Macbeth

Audition pack

Macbeth – Student Audition Pack

About the Play

Macbeth by William Shakespeare is a tragedy about ambition, power, fate, and guilt. When a brave warrior hears a prophecy that he will become king, his desire for power—and the influence of his wife—push him toward violence. The play explores how unchecked ambition can destroy both individuals and the people around them.

This production calls for **bold acting choices**, **strong storytelling**, and **clear use of language**.

Audition Requirements

Students should prepare:

- **One Shakespeare monologue (approximately 2 minutes)**
- OR the **Witches scene** (solo or group, if assigned)
- Clear understanding of the text
- Willingness to take direction

Accents are *not* required unless specified.

2-Minute Monologues

Students may choose **one** of the following monologues or another Shakespeare monologue with approval.

Macbeth – Act 1, Scene 7

Macbeth wrestles with the idea of murdering King Duncan

"If it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well
It were done quickly. If th' assassination
Could trammel up the consequence and catch
With his surcease success, that but this blow
Might be the be-all and the end-all here,
But here, upon this bank and shoal of time,
We'd jump the life to come. But in these cases
We still have judgment here, that we but teach
Bloody instructions, which, being taught, return
To plague th' inventor. This even-handed justice
Commends th' ingredients of our poisoned chalice
To our own lips.

He's here in double trust:
First, as I am his kinsman and his subject,
Strong both against the deed; then, as his host,
Who should against his murderer shut the door,
Not bear the knife myself. Besides, this Duncan
Hath borne his faculties so meek, hath been
So clear in his great office, that his virtues

Will plead like angels, trumpet-tongued, against
The deep damnation of his taking-off…”

Focus: Inner conflict, temptation, fear, ambition

Lady Macbeth – Act 1, Scene 5

Lady Macbeth prepares herself for power

“The raven himself is hoarse
That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan
Under my battlements. Come, you spirits
That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here,
And fill me from the crown to the toe top-full
Of direst cruelty. Make thick my blood;
Stop up th’ access and passage to remorse,
That no compunctious visitings of nature
Shake my fell purpose, nor keep peace between
Th’ effect and it. Come to my woman’s breasts,
And take my milk for gall, you murd’ring ministers,
Wherever in your sightless substances
You wait on nature’s mischief. Come, thick night,
And pall thee in the dunnest smoke of hell,
That my keen knife see not the wound it makes,
Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark,
To cry ‘Hold, hold!’”

Focus: Power, certainty, darkness, control

Lady Macbeth – Act 5, Scene 1

Sleepwalking, unraveling under guilt

“Out, damned spot! Out, I say!—One; two. Why, then ’tis time to do’t.—Hell is
murky!—Fie, my lord, fie! A soldier, and afeard?

What need we fear who knows it, when none can call our power to account?—Yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him?

The Thane of Fife had a wife. Where is she now?—What, will these hands ne'er be clean?—No more o' that, my lord, no more o' that. You mar all with this starting.

Here's the smell of the blood still. All the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand."

Focus: Psychological breakdown, contrast, vulnerability

Macduff – Act 4, Scene 3

After learning his family has been murdered

"All my pretty ones?
Did you say all? O hell-kite! All?
What, all my pretty chickens and their dam
At one fell swoop?

Malcom, this tyrant, whose sole name blisters our tongues,
Was once thought honest. You have loved him well.

Sinful Macduff,
They were all struck for thee! Naught that I am,
Not for their own demerits, but for mine,
Fell slaughter on their souls. Heaven rest them now!

Be this the whetstone of your sword. Let grief
Convert to anger; blunt not the heart, enrage it."

Focus: Grief turning into resolve

Banquo – Act 1, Scene 3

Banquo questions the witches' influence

"The instruments of darkness tell us truths,
Win us with honest trifles, to betray's
In deepest consequence.

Cousins, a word, I pray you.

Think upon what hath chanced, and at more time,
The interim having weigh'd it, let us speak
Our free hearts each to other.

If you can look into the seeds of time,
And say which grain will grow and which will not,
Speak then to me, who neither beg nor fear
Your favours nor your hate."

Focus: Intelligence, suspicion, moral strength

Full Witches Scene – Act 1, Scene 1

(Can be performed as a group or divided among individual actors)

FIRST WITCH
When shall we three meet again
In thunder, lightning, or in rain?

SECOND WITCH
When the hurly-burly's done,
When the battle's lost and won.

THIRD WITCH
That will be ere the set of sun.

FIRST WITCH
Where the place?

SECOND WITCH
Upon the heath.

THIRD WITCH
There to meet with Macbeth.

ALL
Fair is foul, and foul is fair;
Hover through the fog and filthy air.

Focus: Vocal variety, physicality, ensemble awareness, atmosphere
(Accents optional—clarity and intention matter most.)

Tips for Auditioning Shakespeare

1. Understand the Text

Never memorize sounds—memorize meaning.
Ask yourself:

- What just happened?
- What do I want?
- Who am I speaking to?

2. Don’t Rush

Shakespeare needs space.
Slow down and let the thoughts land.

3. Speak the Ends of the Lines

Important ideas often come at the *end* of each line.
Finish every thought clearly.

4. Play an Action

Instead of “being sad” or “being angry,” try:

- To persuade
- To threaten
- To hide guilt
- To demand power
- To control the situation

5. Use Your Voice

- Breathe deeply
- Open your mouth
- Project to the back of the room
  You don’t need to shout—just be clear.

6. Make Bold Choices

Macbeth is a big, intense play.
Strong choices are encouraged—even if they feel risky.

Final Note to Students

You do **not** need to be perfect at Shakespeare to succeed.
We are looking for:

- Commitment
- Clarity

- Emotional honesty
- Willingness to explore

Be brave. Tell the story. Trust the language.