

Friendswood High School

Macbeth by William Shakespeare 2021

Character, Character Descriptions and Line Count

Character	Character Description	LINE Count	
Duncan, King of Scotland	<p>Duncan is the King of Scotland, an old, gracious, pious and gentle man, who resembles Lady Macbeth's father in his sleep.</p> <p>He is somewhat too trusting and will be betrayed twice by Thanes of Cawdor he trusted in the space of a very few days. He does not fight on the front line himself but leaves this duty to others. He is nevertheless quite prepared to pronounce sentence of death on traitors. He promises to improve the fortunes of his victorious generals Banquo and Macbeth just before announcing Malcolm as his heir. He is stabbed to death in his sleep by Macbeth.</p>	70 lines	
Malcom, son of Duncan	<p>Malcolm is Duncan's eldest son. Almost captured in the battle that rages at the beginning of the play, he is rescued by the captain.</p> <p>He is named Prince of Cumberland and heir to the throne by Duncan once all the fighting is done. On his father's death, he flees to England, unwilling to trust the Scottish nobles. This allows Macbeth to frame him as the murderer. In time he becomes the rallying point of opposition to Macbeth, and with the English king's help assembles a massive army to recover his throne. To test Macduff's loyalty to Scotland, Malcolm pretends to be a thoroughly vile human being to him; he is reassured that Macduff works for his country and not simply out of hatred when Macduff turns from him. He conceives the idea of camouflaging his army's advance with the trees of Birnam Forest. On his victory, he re-titles the thanes as earls, an English title rather than a Scottish one.</p>	215 lines	
Donalbain, second son to Duncan	<p>Donalbain is Duncan's second son. After his father's murder, he suggests to Malcolm that they quickly leave.</p> <p>He flees to Ireland, arguing that by going to separate places he and his brother will be safer. He is not returned to join in the battle against Macbeth.</p>	12 lines	

Macbeth Thane of Glamis	<p>Macbeth is Thane of Glamis. A superb general, he is a physically powerful man, able in a fight to eviscerate a man with an upward stroke.</p> <p>The predictions of the witches make a great impression on him; though he insists on reasons for being called Thane of Cawdor, the moment it is confirmed the thought of becoming king lodges in his mind. Very close to his wife, he writes to her of the prediction as soon as he can. Though at first he seems willing to let Fortune take care of bringing him to the throne, the thought of murder cannot be hid, and his wife soon pushes him to it. He still over-thinks the matter, finding out all the moral objections to the act, but he cannot adequately answer his wife's incitements to committing it. He is possessed of a powerful imagination that is able to conjure a dagger before his eyes. As he leaves after killing Duncan, he hears a voice predicting that he will never sleep again, a prediction that comes true. He is quick-witted enough to kill Duncan's grooms as his supposed murderers before they can protest their innocence. Deeply insecure, he is a paranoid king, keeping spies in the household of every nobleman. He plans to have Banquo and Fleance killed in the hopes of undoing the witches' prophecy that Banquo's descendants would take the throne. Once king, he becomes far more manipulative than he was, able to convince the murderers that their complaints against him are actually Banquo's responsibility. He hides the murder plot from his Queen, signaling an end to the closeness of their relationship. Courageous though he may be in battle, he is not proof against the supernatural, as evidenced by the apparition of Banquo's ghost. To explain his fit, he explains to his assembled noblemen that he is subject to an epileptic-type condition, but whether this is true or not is uncertain. By this stage an insomniac, he has lost all hope of redemption, and is determined to do anything that he must to keep himself safe. To this end he visits the witches. He is reassured by the three apparitions they conjure for him, but fails to note the warnings in their shapes which offer a hint of the loopholes in their promises. Hearing of Macduff's flight, he resolves to now act on his first impulses, and he sends his men to sack Fife and murder all of Macduff's family. The reassurances of the witches lead him to discount the desertions in his ranks, but he is nevertheless grown to a state of despair, thinking that his life has gone on long enough. Still, he arms himself, and swears that he will not simply give up. He cares about his wife in her illness, though his concern for her state of mind may apply as much to his own. By the time Malcolm's army begins its approach, he has lost all touch of the fear that afflicted him in the lead-up to his killing Duncan. He alternates between wild rage and deep, nihilistic depression as his wife commits suicide and his enemies arrive at his gate. He is brought to doubt the witches' promises by the moving forest of Birnam, and in his last moments convinced of their falseness when Macduff reveals the circumstances of his birth. He still pulls up his courage, however, and dies fighting.</p>	719 lines	
Banquo, a Scottish Thane	<p>Banquo is a Scottish Thane, Macbeth's co-general in the wars. He spots the witches before Macbeth does, and is not afraid to question them, wishing for a prediction as to his future as well. When the first prediction comes true, he is startled, and worried that it may make Macbeth covet the crown. He is wary of the dark powers' wiliness. The witches and their prophecies remain on his mind, but he reaffirms his loyalty to Duncan when Macbeth subtly tests it. He suspects Macbeth of Duncan's murder, and his accession to king leaves Banquo in hope that his children may yet take the throne. On being attacked by three murderers, his thoughts are for his son Fleance's safety. After his death, he reappears as a ghost and as an apparition.</p>	5 lines	

