MARIN SHAKESPEARE COMPANY

SHAKESPEARE FOR STUDENT AUDIENCES 2023
PRESENTS

Macbeth

PLAYING FOR GOOD
ARTS | EDUCATION | SOCIAL JUSTICE

DISCOVERY GUIDE

MARIN SHAKESPEARE COMPANY

514 FOURTH STREET
SAN RAFAEL, CA 94903
WWW.MARINSHAKESPEARE.ORG

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

Teachers, Students, and Audiences!

This Discovery Guide was compiled to enhance your experience with Shakespeare for Student Audiences 2023 *Macbeth*. This guide is just the beginning and I hope the information, activities, and resources inside will challenge you to engage with the play in new ways and inspire you to dig deeper into the works of William Shakespeare.

If you have any questions, want to discuss the contents of this guide or our production, or are looking for more ideas about bringing Shakespeare alive in your classroom, I would love to hear from you.

Sincerely,
Elana Kepner (she/her), Education Director
education@marinshakespeare.org, 415.499.4487

PRODUCTION TEAM

Director & Adaptor
Elana Kepner

Stage Manager
Frank Cardinale

Fight Director
Richard Pallaziol

Costume Designer
Luisa Frasconi

Set Design & Construction
Bob Currier & Jason Coale

Lighting Design
Jason Coale

MARIN SHAKESPEARE COMPANY

Managing Director: Lesley Currier
Marketing & Communications Director: Abbey Campbell
Education Director: Elana Kepner
Shakespeare for Social Justice Project Manager: Alejandra Wahl
Shakespeare for Social Justice Director: Suraya Susana Keating
Artistic Producer of the Summer Season: Jon Tracy
Technical Director: Kris Barrera
Costume Manager: Jody Branham
Artist in Residence: Dameion Brown
Artistic Director Emeritus: Robert Currier

CAST

In Order of Appearance

THE WEIRD SISTERS, *three witches*	Sylvia Abrams-Wolffsohn, Eliza Christine, Michelle Drexler, Oscar Woodrow Harper III, Melanie Kibbler, Sumi Narendran, Joel Ochoa
DUNCAN, *King of Scotland*	Sumi Narendran
MALCOLM, *his son and later Prince of Cumberland, heir apparent*	Melanie Kibbler
BLOODY CAPTAIN *in Duncan's army*	Oscar Woodrow Harper III
ROSS, *a Thane of Scotland*	Sylvia Abrams-Wolffsohn
LENNOX, *a Thane of Scotland*	Joel Ochoa
MACBETH, *Thane of Glamis, later Thane of Cawdor and King of Scotland*	Dameion Brown
BANQUO, *a Thane of Scotland*	Michelle Drexler
LADY MACBETH	Eliza Christine
SERVANT *in Macbeth's household*	Oscar Woodrow Harper III
FLEANCE, *Banquo's Son*	Sylvia Abrams-Wolffsohn
PORTER *in Macbeth's household*	Sumi Narendran
MACDUFF, *Thane of Fife*	Oscar Woodrow Harper III
SEYTON, *chief servant to Macbeth*	Sumi Narendran
MURDERER *in Macbeth's service*	Melanie Kibbler
LADY MACDUFF	Michelle Drexler
MACDUFF'S CHILD	Joel Ochoa
DOCTOR	Joel Ochoa
GENTLEWOMAN, *attendant of Lady Macbeth*	Michelle Drexler
SOLDIER *in Malcolm's army*	Michelle Drexler

SETTING: Scotland and England, the near future
RUNTIME: 1 hour and 10 minutes with no intermission

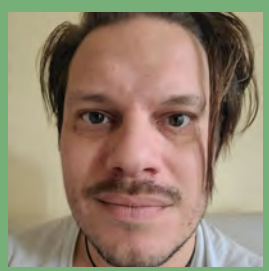
THE MACBETH COMPANY

Sylvia Abrams-Wolffsohn (ROSS/ FLEANCE/WITCH) (they/she/he) is a theater artist, born and raised in the East Bay. They studied acting, directing, and dramaturgy first at Oakland School for the Arts and then earned their BA in Theater from UCLA School of Theater Film & Television in 2022. Sylvia recently moved back to the Bay Area to make art and community, with a special interest in the wacky, weird, and confounding. They spend their free time spoiling their cat Stanley, frequenting the drama/plays section of book stores, and cooking enormous meals with their family.

