

Macbeth Act 1 Scene 1 (1.1) - Revision sheet

Characters

Three Witches - Strange, supernatural “weird sisters”.

- They are described by Banquo as “not like the inhabitants o' the earth” (1.3.41-2)
- The witches appear twice in Act 1 (1.1 & 1.3)

Macbeth - does not appear but mentioned by witches. No details given.

Summary

1.1: A desert place. **Thunder and lightning**

Three witches meet in a storm. They talk in strange riddles about a plan to “meet Macbeth” “on the heath” “when the battle is lost and won.”

What do we learn?

- ❑ Things are not as they seem (‘Fair is foul and foul is fair’)
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Key Quotes

Second Witch	When the hurlyburly's done, When the battle's lost and won.
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Reference: 1.1.3-4

What do we learn?

We don't yet know what this battle is but it is clearly important.

First Witch Where the place?

Second Witch **Upon the heath.**

Third Witch There to meet with Macbeth.

Reference: 1.1.6-8

What do we learn? What do we want to know?

- ❑ Shakespeare creates suspense.
 - ❑ Who is Macbeth? Why do the witches want to meet him ‘Upon the heath’?
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Fair is foul, and foul is fair:
Hover through the fog and filthy air.

Reference: 1.1.11-12 **Who says it?** The witches (Chant)

What do we learn?

- ❑ The witches tell us that ‘fair is foul and foul is fair’. This is a warning that not everything is at appears.
- ❑ The ‘foul and filthy air’ is another indication that bad things are happening.

Advanced:

- ❖ ‘Fair is foul’ is an example of a **paradox** - something that [appears a contradiction](#).
 - ❖ **Foreshadowing** - predicts that [violent events will follow](#).
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Quick Check

1. When will the witches meet again?
 2. Who will they meet
 3. Where will they meet?
 4. Complete the quote: “Fair is ---- and foul is fair”
 5. Complete the quote: “When the ----- is lost and won”
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Writing

6. Look at the stage directions: [Thunder and lightning. Enter three Witches] What atmosphere do they create? (10-20 words)
 7. Describe the way the witches speak in 1.1. Think about the words they use and the way they use them. (10-20 words)
 8. How does Shakespeare create suspense in 1.1? (10-20 words)
 9. Describe the use of paradox and foreshadowing in 1.1? (advanced 20-35 words)
 10. How does Shakespeare establish the atmosphere of *Macbeth* in the opening scene? Write a short paragraph (35 - 75 words).
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From the [Getting Started With Macbeth Teaching Pack](#) (£1.99)