

Macbeth

HL LC ENGLISH



Who was Shakespeare?

**What can you
remember about
Shakespeare from
Junior Cycle?**



Who was Shakespeare?

- William Shakespeare was an unknown man from Stratford on Avon, who ended up becoming a famous playwright in London
- When he was 18 he married 26 year old Anne Hathaway, their daughter Susanna was born 6th months later. They also had twins, Judith and Hamnet, but Hamnet died at age 11
- He spent much of his life in London, as an actor and author, at the Globe theatre
- He wrote at least 37 plays and many poems.
- He died on 23rd April 1616, his fifty-second birthday



Elizabethan Theatre...all the world's a stage

- In Shakespeare's time, theatres were on the south side of London, along with bearbaiting and taverns.
- All of the actors were men, it was illegal for women to be onstage...so Juliet was being played by a teenage boy in a dress...there's a reason Shakespeare's plays have lots of talking, but not too much kissing onstage.
- You could get into the Globe theatre for a penny, and stand during the whole play, or pay a bit more for a seat, most stood, and were called "groundlings"
- Food was sold, and if the play wasn't good or exciting, the audience would heckle or throw things at the actors (mainly rotten tomatoes)



Elizabethan Theatre...all the world's a stage

- Playhouses offered something for everyone in Shakespeare's England. The plays covered a variety of themes that were not dissimilar to today's soap operas.
- When permanent playhouses first appeared, civic leaders and church authorities did not want them because of the threat of plague, riots and even rebellion.
- The playhouses provided just one of many colourful spectacles for the audience of the time; they also enjoyed public executions, bear baiting, fencing and public processions through the streets.



Elizabethan Theatre...all the world's a stage



- Shakespeare's audience would have been hardened to acts of violence in many ways. Public executions were crowd-pleasers and theatre-goers would most likely have seen bodies swinging from gallows as a warning to others not to break the law, for example. What we would consider unbearable cruelty would have been considered entertainment by the audience of the time.
- It was lucky for playwrights in Shakespeare's time that the royals enjoyed the theatre- this fact made their plays far more popular than they might otherwise have been.

The Globe Theatre



- The Globe Theatre was the artistic and creative home for Shakespeare and his acting troupe.
- The Globe was built in about 1598 in London's Bankside district by Shakespeare's theatre company, The Lord Chamberlain's Men.
- It could hold up to 3,000 spectators.
- In 1613, during a performance of Henry VIII, a misfired canon ball set the Globe on fire. In less than two hours it burned to the ground but fortunately many of the props and costumes were saved. The theatre was rebuilt, this time with a tiled roof instead of a thatched one.
- In 1644, Puritans demolished the theatre and built housing on the site.
- The roof did not fully cover the theatre as plays took place during the day and depended on daylight for illumination.
- The sets were very simple with little or nothing by way of effects, so it fell to the playwright to use words to create the images for the audience

A way with words

- Shakespeare added over 2,000 words to the English language in his plays, if he needed a new word, he made one up, you may recognise...
- Eyeball, dwindle, watchdog, gloomy, hobnob, swagger, rant, moonbeam, fashionable
- There are also expressions he coined that are very common today, like "a heart of gold," "wild goose chase," "vanish into thin air," "good riddance," "break the ice," "a laughing stock," "clothes make the man," "dead as a doornail"
- He also wrote some pretty good insults.



THINGS WE SAY TODAY, WHICH WE OWE TO SHAKESPEARE:

