

# How does william shakespeare utilise the genre of tragedy

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How does William Shakespeare utilise the genre of tragedy in the play, Macbeth. The utilisation of the genre tragedy in William Shakespeare's play Macbeth is apparent through the actions that lead up to the tragic death of the plays hero. Other elements needed to classify a play as a tragedy are abnormal conditions of the mind and both inner and outer conflicts. The play consists of prophecies given to Macbeth, leading to the murder of innocents King Duncan, Banquo and Macduff's family.

Insanity takes a hold on Macbeth and his wife, as she kills herself. Macduff, not being born of a woman, slays Macbeth and restores the throne of Scotland to Malcolm. Through the plot, and other aspects of this play, Macbeth contains the correct standards for it to be classed as a tragedy. Macbeth can be classified as a tragedy, as it contains the death of a hero. The hero is Macbeth, an honourable man, loyal to the crown, before being corrupted by his wife, Lady Macbeth and the prophecies brought onto him by three witches. "Gentlemen rise; his highness is not well" (III, IV, LII), is stating that Macbeth is becoming mentally distorted and is losing his heroic traits, until he is killed in a duel, which brings harmony back into Scotland. Through the life and death of Macbeth, the use of the genre tragedy is apparent in the play. The genre tragedy is also evident in Macbeth by the progressively deteriorating mental conditions of the characters after the murder of King Duncan.

This is shown through abnormal conditions of the mind, in which Lady Macbeth sleepwalks during Act 5 Scene 1, mindlessly rubbing her hands together, portraying the action of hand washing. "What, will these hands

ne'er be clean? " (V, I, XLII) is a line in Macbeth which signifies the never-ending guilt that Lady Macbeth felt, which she had hoped would have been nonexistent after the physical blood of Duncan had been washed from her hands.

In the closing stages of the play, " By self and violent hands took off her life" (V, VII, XCIX) states Lady Macbeth commits suicide as the guilt was too much for her to bear, which is why Lady Macbeth's death assists the play in being classed as a tragedy. The inner and outward conflict that is apparent in Macbeth is another reason that this play can be classed as a tragedy. The outward conflict consists of the ongoing vow of revenge by Macduff towards Macbeth for killing his beloved family. " Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth! Beware Macduff;

Beware the Thane of Fife. Dismiss me. Enough. " (IV, I, LXXI) Stated by an apparition sent to Macbeth from the witches, this line in the play resulted in the assassination of Macduff's family by Macbeth. Macduff escapes the same fate as he earlier fled to England in hope that he can join Malcolm's mission to overthrow Macbeth. When told the shocking news about the death of his loved ones, Macduff claims " Bring thou this fiend of Scotland and myself; within my sword's length set him; if he escapes, heaven forgive him too! " (IV, III, Line CCVVIII).

From the loss of his cherished family, Macduff becomes enraged, as his desire to slay Macbeth intensifies, in hope that vengeance will be served. The conflict between these two characters is a perfect example of Shakespeare's utilisation of the tragedy genre. Inner conflict is evident in the

play as Macbeth slowly loses his sanity, being faced with the consequences of his rash actions to assassinate Banquo. “ Thou shalt get kings, though thou be none: So, all hail, Macbeth and Banquo. ” (Act 1, Scene 3, Line 67) In the first, Banquo is illustrated as being Macbeth’s close and loyal friend.

Because of the prophecy that Banquo will also be the father of kings, Macbeth chooses to have him killed. The inner conflict is noticeable in the dining room, where Macbeth sees The Ghost of Banquo sitting in the seat designated for Macbeth. This supernatural element of the ghost coming back to haunt his murderer is the inner conflict Macbeth feels, in which he is made to come into the realisation and consequences of his actions. Through the remorse he carries with him till his death, the genre tragedy is enforced in the play Macbeth.

In conclusion, William Shakespeare has utilised the genre tragedy in the play Macbeth in a number of ways. Some of these include the life and death of Macbeth, who was thought to have been a hero before corruption and abnormal conditions of the mind, like Lady Macbeth’s sleeping walking and suicide and Macbeth’s hallucinations of a Banquo coming back to haunt in. Inner and outer conflict are also present, in Macduffs longing for revenge on Macbeth for killing his family, and in the murder of Banquo, making Macbeth suffer for his immoral actions.