

**ENRICHMENT GUIDE**



# **MACBETH**



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## DEAR FIRST STAGE FRIENDS,

Tempted by an evil prophecy from a trio of witches, and encouraged by his Lady ever deeper into his own dark ambition, Macbeth rages a bloody path to the throne of Scotland. Infamously known as the cursed Scottish play, Shakespeare's darkest tragedy is filled with ferocious battles, supernatural horrors, famously gorgeous poetry, and some of the Bard's most vivid characters.

Enjoy the show,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Coltyn Giltner". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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# PRE-SHOW QUESTIONS



1. *Macbeth* is one of the many plays that was written by William Shakespeare. What do you know about the play *Macbeth*? What other Shakespeare plays do you know?
2. The supernatural, ghosts, and witchcraft plays a major role in how the story progresses. Do you believe in the supernatural? If you had your fortune told to you by a witch, would you believe them? What would you hope they would to predict?
3. *Macbeth* is a kind of play called a tragedy. This means that the main character causes their own demise through their mistakes and shortcomings. What other stories do you know of that could be considered tragedies?

# THE WILL TO WRITE

## ACTIVITY

One of the things that William Shakespeare is most well-known for is his use of rhythm and rhyming to help communicate what a character is feeling. He uses a style of writing that's similar to poetry called verse—where the lines an actor speaks is written in verses similar to a song. Each verse has a standard amount of beats (or syllables) that can have anywhere from 8 to 12 beats per verse. Sometimes these verses end in rhyming couplets. This is when every pair of lines rhymes. Characters tend to speak like this when they're feeling the most confident about their intentions or have a deep connection with their scene partner. Take a look at the following line from *Macbeth* to see an example of what these things look like:

If this which he avouches does appear,  
There is no flying hence, nor tarrying here.  
I 'gin to be aweary of the sun,  
And wish th'estate o'th'world were now undone.  
Ring the alarum bell. Blow wind, come wrack,  
At least will die with harness on our back.

- Macbeth

Notice how almost every line has 10 syllables and every two lines rhyme with each other to form a rhyming couplet.

Now, it's your turn to try your hand at writing in verse! Using the lines on the next page, you get to write your own poem about anything you'd like. Your poem should be anywhere from 6 to 12 lines long and each line must have the same amount of syllables and use rhyming couplets. Once your poem is completed, hold a poetry reading performance for your friends, classmates, or family!



# POST-SHOW QUESTIONS



1. The witches predicted the futures of Macbeth and Banquo. While we see Macbeth's fortune payout during the play, we see Banquo's fortune in a different way. Does his fortune come true? How do we see his fortune payout?
2. The characters of Macbeth, Lady Macbeth, and Macduff are connected by the way they process—or avoid—their mistakes and the resulting guilt. Each of them faces their guilt in a different way that eventually leads to their downfall or, in the case of Macduff, their triumph. How did these three characters process their guilt? What happens to them by the end of the play? What do you think Shakespeare was trying to tell his audience through this connection?
3. The characters in *Macbeth* speak in a way that's different than how we speak. It's similar to poetry in that it uses fanciful language, lines that rhyme, and a set rhythm that sound similar to a heartbeat rhythm. Was the language easy to understand? What did the actors do to help you understand what was happening and what they were saying?