"KNOCK, KNOCK! WHO'S THERE?"
"IN A PICKLE" "SET YOUR TEETH ON EDGE" "HEART OF GOLD"
"FAINT HEARTED" "SO-SO" "GOOD RIDDANCE"
"LIE LOW" "FIGHT FIRE WITH FIRE" "BAITED BREATH" "SEND HIM PACKING"
"COME WHAT MAY"
"WEAR YOUR HEART ON YOUR SLEEVE"
"NOT SLEPT ONE WINK" "FULL CIRCLE" "OUT OF THE JAWS OF DEATH"
"WHAT'S DONE IS DONE" "NAKED TRUTH" "TOO MUCH OF A GOOD THING"
"LAUGHING STOCK" "BREADED HIS LAST" "BREAK THE ICE" "WILD GOOSE CHASE"
"HEART OF HEARTS" "VANISH INTO THIN AIR"
"SEEN BETTER DAYS" "MAKES YOUR HAIR STAND ON END"
"DEAD AS A DOORNAIL" "FOR GOODNESS' SAKE" "LOVE IS BLIND"
"GREEN EYED MONSTER" "FAIR / FOUL PLAY / PLAY" "OFF WITH HIS HEAD"
"THE WORLD IS MY OYSTER" "BRAVE NEW WORLD" "A SORRY SIGHT"

Shakespeare Insult Kit

To create a Shakespearean insult...

Combine one word from each of the three columns below, prefaced with "Thou":

Column 1

artless
bawdy
beslubbering
bootless
churlish
cockered
clouted
craven
currish
dankish
dissembling
droning
errant
fawning
fobbing
froward
frothy
gleeking
goatish
gorbellied
impertinent
infectious
jarring
loggerheaded
lumpish
mammering
mangled

Column 2

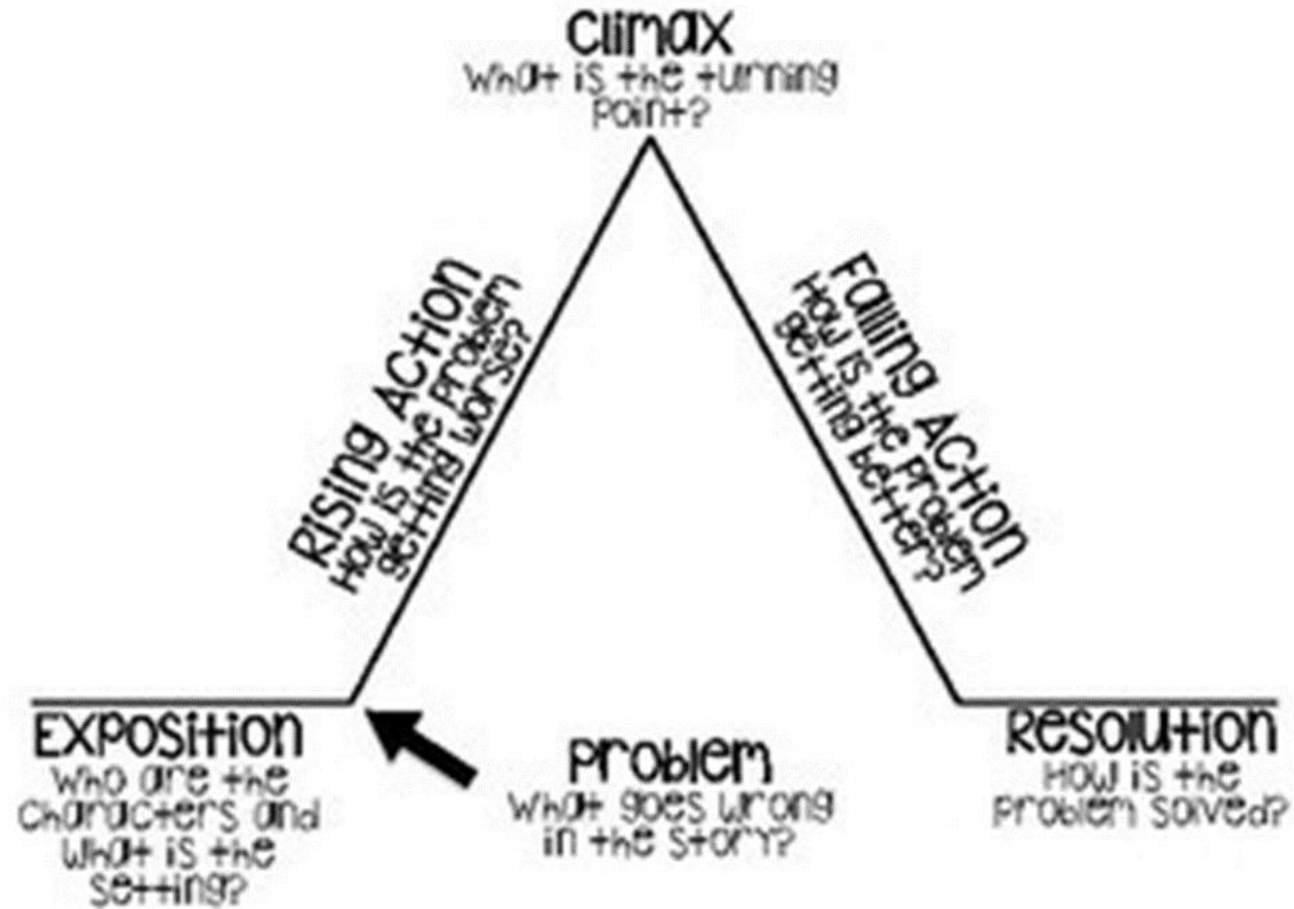
base-court
bat-fowling
beef-witted
beetle-headed
boil-brained
clapper-clawed
clay-brained
common-kissing
crook-pated
dismal-dreaming
dizzy-eyed
doghearted
dread-bolted
earth-vexing
elf-skinned
fat-kidneyed
fen-sucked
flap-mouthed
fly-bitten
folly-fallen
fool-born
full-gorged
guts-gripping
half-faced
hasty-witted
hedge-born
hell-hated