Dameion Brown (MACBETH) is honored to be working with the cast of *Macbeth.* He began his professional acting career with the role of Othello. He has continued to work as an actor with Marin Shakespeare Company, Ubuntu Theatre, Theatre First, and Utopian Theatre Project, to name a few. Dameion is a mentor and also teaches Shakespeare to incarcerated youth at a California State prison and Alameda Juvenile Hall. Dameion lives in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Eliza Christine (LADY MACBETH/ WITCH) is an actor, model, singer, oenophile, and foodie. She is originally from Pangasinan, Philippines, but considers the Bay Area her home away from home. She is excited to be back at Marin Shakespeare Company and would like to dedicate her performance to her wonderful castmates. Eliza has worked for multiple Bay Area theater companies including: TheaterFIRST, Shotgun Players, Cal Shakes, Faultline Theater Company, San Francisco Shakespeare Company and Left Coast Theater Company. Eliza is currently represented by NYLO agency.

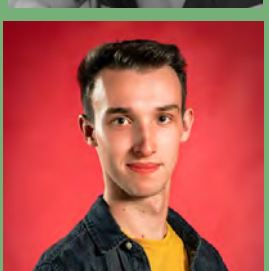
Michelle Drexler (BANQUO/LADY MACDUFF/GENTLEWOMAN/SOLDIER/WITCH) is ecstatic to be back sharing LIVE theater! Select regional credits include: *Our Town (*Center Rep), *Book of Hours (*Berkeley Rep's Ground Floor); *Sunday in the Park with George, Company, Into the Woods*, and *Camelot* (SF Playhouse); *Silent Sky* (Jewel Theatre); *Rags* and *Emma* (Theatreworks); I*maginary Comforts* (u/s Berkeley Rep); *Hedda Gabler* (Cutting Ball Theater); *Harry Thaw Hates Everybody* (Shotgun Players); *Julius Caesar* (SF Shakes on Tour); *Romeo and Juliet* and *Much Ado* (Kingsmen Shakespeare Company); *King Lear* (Great River Shakespeare Festival). Her original comedy web series, *The Simpleton's Guide to Success,* is bingeable now on YouTube. BFA Acting, Emerson College. www.MichelleDrexler.com.



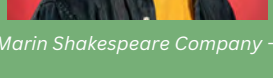
Oscar "Woody" Woodrow Harper III (MACDUFF/BLOODY CAPTAIN/SERVANT/WITCH) At the urging of his therapist, Woody returns to the stage for the first time in 20 years. During his last production of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* (not as Joseph or the Dreamcoat) he would amp himself up before shows by listening to a brand new song on the radio at the time called "Chop Suey" from System of a Down and, 20 years later, it still SLAPS! He would like to thank his family, friends, co-workers, and cast mates for not talking him out of doing this play. This entire performance will be dedicated to his chihuahua, Wally, who is no longer with us. Love you Wallsters!

Melanie Kibbler (MALCOLM/MURDERER/WITCH) (she/they) is an Oakland based actor and singer who is thrilled to be making her Marin Shakespeare Company debut! Their recent credits include *Camelot* at Contra Costa Civic Theatre. She has also worked with Insight Cove Theater Company in Berkeley as well as Nothing Special Productions, The Artistic Home, and Babes with Blades in Chicago.

Sumi Narendran (DUNCAN/SEYTON/WITCH) is ecstatic to be in her production of *Macbeth.* She has performed all over the SF Bay area in Shakespeare plays, dramas, farces, comedies, and musicals. She was nominated twice for an SFBATCC award for performance in a drama and a comedy. She dedicates this performance to her father, ACHA (daddy) for being the love of her life and giving her his artistic genes, her husband who makes their home heaven and her late dogson, Dawson.



Joel Ochoa (LENNOX/ MACDUFF'S CHILD/DOCTOR/WITCH) (he/him) is excited to be making his Marin Shakespeare debut! Favorite Credits include: CB in *Dog Sees God* (Pipe Dreams), Moritz in *Spring Awakening* (Springfield Theatre Center), Cathy Hiatt in *The Last Five Years* (Pipe Dreams), and Cecil in *Eva's Conundrum* (Gong Films). Originally from Iowa, Joel earned his BA in Theatre and Communications from Millikin University and is a rising second-year grad student at the Academy of Art University earning his MFA in Acting. Catch him this summer as a swing for *A Chorus Line* at SF Playhouse. He would like to thank all the people in his life that push him to be a better artist and a better human - this one is for you. IG: @joelocho



Frank Cardinale (STAGE MANAGER) has been stage managing in the San Francisco Bay Area for the past 11 years in venues ranging from 10 seats to 4000 seats, casts from 2 people to 60 people, Shakespeare to Gilbert and Sullivan. He is happy to be working on his first show with Marin Shakespeare Company and hopes you all enjoy the show as much as he has enjoyed working on it.