Macduff	<p>Macduff is the Thane of Fife. Commanded by Duncan to visit him early in the morning at Macbeth's castle, he discovers the King's body. Though he accepts the explanation that Duncan's attendants committed the murder at his sons' instigation, he refuses to attend Macbeth's coronation. Having refused to attend a feast of Macbeth's, he is cast into disgrace, and travels to England to beg King Edward to help Malcolm overthrow the usurper. His wife accuses him of lacking natural human feeling and of being a coward for having fled. A noble and ethical idealist, he is horrified by Malcolm's listing of his own vices, and finally must conclude that the young man is no more worthy of the throne than Macbeth. The revelation that Malcolm was merely testing him leaves him a touch off-kilter. Though he left them in Scotland, he remains fond of his wife and children, and is devastated when he learns that they have been slaughtered on his account. This grief becomes his chief spur against Macbeth. He leads a part of Malcolm's army, but at the battle of Dunsinane soon abandons them while on a single-minded quest to find and kill Macbeth himself. Finding him, he wastes little time in dialogue, preferring to trust to his sword. He tears Macbeth's last hope from him by revealing that he was the issue of a Caesarean birth, and threatens him with abject humiliation. In the end, he succeeds in beheading him.</p>	6 lines	
Lennox younger Thane attends King Duncan	<p>Lennox is a young Thane attending on Duncan. He accompanies Macduff the morning of Duncan's murder, and notes that he cannot remember as stormy a night as the preceding one. He joins Macbeth's court, but is soon convinced of the usurper's guilt, which he cautiously exposes to similarly-minded lords in ironical phrases. He still stays with Macbeth, however, bringing him the news of Macduff's flight. He is one of the Thanes who deserts Macbeth once Malcolm invades, bringing reinforcements to Malcolm's army, and is well-informed of who is present with Malcolm.</p>	7 lines	

Ross	Rosse is the Thane who brings Duncan news of the Norwegian invasion and of Cawdor's complicity in it. He is sent to have Cawdor executed and to give his title to Macbeth. He is present the morning after Duncan's murder, and predicts Macbeth's accession. Unlike Macduff, he decides to attend the new king's coronation. Present at Macbeth's feast, he is the first to note that Macbeth is acting oddly. He attempts to comfort Macduff's wife, insisting on the fallen thane's wisdom and nobility, but not daring to stay too long with her. Gone to England himself, he at first tells Macduff that his family is well; it is not until he has received assurances from Malcolm that an invasion is imminent that he reveals that they have been murdered. He is present at the final battle, and brings Siward news of his son's death. A glib-tongued fellow, he has a knack of being on the winning side and at placing himself first.	8 lines	
Menteth	Menteth one of the four Thanes who desert Macbeth when Malcolm invades, bringing reinforcements to Malcolm's army.	9 lines	
Angus	Angus is a Thane who accompanies Ross in bringing Duncan news of the victory over Norway, and later bringing Macbeth the announcement of his accession to the rank of Thane of Cawdor. He is one of the four Thanes who desert Macbeth when Malcolm invades, bringing reinforcements to Malcolm's army. He is less talkative than Ross.	10 lines	
Fleance	Fleance is Banquo's son. He accompanies his father to Macbeth's castle, and joins him in riding the day he is murdered. When the torch he and Banquo have is struck out when the murderers attack them, Fleance is able to flee in the dark.	11 lines	
Siward	Siward , the Earl of Northumberland, is a veteran soldier's of the English king's and Malcolm's uncle.	12 lines	

	He is the leader of the English troops lent to Malcolm to retrieve his throne. On hearing of his son's death, his only fear is that the young man may have been killed from behind. When told that that all the wounds were to the front, and that he therefore died fighting, Siward is quite reconciled to his death.		
Young Siward	Young Siward is Siward's son. During the battle at Macbeth's castle, he comes across Macbeth and fights with him, but is killed.	13 lines	
Seyton	Seyton is Macbeth's chief servant when his thanes are abandoning him. The fact that his name rhymes with 'Satan' may be coincidental. He helps to arm Macbeth, and reports the Queen's death to him.	14 lines	
Macduff's son	Macduff's son is able to trade witticisms with his mother, and even to best her at times. He is fierce enough to deny his father to be a traitor and to insult a murderer to his face. On doing so, he is promptly murdered.	15 lines	
<i>An English Doctor</i>	<i>An English Doctor is involved with gathering sufferers from the Evil to receive the English king's touch. He informs Malcolm of the king's presence.</i>	5 lines	
A Doctor of Physic	A Doctor of Physic is called in by Lady Macbeth's waiting-gentlewoman to witness her mistress's sleepwalking.	16 lines	
A Sergeant	A Sergeant in Duncan's army saved Malcolm from being captured. He was present at the battle against Macdonald, where he is wounded; on his way to seek help, he meets Duncan and is able to tell him of Macbeth and Banquo's success against the rebel.	17 lines	
Porter	Porter at Macbeth's castle Answers the knocking...	18 lines	
First Second Third Murders	The Murders has some grievances against Macbeth that the latter convinces him were in fact Banquo's fault.	19,20,21 lines	
Lady Macbeth	Lady Macbeth is a ruthless woman. More openly ambitious than her husband, she does not shy from murder, and pushes Macbeth towards it.	265 lines	

