

English 20 macbeth literary essay

[Literature](#), [British Literature](#)



ENGLISH 20 MACBETH LITERARY ESSAY The choices we make every day are what shape who we are as human beings. To ask how many choices are made in a day is preposterous to ask because everything we do in life is a choice. The fact that I am writing this essay is a choice, what I eat today and how I chose to live my life are choices. Some of those choices can seem as insignificant as what we chose to wear to school, but what we learn is that no choice is insignificant. Others could be the difference between life and death. In his book " Choices" Dr. Shad Helmstetter stated " No one else can ever make your choices for you. Your choices are yours alone. They are as much a part of you as every breath you will take, every moment of your life. " This reinforces the idea that the choices we make yesterday are responsible for who we are today. It widely believed that we are influenced by the people we associate with, this is the same with choices. Our choices are influenced by the people we associate with and events that have occurred earlier in our lives. Our choices not only affect our own lives, but the lives of the people around us, these effects can be positive or negative. Before we do something we need to stop and think about the impact that choice will have on not only ourselves, but also rest of the world. The problem is not everybody " stops and thinks". That one seemingly unimportant problem is the cause of nearly every form of evil in our world and causes the many hardships we as humans endure. A piece of literature that relates to choices and their consequences is the play " Macbeth" by William Shakespeare. Whether it is Macbeth and Lady Macbeth orchestrating the murder of Duncan or Macduff refusing to attend Macbeth's banquet, we see how the choices we make will hold an effect on us, even if it may not seem like it. In this essay I will explore the

choices which lead to the character Macbeth's downfall. In "Macbeth" William Shakespeare illustrates that the only thing in our lives separating life from death is a choice. Duncan's death was a collaboration of choices, and not only the choices of his murderer Macbeth. The initial choices that led to Duncan's death appeared to be harmless. When Duncan pronounced Macbeth Thane of Cawdor he lights a fire of ambition in Macbeth, this ambition is the primary aspect of Macbeth's personality that provokes him to slay Duncan. But despite that Duncan's fatal choice was his decision to spend the night in Macbeth's castle. It's ironic that a choice in lodging could be a choice that leads to your death, but every choice that we make will have an affect our lives one way or another. Some of the Choices made by Lady Macbeth were also fundamental in Duncan's death. "Come you spirits that tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here and fill me from the crown to the toe, top full of direst cruelty!" Those words from Lady Macbeth's soliloquy (Act 5 Scene 1) show us her desire to be a monarch, as well as the fact that she is willing to do anything to attain her goal. Lady Macbeth's wishes are a reflection of a choice; she is making a conscious decision to stray from the path of righteousness to a much darker place. Lady Macbeth then choses to express her wishes to Macbeth, her wishes to have Duncan killed. However, despite the choices made by Duncan and Lady Macbeth the primary choice that led to Duncan's death was when Macbeth chose to plunge his dagger into the sleeping body of Duncan. All Macbeth had to do was stop and think and so many hardships could've been avoided. Duncan's death can be traced to three people's choices; this goes to show that a choice, any choice made by anyone can have devastating effects. Macbeth

had Banquo killed for the same reason he killed Duncan, He was in Macbeth's way. "Thou shalt get kings, though thou be none" were the words spoken by one of the witches when predicting Banquo would father a line of kings, they were also the words that had been haunting Macbeth. Macbeth's choice to kill Banquo was influenced by the witches prophecy. Macbeth's solution was to employ a trio of murders to move Banquo "out of the way". Macbeth tasks the murderers to kill Banquo and his son Fleance. Macbeth appears to have no issues with murdering his friend Banquo which is odd considering Macbeth's reluctance to kill Duncan. It was because of Macbeth's past choices, most specifically his choice to kill Duncan that made it easy for him to have Banquo killed. Our choices shape who we are and when Macbeth killed Duncan he made the choice to become a murderer. Macbeth likely wouldn't have conceived the idea to kill Banquo had he not been responsible for Duncan's death and so the consequences of Macbeth's choices were being put into motion. The death of Banquo was because of an immoral choice by Macbeth whom was being consumed by his choices. Every time you kill someone you are gradually, bit by bit dismantling yourself. Between Macbeth's crimes and his newfound glory he was losing himself, he is being consumed by the monster his choices have turned him into. After his third meeting with the witches Macbeth feels invincible as demonstrates his arrogance in this quote; "That will never be. Who can impress the forest, bid the tree unfix his earthbound root? Sweet bodements good! Rebellion's head, rise never till the wood of Birnam rise, and our high placed Macbeth shall live the lease of nature, pay his breath To time and mortal custom. "(Act 4 Scene 1). Macbeth is now acting irrationally and he elects to attack

Macduff's castle and have everyone within slain. The witches warned Macbeth about Macduff, however Macbeth was likely still irritated by the fact that Macduff didn't attend his banquet. So whether the attack on Macduff's castle was out of fear or spite we will never know but it was the choice that likely sealed Macbeth's fate. Macbeth had given Macduff incentive to kill him. Macbeth's death was inevitable, it was only a matter of time. The aftermath of Macbeth's choices were beginning to take shape, Lady Macduff died due to the psychological affects of her choice to engage in the plotting of Duncan's murder. When the time comes for Macbeth and his nemesis Macduff to cross blades and engage in battle Macbeth is struck down and killed. A series of choices led to Macbeth's gruesome downfall. "No one else can ever make your choices for you. Your choices are yours alone. They are as much a part of you as every breath you will take, every moment of your life." Macbeth was consumed by his choices, He was essentially responsible for his own downfall in the sense that the difference between life and death is no more than a choice.