ABOUT THE PLAY

Sources & Early Performances

Macbeth was likely based on a variety of sources, both historical and literary. One of the primary sources was Raphael Holinshed's "Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland," a popular history book that Shakespeare often used as inspiration for his plays. In Holinshed's account, Macbeth is portrayed as a powerful and brutal king who, though he has a legitimate claim on the throne, rules Scotland with an iron fist with Banquo as his accomplice.

In his version, Shakespeare wisely recast Banquo in a more favorable light since King James I, the sitting king at the time of the play's writing and performance, could trace his lineage back to Banquo and his "line of kings." Because of James' connection to this bit of history, *Macbeth* is seen as a tribute of sorts to the king. James was also very superstitious and wrote extensively about witchcraft, so the play would have appealed to him on many levels.

In addition to these sources, Shakespeare likely drew on his own experiences and observations of the political climate of his time. Allusions to The Gunpowder Plot of 1605, a failed plan to assassinate King James I by blowing up the houses of Parliament, are found throughout the play, as are the themes of ambition, power, regicide, and betrayal.

Macbeth was likely first performed at court for King James I in 1606 and probably opened at the Globe in 1611. The publishing of the First Folio in 1623 marks the only time the text of the play was published.

The "Curse" of *Macbeth*

The early performances of *Macbeth* were often accompanied by superstition and fear. Legend has it that a coven of actual witches objected to Shakespeare's alleged use of authentic spells and incantations and put a curse on the play that has lingered to this day. This legend gave rise to others, including the story that at the first performance of the play, the actor playing Lady Macbeth was taken mysteriously ill (or died) and Shakespeare himself had to step into the role.

In 1849, a riot broke out during a performance of *Macbeth* at the Astor Place Opera House in New York City. The production starred American actor Edwin Forrest in the title role, who was competing for popularity with English actor William Charles Macready, who was playing Macbeth at a rival theatre. Supporters of both actors clashed outside the theatre, and the National Guard was called in to disperse the crowd of over 20,000. Thirty-one people died and over 100 people were injured in the ensuing violence.

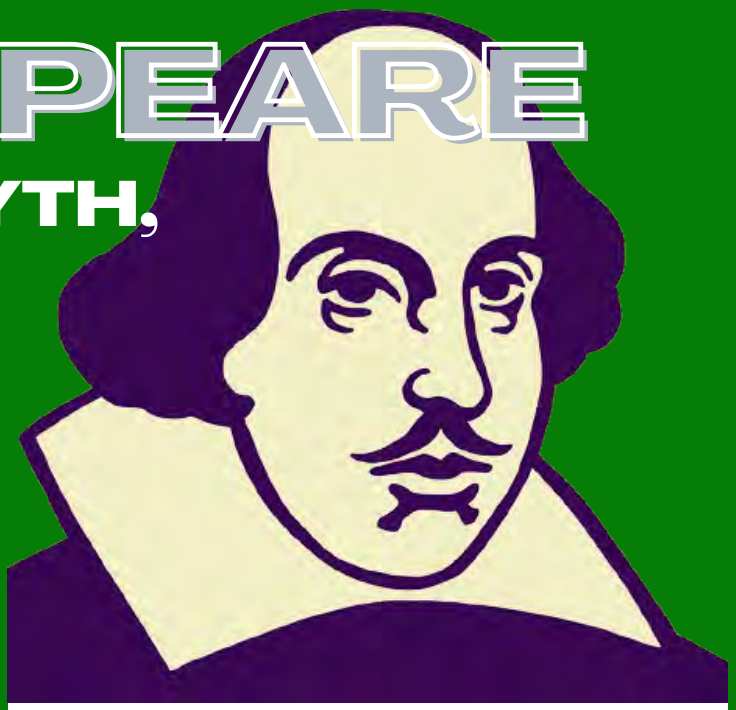
Over the years, many more productions of *Macbeth* have been plagued by injury, death, or the financial downfall of a theatre company. In 1937, a young Laurence Olivier lost his voice and was almost killed by a falling piece of scenery right before opening night. During the same production, the theatre manager died of a heart attack and a sword slipped out of an actor's hand, injuring a member of the audience. In a 1947 production, an actor was wounded during a sword fight and died later in the hospital.