	<p>She is worried that his kinder side may keep him from going as far as he may. She calls on the powers of darkness to steel her against remorse or misgiving, and concocts the whole plan of how to kill Duncan. When Macbeth backs out of the thought, she brings him around by a combination of mockery, belittling of his manhood, and accusations of cowardice. She drugs the king's attendants herself, and leaves their daggers when Macbeth will see them. She considers committing the murder herself, but she is troubled by Duncan's resemblance to her father, and forbears. Though frightened while waiting for Macbeth to emerge from Duncan's chamber, she is controlled enough to erase all the evidence afterwards. Once Queen, her closeness with her husband begins to fray as he draws away from her, now hiding his plots. She is at first able to stop the feast from disintegrating into chaos when Macbeth sees Banquo's ghost, but in the end realizes that she must rid the room of witnesses. Consciously she does not suffer the remorse that affects Macbeth; but while he can no longer sleep, she begins to sleepwalk, admitting to her guilt and begging for some way to wash away her sins. In the end she is guilt-ridden enough that she ends life.</p>		
Lady Macduff	<p>Lady Macduff is a realist. Horrified at her abandonment by her husband, she castigates him in his absence for a lack of wisdom and normal human feeling. She considers him to be dead after he has fled to England. She is aware that innocence is no guarantee of safety from harm. She is killed by the same Three Murderers who kill Banquo.</p>	23 lines	
Three Waiting-Gentlewomen	<p>3 Waiting-Gentlewomen of Lady Macbeth's witnesses her mistress' sleepwalking and calls in the Doctor to help her. She understands just what Lady Macbeth means in her sleeping speech, but refuses to repeat it to anyone.</p>	24,25,26 lines	

Grimalkin, The First Sister	The First Sister seems to be the leader of the trio of Sisters. She speaks mainly of things that are in the past, and asks questions. She is vengeful, can fly about in a sieve, and command the winds. Her familiar is a cat named Grimalkin. (CAT)	27 lines	
Paddock, The Second Sister	The Second Sister speaks of present things, rather than past or future. Like her sisters, she can command winds. Her familiar is a toad named Paddock. (Toad)	28 lines	
The Third Sister	The Third Sister speaks of future things. Like her sisters, she can command winds.	29 lines	
The Fourth Sister Stadlin	The Fourth Sister attends on Hecat and adds some ingredients to the witches' brew.	30 lines	
The Fifth Sister Puckle	The Fifth Sister attends on Hecat and adds some ingredients to the witches' brew.	31 lines	
The Sixth Sister Hoppo	The Sixth Sister attends on Hecat and adds some ingredients to the witches' brew.	32 lines	
Hecat, queen of Sister spirits	Hecat is the queen of Sister Spirits She is enraged that the main trio of sisters have interfered with Macbeth without consulting her, particularly as she thinks little of him, and insists on joining their later interaction with him. She arrives with reinforcements to improve their brew before Macbeth arrives. She is given to bursting into song and taking flight at little notice. Four spirits call for Hecat and induce her to leave the three sisters . They are Stadlin, Puckle, Hoppo, and Hellwain. A spirit like a cat (Malkin) descends from the sky to fetch Hecat.	33 lines	
The Seventh Sister Hellwain	The Seventh Sister attends on Hecat and adds some ingredients to the witches' brew.	34 lines	
The First Apparition	The First Apparition , in the warlike shape of a head wearing a helmet, warns Macbeth of Macduff.	35 lines	
The Second Apparition	The Second Apparition tells Macbeth that he shall not die at the hand of a woman born. Its shape as a bloody child suggests the trickery of the prediction	puppet	

The Third Apparition	The Third Apparition tells Macbeth not to fear defeat until Birnam Wood comes to Dunsinane. Its shape, a child crowned holding a tree in its hand, reveals how this shall come about	(36) lines	
Soldiers	Soldiers of Malcolm's army cut down Birnam Wood to camouflage themselves as they approach Dunsinane. They fight and win the day, hailing Malcolm as King of Scotland when Macbeth's death is confirmed.	Various	