Column 3

apple-john
baggage
barnacle
bladder
boar-pig
bugbear
bum-bailey
canker-blossom
clack-dish
clotpole
coxcomb
codpiece
death-token
dewberry
flap-dragon
flax-wench
flirt-gill
foot-licker
fustilarian
giglet
gudgeon
haggard
harpy
hedge-pig
horn-beast
hugger-mugger
joithead

**Create your own
Shakespearean insult
e.g. Thou dankish, fat
kidneyed, hedge-pig.**

STORY ARC



The 5 act play follows the following structure

Macbeth

- Watch the following trailer for the film version of Macbeth, what information do you learn about the play?



Macbeth

- Macbeth was not premiered at the Globe, although it was performed there after its initial performance. It was first performed in August 1606 at Hampton Court for King James the 1st, where it was performed at night and lit by candles, which was most unusual. It allowed Shakespeare to incorporate light and shade in a way that would not have been possible in his other plays. This would have lent the play an eerie atmosphere.
- Macbeth is set in 1040, when the Viking, Sweno, is attacking the north of Scotland



Introduction to Macbeth

- Macbeth is one of Shakespeare's most powerful tragedies. The play raises fascinating questions about human nature, ambition, corruption and power. Other key themes include deception, violence, masculinity and the supernatural.
- Drama is a story, usually involving human conflict, relayed through dialogue and actions performed by actors. Most leaving Cert exam questions on the Shakespearean text relate to characters, relationships, themes, imagery and symbolism and dramatic techniques, all of which are closely interlinked.