While many discount the mishaps associated with the play as coincidence or chalk them up to the difficulty of producing a play with so much stage combat, some actors, directors, and theatre patrons refuse to even say, "Macbeth" aloud in the theatre, in case it might bring bad luck. Sometimes the play is referred to as "The Scottish Play," "Mackers," or "MacB".

Despite these superstitions, *Macbeth* has remained one of Shakespeare's most popular and enduring plays. Its themes of power, ambition, and guilt continue to resonate with audiences today, and the play has been adapted into countless films, television shows, plays and an opera over the years.

SHAKESPEARE

THE MAN, THE MYTH, THE LEGEND



Let's talk about the dude himself: William Shakespeare. He was born on April 23rd, 1564 in Stratford-upon-Avon, England, a small town on the Avon River. His dad was a glove maker and his mom came from a pretty wealthy family. But young Will was always more interested in writing than in gloves (can you blame him?).

In 1582, when he was just 18, Will married Anne Hathaway (not that one). They had 3 children, Susanna, and twins Hamnet and Judith.

Shakespeare went off the grid for a bit after his twins were born in 1585. Historians can only guess what he was up to during these “lost years.” He may have been on the run from the law for deer poaching, working as a Latin and Greek tutor, acting with a traveling theatre troupe, serving in the military, or just helping out with the family business in Stratford.

By 1592, we know Shakespeare, now in his early 20s, had moved to London and started acting and writing plays for a theatre company called the Lord Chamberlain's Men. Eventually, he became a part-owner of the company and they even built a new theatre called the Globe. Talk about a power move. He also performed for Queen Elizabeth I herself and may have even written plays at her request.

Shakespeare had a prolific career as a playwright and poet, with 38 (or more) comedies, tragedies, and histories to his name, as well as 154 sonnets, 2 epic poems, and a handful of other bits of verse. And this is just the writing we know about! Some scholars think there are Shakespeare plays and other works lost to history. Imagine that garage sale find!

Shakespeare continued to write and act until he retired to Stratford in 1613, shortly before the Globe Theatre burned down during a performance of *Henry VIII*. William Shakespeare died on April 23, 1616, meaning he died on his 52nd birthday. Iconic, right?

Now, you might be thinking, "Okay, but why should I care about this dead White dude?" Well, let me tell you, Shakespeare was a trailblazer. He wrote plays that dealt with all sorts of topics, from love and jealousy to power and betrayal. He liked to mix comedy, drama, the supernatural, political commentary, a crude joke or two, and lots of sword fights. And he created characters that were so complex and deeply human that people still study them today. He is also credited with inventing so many words and phrases we still use, like “eyeball, “ “gloomy”, “swagger”, “break the ice” and “wild goose chase.”

More than 400 years after his death, Shakespeare continues to be the most-produced playwright in the world. His plays have been translated into over 100 languages, including French, Japanese, Arabic, and even Klingon, the fictional language spoken by the alien species in the Star Trek franchise.

So there you have it, folks. William Shakespeare: word-smith, playwright, poet, actor, businessman, student of the human condition, and total icon.

MACBETH: THE STORY OF THE PLAY

Act I: Macbeth, a brave Scottish general, is returning from battle when he and his friend Banquo encounter three witches who predict their future. The witches tell Macbeth that he will become Thane of Cawdor and eventually the king of Scotland. Almost immediately, Macbeth is given the title Thane of Cawdor, so the rest of the prophecy fills Macbeth with ambition. With the encouragement of his wife, Lady Macbeth, he starts considering the idea of murdering King Duncan to fulfill his destiny.

"**A little water clears us of this deed**"

LADY MACBETH (ACT II, SCENE 2)

Act II: Macbeth murders King Duncan in his sleep, and instantly feels guilty about it. Lady Macbeth scolds him and takes charge of the situation, framing the guards for the murder. When the murder is discovered, Macbeth kills the guards. Duncan's son and heir, Malcolm, doesn't trust Macbeth and escapes to England.

