

Macbeth „Whoosh“ activity

You will find an excellent (definitely better!) version of this in „Der fremdsprachliche Unterricht Englisch“ 164/2020: „Let’s stage and engage“ page 45-48

The following is a version by Chat GPT (I used two prompts), which is a bit short but should work well, too.

Prompts:

1. Divide the play Macbeth by Shakespeare in 12 parts, give a small introduction (summary-like) to each part and provide 2-4 short significant quotes of each part that provide insight to the content and can be acted out by students. This is meant to be used for the method "Whoosh" as used by the Royal Shakespeare company.
2. Follow up prompt: Can the introduction to each part be a little more precise?. It can be slightly longer.

Part 1: The Witches’ Prophecy

Introduction: A storm rages as three witches gather on a wild heath. They plan to meet again after a great battle, when they will confront Macbeth. From the start, they blur the line between good and evil.

Quotes:

- “*Fair is foul, and foul is fair.*” (Witches)
 - “*When shall we three meet again? In thunder, lightning, or in rain?*” (First Witch)
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Part 2: Macbeth the Hero

Introduction: News of battle reaches King Duncan. A wounded captain describes how Macbeth fought fiercely and defeated the traitorous Macdonwald. Duncan praises Macbeth for his courage and loyalty.

Quotes:

- “*For brave Macbeth—well he deserves that name.*” (Captain)
 - “*O valiant cousin! Worthy gentleman!*” (Duncan)
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Part 3: Macbeth Meets the Witches

Introduction: On the heath, Macbeth and Banquo encounter the witches. They greet Macbeth with three strange titles: Thane of Glamis, Thane of Cawdor, and “King hereafter.” They also predict that Banquo will father kings.

Quotes:

- “*All hail, Macbeth! Hail to thee, Thane of Glamis!*” (Witches)
 - “*Thou shalt get kings, though thou be none.*” (Witches to Banquo)
 - “*If chance will have me king, why, chance may crown me.*” (Macbeth)
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Part 4: Temptation Begins

Introduction: Duncan rewards Macbeth with the title Thane of Cawdor, proving the witches' words true. But Duncan names his son Malcolm as heir, which blocks Macbeth's path to the throne. Ambition begins to stir within Macbeth.

Quotes:

- *"The Prince of Cumberland! That is a step / On which I must fall down, or else o'erleap."* (Macbeth)
 - *"Stars, hide your fires; / Let not light see my black and deep desires."* (Macbeth)
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Part 5: Lady Macbeth's Persuasion

Introduction: Lady Macbeth reads her husband's letter about the witches' prophecy. She fears Macbeth is too kind to seize the crown, and calls on dark spirits to harden her heart. When Macbeth hesitates, she taunts him and pushes him to kill Duncan.

Quotes:

- *"Glamis thou art, and Cawdor; and shalt be / What thou art promised."* (Lady Macbeth)
 - *"Look like the innocent flower, / But be the serpent under't."* (Lady Macbeth)
 - *"Screw your courage to the sticking-place, / And we'll not fail."* (Lady Macbeth)
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Part 6: Murder of Duncan

Introduction: Macbeth wrestles with his conscience but imagines a dagger leading him to Duncan's chamber. Lady Macbeth drugs the guards, and Macbeth murders the sleeping king. Afterwards, he is shaken and filled with guilt.

Quotes:

- *"Is this a dagger which I see before me, / The handle toward my hand?"* (Macbeth)
 - *"I have done the deed."* (Macbeth)
 - *"Macbeth does murder sleep!"* (Macbeth)
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Part 7: The Morning After

Introduction: Macduff arrives to wake the king and discovers Duncan's body. Macbeth kills the guards to hide the truth, claiming he did it out of loyalty. Duncan's sons, Malcolm and Donalbain, flee in fear of their lives.

Quotes:

- *"O horror, horror, horror!"* (Macduff)
 - *"There's daggers in men's smiles."* (Donalbain)
 - *"O, yet I do repent me of my fury, / That I did kill them."* (Macbeth)
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Part 8: King Macbeth

Introduction: Macbeth is crowned king, but his crown feels insecure. He remembers the witches' words to Banquo and fears Banquo's children will inherit the throne. He secretly plots their murder.

Quotes:

- *"To be thus is nothing, / But to be safely thus."* (Macbeth)
 - *"Our fears in Banquo / Stick deep."* (Macbeth)
 - *"Fail not our feast."* (Macbeth to Banquo)
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Part 9: Banquo's Murder and Ghost

Introduction: Macbeth's hired murderers kill Banquo, but Fleance escapes. That night, at a feast, Banquo's ghost appears and terrifies Macbeth. Lady Macbeth tries to keep control, but the court begins to suspect something is wrong.

Quotes:

- *"Fly, good Fleance, fly, fly, fly!"* (Banquo)
 - *"Thou canst not say I did it: never shake / Thy gory locks at me!"* (Macbeth)
 - *"Are you a man?"* (Lady Macbeth)
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Part 10: Macbeth Seeks the Witches

Introduction: Desperate for security, Macbeth returns to the witches. They summon apparitions: one warns him of Macduff, another says no man born of woman can harm him, and a third promises he will be safe until Birnam Wood moves to Dunsinane. Macbeth feels unstoppable, but also learns Banquo's line will still inherit the throne.

Quotes:

- *"Beware Macduff!"* (First Apparition)
 - *"None of woman born / Shall harm Macbeth."* (Second Apparition)
 - *"Macbeth shall never vanquished be until / Great Birnam Wood to high Dunsinane Hill / Shall come against him."* (Third Apparition)
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Part 11: Descent into Tyranny

Introduction: Macbeth orders the slaughter of Macduff's wife and children. Meanwhile, Lady Macbeth begins to sleepwalk, obsessively washing imagined blood from her hands. Both king and queen are trapped in guilt and cruelty.

Quotes:

- *"What, all my pretty chickens and their dam / At one fell swoop?"* (Macduff)
- *"Out, damned spot! Out, I say!"* (Lady Macbeth)
- *"What's done cannot be undone."* (Lady Macbeth)

Part 12: The Final Battle

Introduction: Malcolm and the English army march on Macbeth's castle, disguising themselves with branches from Birnam Wood. In battle, Macduff reveals he was not "born of woman" in the usual way but delivered by Caesarean birth. He kills Macbeth, and Malcolm is crowned king, restoring order.

Quotes:

- *"Macbeth shall never vanquished be until / Great Birnam Wood ..."* (Messenger reporting)
- *"Turn, hell-hound, turn!"* (Macduff)
- *"Macduff was from his mother's womb / Untimely ripp'd."* (Macduff)
- *"Hail, King of Scotland!"* (All)

Chat GPT also suggests:

Would you like me to also **layer in quick performance cues** (e.g., "witches circle and chant," "Macbeth stares at an imaginary dagger," "all students gasp on the word '*horror!*'") so it's even more classroom-ready for "Whoosh"?