O valiant cousin, worthy gentlemen." Duncan expresses this about Macbeth. This reveals that people do respect Macbeth and that he is brave and is a gentleman meaning that his status is quite high. However the witches do manipulate Macbeth and when he tells Lady Macbeth of the predictions, an evil plan is conducted. The prophecy unleashes a struggle within himself, he lusts for power, and his ambition to possess that power is set in motion. He begins to ponder how he can obtain the power promised in the prophecy, but he wants it now. So he considers committing murder, killing King Duncan. He goes through many stressful internal discussions with his conscience to determine whether he has the

true nature to commit murder. " When Duncan announces that his son Malcolm will succeed him as king, Macbeth outwardly supports Duncan's decision. However, he is disappointed and knows he must eliminate Duncan and his son Malcolm to become king. Macbeth now struggles with this conflict and ponders what fate may bring." and the witches plan is going according to plan.

" I've done the deed." This deed is the worst possible crime; Macbeth has murdered king Duncan in cold blood, evil has triumphed over good. Macbeth, the good brave warrior at the beginning of the play has been driven by his ambition powered by the witches to be king. DRAGGER: Macbeth sits alone, waiting for the bell which will summon him to murder Duncan, pondering his decision one final time. The focus of the soliloquy, the invisible dagger, is our first glimpse of Macbeth's powerful imagination — imagination that is largely responsible for his mental torment throughout the drama. Although Macbeth knows that the dagger is an optical illusion, and suspects that it could be brought about by his potentially " heat-oppressed brain" , he nonetheless allows the phantom dagger, soon stained with imaginary " gout of blood" to affect him greatly.