"**All hail, Macbeth! Hail to thee, Thane of Glamis! All hail, Macbeth! Hail to thee, Thane of Cawdor! All hail, Macbeth, that shalt be king hereafter!**"

THE WITCHES (ACT I, SCENE 3)

"**It will have blood, they say; blood will have blood**"

MACBETH (ACT III, SCENE 4)

Act III: Macbeth is crowned king, and becomes increasingly paranoid about losing his power. He hires murderers to kill Banquo and her son Fleance to prevent them from taking the throne. Macbeth is haunted by the ghost of Banquo and starts to feel that his actions are causing his downfall.

"**By the pricking of my thumbs, Something wicked this way comes.**"

THE WITCHES (ACT IV, SCENE 1)

Act IV: Macbeth visits the witches again to get more predictions about his future. They show him a series of apparitions that warn him of the impending danger he will face, but they let him know that "none of woman born" can harm him. He also learns that Macduff, a nobleman, poses a threat to his power. Macbeth sends the murderers to kill Macduff's wife and children.

"**Out, damn'd spot! Out, I say!.**"

LADY MACBETH (ACT 5, SCENE 1)

Act V: Lady Macbeth, consumed with guilt and madness, dies. Macbeth is now completely alone and desperate. Malcolm leads an army against Macbeth, with Macduff leading the charge, intent on revenging his family. Macbeth and Macduff have a final confrontation and Macduff reveals that he was delivered by cesarian section and is therefore not "of woman born". With this fatal revelation ringing in his ears, Macbeth falls under Macduff's sword. The play ends with the promise of a new king taking over Scotland.

"**Out, out, brief candle! Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player that struts and frets his hour upon the stage and then is heard no more.**"

MACBETH (ACT V, SCENE 5

WHO'S WHO IN MACBETH

MACBETH: a brave and ambitious Scottish general who becomes consumed by his desire for power. After encountering three witches who prophesy that he will become king, Macbeth murders King Duncan and ascends to the throne. However, his guilt and paranoia cause him to commit further atrocities, ultimately leading to his downfall.

LADY MACBETH: Macbeth's wife, a strong-willed and ambitious woman who encourages her husband to pursue his ambition and seize the throne. She is often seen as a powerful and ruthless character, but her guilt over her role in the murders drives her to madness and suicide.

BANQUO: a Thane (noblewoman) and Macbeth's friend and ally. Like Macbeth, she is also visited by the three witches and given a prophecy about her future, but unlike Macbeth, she does not actively pursue power. Banquo is eventually murdered on Macbeth's orders, but his ghost appears to haunt Macbeth, adding to his guilt and paranoia.

DUNCAN: the King of Scotland at the beginning of the play, who is respected by his people. His murder at the hands of Macbeth sets off a chain of events that leads to the downfall of both Macbeth and Lady Macbeth.

MACDUFF: a Thane (nobleman) who becomes Macbeth's chief opponent. He is initially suspicious of Macbeth's rise to power and becomes a vocal critic of his reign. When Macbeth has Macduff's family murdered, Macduff becomes consumed with the desire for revenge and ultimately kills Macbeth in the play's climactic battle.

THREE WITCHES: also known as the "weird sisters," are mysterious and supernatural characters who play a crucial role in the play's plot. They prophesy Macbeth's rise to power and inspire him to commit further atrocities. Their strange and eerie presence adds to the play's sense of mystery and foreboding.

MALCOLM: Duncan's son and the rightful heir to the throne of Scotland. After his father's murder, Malcolm flees to England to avoid being killed by Macbeth. He eventually returns to Scotland with an army to overthrow Macbeth and restore order to the kingdom.

ROSS: a Scottish nobleman who is loyal to both Duncan and Macbeth at various points in the play. He serves as a messenger and intermediary between the various factions and helps to move the plot forward.

LENNOX: a Scottish nobleman who is loyal to Duncan and later to Macduff. He serves as a witness to the various murders and conspiracies that take place.

FLEANCE: Banquo's son. He survives his mother's murder. The witches prophesize that Banquo's heirs will be kings, which may include Fleance, although the action of the play ends before we see the outcome.

PORTER: a comic relief character who appears in Act 2. He is a drunken gatekeeper at Macbeth's castle, and his rambling monologue provides a brief respite from the play's tension and darkness.

THE BLOODY CAPTAIN: a soldier in Duncan's army who recounts the bravery of Macbeth on the battlefield.