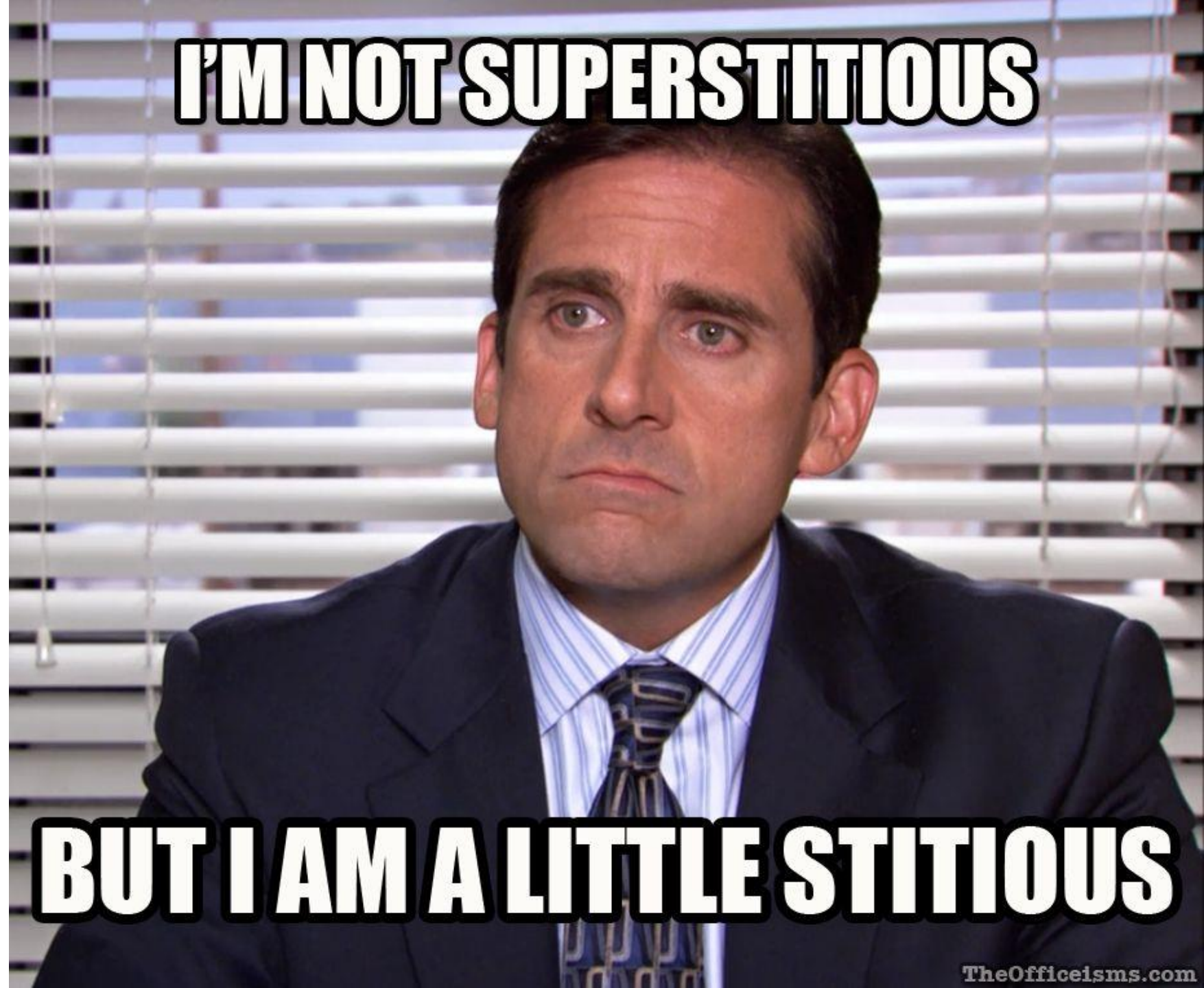




Historical influence

- Shakespeare's portrayal of Macbeth bears little resemblance to the original Macbeth, an eleventh century Scottish King who was also known as Mac Bethad and nicknamed the Red King. He was born in 1005, the son of an earl. In 1040, he killed the ruling king, Duncan I, in battle near Elgin, Morayshire, and replaced him as the new monarch. Duncan's wife fled Scotland with her two sons, Malcolm and Donald.
- Macbeth's long reign as king of the Scots was relatively peaceful. There are no records from that period that refers to him as a tyrant.
- For about 17 years, he appears to have ruled fairly, imposing law and order and encouraging Christianity. He was a courageous leader who fought successful battles against England along Scotland's border.
- In August 1057, Macbeth was killed at the Battle of Lumphanan in Aberdeenshire by Duncan's son Malcom, who succeeded him as king.

What are some commonly held superstitions?





Elizabethan superstitions

- **Avoid walking under a ladder:** this was considered bad luck as ladders were associated with gallows, the wooden frame used to hang criminals.
- **Saying 'Bless you' when someone sneezes:** this was thought to stop the devil entering your body through your mouth.
- **Throwing salt over your shoulder after spilling it:** this was thought to ward off bad luck. Salt was very expensive in Elizabethan times so spilling it was considered bad luck.
- **Avoiding black cats:** black cats were associate with witches and therefore considered evil



What is your
view of a
witch?



