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❁ ACT 1 ❁

PRE-GRAMMAR | Preparation

Prepare to think about the novel and its Central One Idea by drawing upon your prior knowledge, experience, or interests.

1. Think about a time in which you had a crisis of conscience. In the context of this dilemma, you wrestled internally between two different actions. One action was right, and the other was wrong. Briefly explain the situation and the ensuing crisis of conscience. You may choose to reveal the choice you made, or not.

GRAMMAR | Presentation

Discover essential facts, elements, and features of the play through the Reading Notes, Words to Be Defined, and Comprehension Questions.

READING NOTES

1. **antimetabole** – (a kind of chiasmus) the repetition of identical words (or phrases) in successive clauses, but in reverse grammatical order (Example: When the **going** gets *tough*, the *tough* get **going**.)
2. **aphaeresis** – the scheme of subtracting a syllable from the beginning of a word
3. **epizeuxis** – the repetition of words with no others in between – used for vehemence or emphasis
4. **peristasis** – a figure of speech which amplifies by detailing the circumstances affecting a person or thing
5. **antecedent and consequent** (Topic of Invention – Relationship) – Very similar to cause and effect, this topic of invention invites one to consider events or consequences that follow given actions or conditions. The difference is that what follows may not be caused by what preceded it, but will naturally flow from those earlier conditions. Given a certain situation (the antecedent), what is likely to follow

(the consequence)? This often takes the form of an "if ... then" compound sentence.¹

6. **aporia** – a doubting or deliberating with oneself over a difficult matter
7. **erotema** – the rhetorical question; to strongly affirm or deny a point by framing it in the form of a question
8. **deesis** – A calling to witness; a vehement expression of desire or supplication. It is often expressed in terms of "for someone's sake" or "for God's sake." (Example from Donne's poem "The Canonization": "For God's sake hold your tongue and let me love ...")
9. **antithesis** – a rhetorical device that features contrasting words or phrases in a strong parallel structure (Example from Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities*: "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times.")

Act 1, Scene 1

10. **Brief Summary** – On a battlefield in the midst of thunder and lightning, three witches plan to meet Macbeth when the fighting is complete.
11. **"When the battle's lost and won."** (1.1.2) – Winning and losing will turn out to be an important theme in the play.

Act 1, Scene 2

12. **Brief Summary** – Macbeth and Banquo have fought courageously in the battle. King Duncan receives this good news, and he rewards Macbeth with the elevated title of Thane of Cawdor.
13. **newest state** (1.2.3) – latest state (of events)
14. **ne'er shook hands** (1.2.21) – never departed from him
15. **As whence the sun gins his reflection ...** (1.2.25-28) – As tumultuous weather can come from the east, so more trouble has sprung from the source that should have provided assistance.
16. **the Norwegian lord** (1.2.31) – the Norwegian king Sweno, who invaded Scotland in 1041

[1] http://rhetoric.byu.edu/Canons/Invention/topics_of_invention/Relationship.htm

Act 1, Scene 3

17. **Brief Summary** - The three Witches deliver quite strange prophecies to Banquo and Macbeth. The first prophecy proves true!
18. **Aleppo** (1.3.7) - a city in northern Syria
19. **The'art** (1.3.12) - Thou art
20. **I myself have all the other** (1.3.14) - the other winds
21. **weird** (1.3.32) - mystical; supernatural
22. **blasted** (1.3.77) - barren; withered

Act 1, Scene 4

23. **Brief Summary** - At the king's palace at Forres, Malcolm tells Duncan that the Thane of Cawdor has been executed. Macbeth and Banquo show up with Angus and Ross. Duncan thanks both Malcolm and Banquo for their courageous military service, and he greets Macbeth as the new Thane of Cawdor. Duncan also names Malcolm as the heir to the throne.
24. **That swiftest wing of recompense is slow/To overtake thee.** (1.4.17-18) - That no matter how quickly I try to pay you back, I cannot overtake you.
25. **Prince of Cumberland** (1.4.39) - The title of the heir to the throne of Scotland. During the reign of King Duncan, the Scottish throne was not hereditary, so if the successor was named during the king's lifetime, he was given this title as a sign of his future succession to the throne.
26. **On all deservers** (1.4.42) - on all who deserve them

Act 1, Scene 5

27. **Brief Summary** - Alone in Macbeth's castle, Lady Macbeth reads her husband's letter, informing her of his encounter with the Witches, their prophecies, and the fulfillment of the first, his being made Thane of Cawdor. She gladly receives Macbeth when he comes home, and they begin to scheme about hosting King Duncan.
28. **all-hail'd me** (1.5.8) - gave me a greeting of "All hail"
29. **holily** (1.5.18) - with holiness; righteously