SEYTON: Macbeth's loyal attendant. She joins the Murderer in the violent killings of Banquo and Macduff's family.

THE MURDERER: hired by Macbeth to kill Banquo and her son, Fleance. He is a ruthless and violent man who carries out Macbeth's orders without hesitation.

LADY MACDUFF: the wife of Macduff and the mother of their children. Her murder at the hands of Macbeth's henchmen is a pivotal moment that galvanizes Macduff's desire for revenge.

MACDUFF'S CHILD: Macduff's young son. His murder alongside his mother is a heartbreaking moment that underscores the cruelty and violence of Macbeth's reign.

DOCTOR: a physician hired by Macbeth to treat Lady Macbeth's mental illness.

GENTLEWOMAN: an attendant on Lady Macbeth.

SOLDIER: a warrior in Malcolm's army who goes up against Macbeth in the final battle.

***These are the 22 named characters that appear in Shakespeare for Student Audience's 2023 adaptation of* Macbeth. *The uncut text has more than 30 characters.*

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Before the performance:

- What do you already know about the story of *Macbeth?* What are you curious to learn about?
- How do you think watching a live performance differs from reading or watching a film adaptation?
- What do you think are some of the key themes and ideas in *Macbeth*?
- What role do you think theater plays in our society? Why do you think people still perform plays that are hundreds of years old?
- What do you think are some of the challenges of performing a play like *Macbeth*? How do you think actors and directors approach bringing such an iconic story to life?

After the performance

- How did the live performance compare to your expectations? What surprised you the most?
- How did the actors and director approach the story and characters of *Macbeth*? What creative choices did they make?
- If you have read the play, what are the biggest changes the director made in adapting the text? Why do you think those changes were made?
- How did the live performance differ from reading or watching a film adaptation of *Macbeth*?
- What themes and ideas from the play stood out to you the most? How do you think the actors and directors conveyed these themes on stage?
- What was your favorite scene or moment from the play? Why did it resonate with you?
- What did you learn about theater by watching a live performance? How did it deepen your understanding and appreciation of the play?
- What did you learn about Shakespeare's language by watching a live performance?
- What questions are you left with? What do you wonder about?

About the play

- What motivates Macbeth to commit his first murder, and how does this decision shape the rest of the play?
- How does Lady Macbeth influence Macbeth's decisions throughout the play, and what is the nature of their relationship?
- What is the role of the supernatural in *Macbeth*, and how does it contribute to the play's themes and overall tone?
- What is the role of guilt in *Macbeth*, and how do characters like Macbeth and Lady Macbeth deal with the psychological consequences of their actions?
- How does the play depict the relationship between power and corruption, and what are some examples of characters who fall victim to this dynamic?
- Do you think that the witches can actually see the future? Or are they just manipulating Macbeth? Why?
- What is the ultimate message or moral of *Macbeth,* and how does it speak to larger themes or issues in society?
- What are some of the key symbols and motifs in *Macbeth* and how do they contribute to the play's meaning and impact?

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

15-MINUTE *MACBETH*

FROM THE FOLGER SHAKESPEARE LIBRARY

Grade Levels: 6-12
Time: 40-45 mins
Materials: Cards with quotes

The Fifteen-Minute Play is a plot summary intermingled with quotations from the play. It is typically used to introduce students to the play or to prepare them to see a production. You can alter it as you see fit, invent a version of your own for a different play, or have your students create one. Try to keep it as short and simple as possible.

- Create cards for the quotations with the corresponding numbers, shown below, in bold. The cards should be large enough for three to five people to read simultaneously.
- Divide the class into groups and distribute the cards. Each group may have multiple cards.
- Give the groups five to ten minutes to prepare dramatic renditions of their line(s). They can read the line(s) as a chorus, individually, or in sub-groups, but everyone must speak part of the text. Encourage students to physicalize/dramatize the line(s) in some way. Using props is acceptable, but not necessary.
- When the rehearsal period is over, ask everyone to stand in a circle.
- The leader (you, or a student) stands in the circle, too, and reads aloud the script of the story, calling out the numbers of quotations where indicated and pausing for the group responsible for that quotation to step quickly into the center and perform it. The leader should keep a quick, steady pace - the activity is much more fun when it moves right along.