Witches and witchcraft

- In Shakespeare's time belief in witches and witchcraft was common. Ordinary people believed that witches were women who had made a pact with the devil in exchange for power.
- Witchcraft was often seized upon as an explanation for random, tragic or senseless events. If the plague hit a village, or if crops failed, it was not uncommon for witchcraft to be blamed.
- If a woman was suspected of consorting with evil spirits, she could be hanged, drowned or burned at the stake. A common test to see if a woman was a witch was to tie her up and throw her in a lake or river. If she floated, she was a witch and would be executed and if she didn't float she was innocent.



Witches and witchcraft

- Witches were associated with darkness and death, often portrayed as conducting their rituals in graveyards at night. It was believed they could see into the future, control the weather, sink ships and make themselves invisible. Witches were said to have a familiar – a cat, bird or toad- that served as a demon advisor.
- The presence of the three witches in Macbeth has caused tension and superstition since it was first performed.



'The Scottish Play' - the play that shall not be named

- One of the best-known theatre superstitions surrounds Shakespeare's Macbeth. It is seen as bad luck to say the name of the drama, and therefore it is usually referred to as 'The Scottish Play' in the theatre.
- The origins of this superstition are unknown, although there are several theories ranging from the practical (the story contains a lot of swordplay, so injuries are more likely), to the fanciful, (the play was cursed by witches because it revealed their secrets). Although rumours of a curse are now generally dismissed as nonsense, the play is famously associated with reports of misfortune.

the
scottish
play



The Curse



- During a 1672 production in Amsterdam, the actor playing Macbeth substituted a real dagger for the blunted stage dagger and killed the actor playing Duncan in full view of the audience.
- In 1849, a long-standing rivalry between fans of British actor William Charles Macready and American actor Edwin Forrest became violent during a production at New York's Astor Place Opera House, reportedly leaving more than twenty dead and many more seriously injured.
- Even the great English actor Laurence Olivier couldn't escape the curse. When he played the Scottish King, a heavy weight mysteriously dropped from above the stage, missing him by inches. His performance was further jinxed by the use of real swords on stage one flew into the audience, striking a theatre-goer and causing him to have a heart attack.
- A 1942 production notched up the highest body count: three of the actors died in



“By the pricking of my thumbs,
Something wicked this way comes.”

THE 2ND WITCH FROM 'MACBETH'
BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

MACBETH

dramatis personae



Macbeth

- Thane of Glamis
- Renowned general
- Prone to suggestion



Lady Macbeth

- Macbeth's wife
- Impatient & ambitious
- Doesn't like spots



Duncan

- King of Scotland
- Rather avuncular
- Totally doomed



Malcolm

- Duncan's eldest son
- Kind of slippery
- Natural politician



Donalbain

- Duncan's second son
- Doesn't say much
- Doesn't do much



Banquo

- Macbeth's friend and fellow general
- Somewhat skeptical



Fleance

- Banquo's son
- Fortuitously good at running away



Macduff

- Thane of Fife
- Dedicated family man



Lady Macduff

- Macduff's wife
- Worries a lot, for good reason



Macduff's Son

- Smart-mouthed kid
- Unfortunately not good at running away



Ross

- Thane of Ross
- Macduff's cousin
- Delivers the news



Lennox

- Scottish nobleman
- Also delivers news
- A bit suspicious



Seyton

- Macbeth's servant
- Has the great line "The queen, my lord, is dead."



Porter

- Macbeth's gate-keeper
- Drunken philosopher
- Knock knock. He's there.



Captain

- In Duncan's army
- Badly wounded, but quite talkative



Siward & Young Siward

- English backup for Malcolm



Doctor

- Not a psychiatrist
- Doesn't like serving usurping murderers



Gentlewoman

- Not to be trusted with the care of unstable patients



Murderers

- Hired by Macbeth
- Identity of Third Murderer is hotbed of speculation



Witches

- Scheming evil secret black and midnight hags
- Like making prophesies



Hecate

- Queen of the witches
- Kind of shoe-horned into proceedings to beef up the occult factor

plus assorted others!