Act 1, Scene 6

30. **Brief Summary** – King Duncan arrives with his sons, Banquo, and other noblemen to Macbeth’s castle in Inverness. Feeling joyful, peaceful, and secure, they interpret a small bird they see outside the castle as a good omen. Appearing as the perfect hostess, Lady Macbeth greets them and offers them gracious hospitality. The scene is rife with dramatic irony.
31. **single** (1.6.16) – simple

Act 1, Scene 7

32. **Brief Summary** – The scene opens with Macbeth alone, battling his conscience over whether to commit the murder. He decides it should not be done. Lady Macbeth enters the scene, applies so much pressure on him, and explains her detailed plan; he finally relents to enact the plan.
33. **in double trust** (1.7.12) – as a guest, and as a monarch and relative
34. **trumpet-tongu’d** (1.7.19) – with the sound of trumpets

WORDS TO BE DEFINED

Definitions Bank

a meshed utensil; a strainer	feeling guilty or expressing regret for one's sins
an area of open, uncultivated land	hinders; obstructs; prevents
an interval of time	imaginary; unreal; fanciful
bodily; physical	to mock; to openly disregard
difficult situation; predicament	persuading; inciting
to diminish gradually; to decrease	possibility; expectation; probability
fascinated; enthralled; captivated	supernatural; immaterial
	underling; servant

1. Upon the **heath**. *n.* (1.1.5)
2. As seemeth by his **plight**, *n.* (1.2.2)
3. Like valour's **minion**, carv'd out his passage, *n.* (1.2.19)
4. Where the Norway banners **flout** the sky, *v.* (1.2.50)
5. But in a **sieve** I'll thither sail, *n.* (1.3.8)
6. Shall he **dwindle**, peak, and pine. *v.* (1.3.22)
7. Are ye **fantastical**, or that indeed/Which outwardly ye show? *adj.* (1.3.53)
8. That he seems **rapt** withal. *adj.* (1.3.57)
9. Stands not within the **prospect** of belief, *n.* (1.3.74)
10. Into the air; and what seem'd **corporal** melted, *adj.* (1.3.81)
11. This supernatural **soliciting**/Cannot be ill; *n.* (1.3.130)
12. The **interim** having weigh'd it, let us speak/Our free hearts each to other. *n.* (1.3.154)
13. All that **impedes** thee from the golden round, *v.* (1.5.25)
14. Which fate and **metaphysical** aid doth seem/To have thee crown'd withal. *adj.* (1.5.26)
15. That no **compunctious** visitings of nature/Shake my fell purpose, *adj.* (1.5.42)



Read Act 1, marking the text in key places according to the method taught in "How to Mark a Book."

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

- Describe the **setting** in the opening scene. When and where do the Witches plan to meet again?
- Quote the instance of **antimetabole** in scene 1. How does this line **foreshadow** the **mood** and **theme** of the play?
- What he hath lost, won.* (1.2.69)
How does the use of **antithesis** in the line above help communicate the situation at hand?
- Who becomes a traitor, and why? What happens to him as a result?
- In scene 3, Macbeth makes a comment about the weather (**setting**). Quote the line in your Literature Notebook. Is this another instance of **foreshadowing**? Explain.
- What are the prophecies that the Witches tell Banquo and Macbeth? Do they fully understand the Witches' prophecies?
- What news is brought to Macbeth and Banquo, and by whom? How do the men feel about the news?
- Malcolm. *My liege,
They are not come back. But I have spoke
With one that saw him die; who did report
That very frankly he confess'd his treasons,
Implor'd your Highness' pardon, and set forth
A deep repentance.* (1.4.2-7)
What does this reveal about the religious nature of the medieval and Elizabethan culture and worldview?
- Duncan. *There's no art
To find the mind's construction in the face.
He was a gentleman on whom I built
An absolute trust.* (1.4.11-14)
Paraphrase this passage. What is significant about these words? Do these words **foreshadow** anything or relate to any major **themes**?

10. Macbeth. [Aside.] *The Prince of Cumberland! That is a step,
On which, or else o'er-leap,
For in my way it lies. Stars, hide your fires;
Let not light see my black and deep desires.
The eye wink at the hand; yet let that be
Which the eye fears, when it is done, to see.* (1.4.48-53)
Summarize this passage. What is significant here?
11. What comprises the letter that Macbeth writes to Lady Macbeth? How does she react? What is significant about this scene?
12. What is Lady Macbeth's plan? Does she convince Macbeth?