You know that Macbeth has begun when you hear these words **[1. WHEN SHALL WE THREE MEET AGAIN?],** probably the most famous first line in any Shakespearean play. Soon after, we meet King Duncan and his bloody captain, and we hear about Macbeth's battle heroics **[2. UNSEAMED HIM FROM THE NAVE TO THE CHOPS!]**

Then, we see Macbeth and Banquo meeting up with those three witches. **[3. HAIL! HAIL! HAIL!]** The witches prophesy that Macbeth will be King, and after that, Banquo's sons will be Kings, but ... can Macbeth take action to get himself on the throne sooner rather than later? He's shocked at the very thought of it. He says: **[4. THIS HORRID IMAGE DOTH UNFIX MY HAIR!].**

But Lady Macbeth is game to kill King Duncan so that Mac can take over. She prays for strength: **[5. COME YOU SPIRITS THAT TEND ON MORTAL THOUGHTS!]** King Duncan comes to spend the night at the Macbeth's castle, but goes to sleep and never wakes up. He's murdered. Macbeth says it: **[6. I HAVE DONE THE DEED!]**

Macduff arrives at the gate the next morning **[7. KNOCK! KNOCK! KNOCK!]** and finds Duncan dead. He says **[8. 0 HORROR, HORROR, HORROR!]** Macbeth says **[9. 'TWAS A ROUGH NIGHT!]**. Like any good hostess, Lady Macbeth says **[10. WHAT, IN OUR HOUSE?]** Duncan's sons Malcolm and Donalbain know they need to get the heck out of there. They say **[11. LET'S AWAY!]** and they go to England.

Things go from bad to worse. Macbeth hires a murderer **[12. THOU ART THE BEST OF THE CUTTHROATS!]** to kill Banquo **[13. 0 TREACHERY! FLY ... FLY, FLY! FLY!]** Macbeth is in deep! He looks to the witches for advice: **[14. HOW NOW, YOU HAGS!]** They say **[15. MACBETH! MACBETH! MACBETH! BEWARE MACDUFF!]** So Macbeth gets in deeper. He murders Macduff's wife and children **[16. THOU SHAG-HAIRED VILLAIN!]** And Lady Macbeth, overcome with guilt, too goes from bad **[17. OUT, DAMNED SPOT!]** to worse **[18. THE QUEEN, MY LORD, IS DEAD.]**

Meanwhile, Malcolm and Donalbain have been off assembling an army and they are ready to march and defeat Macbeth **[19. OUR POWER IS READY!]**. But it all comes down to Macbeth and Macduff mano a mano. Macduff says **[20. TURN HELLHOUND, TURN!**] Macbeth says **[21. LAY ON, MACDUFF!]** They fight fiercely. In the end, Macduff holds up Macbeth's severed head for all to see, and everyone salutes the next King, Malcolm **[22. HAIL, KING OF SCOTLAND!]**

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

THE WITCHES' SPELL

Grade Levels: 6-12
Time: 40-45 minutes
Materials: Witch Handout, annotated text (optional)

The goal of this lesson is for students to creatively stage a scene from *Macbeth*, using literary devices, embedded stage directions, and character brainstorming.

Introduction (5 minutes): If you haven't read or seen *Macbeth* yet, review the role of the witches. The Witches in Macbeth may or may not see the future and they influence Macbeth's decisions.

Discussion & Staging the Scene (35-40 minutes)

- Lead the student in brainstorming some actions that witches do: casting spells, dancing around a cauldron, and making a potion. What do witches look like/ move like/ sound like? Maybe they are classic Halloween-style witches: Old, hunched over, wearing black and pointed hats, cackling, etc. How else could witches be portrayed? Young, moving like specific animals (snakes, bugs, lizards), like aliens, etc.
- Read the Witches' Spell aloud round-robin style with each student taking a verse line. Have the whole group join for the chorus, "Double, double...". Discuss unfamiliar words and phrases.
- Ask a student to read the first stanza over-emphasizing the consonants. Have another student read a stanza overemphasizing the vowels. Which sounds more witch-like?
- Discuss the alliteration, consonance, and assonance found in the spell. We hear it in "Fillet of a fenny snake" with a repetition of the ‘f'. We also hear it in "Toad that under cold stone," with a repetition of an "oh" vowel sound. Where else do you hear the repetition of vowel or consonant sounds? How does that affect the listener?
- What kind of stage directions are written right into the spell? Where does Shakespeare indicate the witches would be moving in a circle, adding ingredients, stepping back to let the brew bubble?
- Discuss the purpose of this potion the witches are brewing. What will it do to them, or to Macbeth?
- (optional) If you have studied iambic pentameter, ask the students to beat out the rhythm and ask them if they notice anything different. First, there are only 7 syllables in each line of the stanzas, instead of 10. The students may also notice in the refrain that the stress is on the first syllable (DA dum) instead of the second. Why is this? Explain that supernatural characters (witches, fairies, and spirits)are often written by Shakespeare in this reversed iamb (or trochee). Ask the students what the different beat tells us about the witches or the play. Is this meter more spooky or supernatural? With no special lighting or sound effects in the Globe, Shakespeare was signaling to the audience that something different was about to happen.
- Once you have generated some ideas as a group, divide the class into groups of 3-5 and give them 10 minutes (or more depending on the focus and group work) to divide up the script and stage the scene. You can use the whole text provided or an excerpt. Every group member must speak a line by themselves and some parts should be read by the whole group. Remind them that they don't have to all be witches; some could act out the ingredients that are going into the cauldron. The staging must include some kind of movement (dancing, skipping, and spinning) and gestures. Encourage them to add percussion, and non-verbal sounds (laughter, howling, humming), and get creative with their staging.
- Let each group perform and then discuss the different interpretations.

Excerpt from *Macbeth (*Act 4, scene 2)

First Witch
Round about the cauldron go;
In the poison'd entrails throw.
Toad, that under cold stone
Days and nights has thirty-one
Swelter'd venom sleeping got,
Boil thou first i' the charmed pot.

ALL
Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire burn, and cauldron bubble.

Second Witch
Fillet of a fenny snake,
In the cauldron boil and bake;
Eye of newt and toe of frog,
Wool of bat and tongue of dog,
Adder's fork and blind-worm's sting,
Lizard's leg and owlet's wing,
For a charm of powerful trouble,
Like a hell-broth boil and bubble.

ALL
Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire burn and cauldron bubble.

Third Witch
Scale of dragon, tooth of wolf,
Witches' mummy, maw and gulf
Of the ravin'd salt-sea shark,
Root of hemlock digg'd i' the dark,
Add thereto a tiger's chaudron,
For the ingredients of our cauldron.

ALL
Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire burn and cauldron bubble.

Second Witch
Cool it with a baboon's blood,
Then the charm is firm and good.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

WHAT IS IN A MEME?

Grade Levels: 6-12
Time: 25 minutes
Materials: Memes

Introduction (5 Minutes)

- Share a few of your favorite internet memes, including memes related to *Macbeth* (some are included below) and others.
- Discuss the images in the memes and what makes them "meme-able": open to many interpretations, simple storytelling, symbols of shared meaning, etc.

Make a Macbeth Meme (20 minutes)

- Display the blank memes on the following pages (or pick other popular meme templates from imgflip.com/memegenerator). In groups, partners, or individually, ask the students to choose one of the images and generate the text to turn it into a meme related to the themes or characters in *Macbeth*. Give them 5-10 minutes to craft their text.
- Ask each group/student to present their text for their meme. Discuss their choice of image and text. What about the image inspired them or reminded them of an element of the play? Is this new meme funny and does it make sense to the other students? How do memes relate to subtext?
- Extension: Use the meme generator on imgflip.com/memegenerator to add the text to the image and share the new memes. *Share your meme with us by emailing Education Director Elana Kepner at education@marinshakespeare.org and you may see them featured on IG for #mememonday!*

Macbeth Memes

Macbeth Memes

The witches: Be bloody, bold, and resolute; laugh to scorn the power of man, for none of woman born shall harm Macbeth.

Also the witches:

Macbeth seeing Banquo's ghost at the coronation dinner

Banquo's Ghost

Meme Templates

More Meme Templates

MARIN SHAKESPEARE COMPANY

514 Fourth Street
San Rafael, CA 94913
415.499.4485
www.marinshakespeare.org

Elana Kepner, Education Director
415.499.4487
education@marinshakespeare.org

With Shakespeare as our endless inspiration, our mission is to serve as a vibrant catalyst for cultural engagement, education, and social justice to benefit the people of Marin County, the San Francisco Bay Area, and beyond.

We acknowledge the Coast Miwok people, on whose unceded lands this organization resides.

PLAYING FOR GOOD
ARTS | EDUCATION | SOCIAL JUSTICE