LITERARY & RHETORICAL DEVICE EXERCISES

1. *Confronted him with self-comparisons,
Point against point rebellious, arm 'gainst arm,
Curbing his lavish spirit; and to conclude,
The victory fell on us.* (1.2.56-59)
Identify the use of **aphaeresis** in the quote above and copy the line in your Literature Notebook.
2. Macbeth. [Aside.] *If chance will have me King, why, chance
may crown me,
Without my stir.* (1.3.143-144)
Explain the presence of **antecedent and consequent** (topic of relationship) in the quote above.
3. *What beast was't then
That made you break this enterprise to me?
When you durst do it, then you were a man;
And to be more than what you were, you would
Be so much more the man. Nor time nor place
Did then adhere, and yet you would make both;
They have made themselves, and that their fitness now
Does unmake you.* (1.7.47-54)
Explain the presence of **peristasis** in Lady Macbeth's argument to Macbeth.

LOGIC | Dialectic

*Reason with the facts, elements, and features of the play;
sort, arrange, compare, and connect ideas – and begin
to uncover and determine the Central One Idea.*

SOCRATIC DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

May be verbally discussed or answered in written form in your Literature Notebook.

1. Read 1.5.37-51, starting at "*Come, you spirits*"
This speech by Lady Macbeth is one of the most horrifying supplications in all of Shakespeare. Briefly **summarize** the speech. Include how it is an example of **deesis**. What makes her speech so ghastly and appalling?
2. Provide a brief **summary** of Act 1, scene 7, lines 1-28. In your summary, be sure to explain the presence of **aporia**, as well as your perspective on the **logical reasons** in Macbeth's argument. What conclusion does Macbeth come to at the end of these lines?
3. Read 1.7.35-41, starting at "*Was the*"
Discuss Lady Macbeth's use of **erotema** (the **rhetorical question**) in her argument. How effective is this technique? What effect does it have on Macbeth?
4. Read 1.7.43-45, starting at "*And live a coward in thine own esteem*"
How does the use of an **adage** contribute to Lady Macbeth's argument?

RHETORIC | Expression

*Express in your own words the Central
One Idea with supporting points.*

RHETORICAL EXPRESSION:

To be answered in your Literature Notebook in preparation for your essay.

1. In 1-2 paragraphs, **summarize** the events of Act 1.
2. Write the **Central One Idea** of Act 1 in a precise, eloquent sentence.
3. List two or three points that **support** your determination of the Central One Idea.
4. Write a **lead** (1-2 sentences) that grabs the reader's attention—such as a *quote, question, startling fact or statistic, scenario, piece of dialogue, etc.*
5. Write an **amplification/importance** (1-2 sentences) that explains why your thesis is important in a larger or more universal sense.

◆ **Central Quote:** Choose a quote from anywhere in Act 1 that you think best embodies the Central One Idea and copy it down.

① **Write the Central One Idea as expressed by the teacher.**

ESSAY OPTION

Choose a topic below and respond with a 3-5 paragraph essay that includes an Introduction with a clear thesis; a Body with organized, logical, and specific support of the thesis; and a Conclusion that recapitulates the thesis and supporting points in a fresh way, and closes with an amplification—why the thesis is important in a larger or more universal sense.

The essay should feature appropriate tone, voice, and point of view; correct grammar, usage, and mechanics; a variety of sentence structures enhanced by subordination and parallelism; a balance of general and specific detail; and enhanced rhetorical effect through transition words, appropriate diction, strong verbs, descriptive adjectives, and other rhetorical devices.

Note: Some of these prompts tend toward a shorter essay, and some toward a longer. Check with your teacher to see what

length he or she suggests. Both short essays (1 page) and long essays (2-4 pages) are useful and helpful, depending on the intent and purpose.

1. It is quite obvious that Shakespeare wished to honor King James I with the play *Macbeth*. For playwrights, flattering the monarch in their writings was a common and appropriate activity in the Elizabethan era. Write an essay showing how the play depicts various kings (including Banquo, etc.) in a positive way with the intention to honor King James I.
2. Write a personal narrative essay about a time when you had a crisis of conscience, where you deliberated between two actions, one right and the other wrong. Creatively tell the back-story that surrounds the crisis of conscience. Then reveal the choice you made, and how that choice has affected your life in some way.
3. It has been noted that Lady Macbeth had the strongest desire to kill King Duncan. Develop a thesis centered around Lady Macbeth, considering her motives, her character, and her desires. Write a character analysis essay on Lady Macbeth.
4. [Central One Idea] Use the Central One Idea of Act 1 as your thesis, and support it with some evidence from your reading of Act 1, your work in the study guide, and/or outside research.
5. [Open] Write an essay in which you analyze an aspect of Act 1 that is of import to you, such as a particular theme, character, setting, element of plot, dialogue, symbol, or other literary or rhetorical motif.
6. [Teacher] Essay prompt.