

LESSON 2	Macbeth's Soliloquy: Act 1 Scene 7 PART 1
<p>Drama</p> <p>Dance/ Movement</p> <p>Choral Performance</p>	<p><u>Dance/Movement:</u></p> <p>Explain that they will be creating a simple movement sequence which will explore the concept of antithesis i.e. opposing concepts or ideas (which Shakespeare uses in Macbeth's soliloquy in Act 1 Scene 7). In advance, select two pieces of music which could represent Macbeth's two opposing 'states of mind'. Children to form groups of four. Position children in a diamond shape, all facing the same direction. Identify a 'leader' within each diamond formation. The leader starts by making slow, gentle movements/gestures with their body. The rest of the group mirror these actions. When the leader is ready to move on, they turn their body 90 degrees to the left or right. The next person automatically becomes the leader (as the rest of the group are behind and can see them). The new leader adopts a new sequence of movements which the group again copy, as accurately as possible.</p> <p>When the group are ready, start again and this time experiment with opposing moods, according to different soundtracks/musical accompaniments. When each child has 'led' the group, a different soundtrack can be selected to express an opposing mood.</p> <p>Extension- other children can read aloud Macbeth's Act 1 Scene 7 soliloquy as the group perform their movement sequence.</p> <p><u>Choral Performance:</u></p> <p>Show class Act 1 Scene 7. Ensure children understand what Macbeth is agonising over in this soliloquy: whether or not to kill Duncan. See the use of antitheses highlighted below, and discuss what this term means: i.e. the opposition of ideas, words or phrases against each other e.g. 'when the battle's lost and won', 'Fair is foul, and foul is fair'. Antitheses express conflict, and there are many examples of this in Macbeth e.g. good against evil, deception against truth, strength against weakness etc. Can pupils think of their own examples?</p> <p>Arrange half the class into a semi-circle and explain</p>

that pairs of children will read sections of the soliloquy in turn. The remaining half of the children will then stand in two lines opposite each other. Ask them to experiment with freeze-framing actions/gestures which represent the opposing ideas e.g. 'host' and 'murderer'. As the soliloquy is read aloud pairs take it in turns to freeze frame their movements.

Extension:

Draw children to Shakespeare's use of euphemisms; Macbeth cannot bring himself to speak directly about the act of murder. See the euphemisms highlighted in red. Try reading it again as a class, but this time experiment with saying 'murder', 'death' or 'killing Duncan' instead of each euphemism. Discuss together what effect this has.

If **it** were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well
It were done quickly. If **the 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 the 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**;
And pity, like a naked newborn babe,
Striding the blast, or **heaven's cherubim**, horsed
Upon the sightless couriers of the air,
Shall blow the **horrid deed** in every eye,

That tears shall drown the wind. I have no spur
To prick the sides ***of my intent***, but only
Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself
And falls on th' other.

Red=euphemism for Duncan's murder. Experiment by substituting 'murder', 'death' or 'killing Duncan'.

Highlighted text=pairs of antitheses

Writing

Figurative Language

Introduce the idea of naughty 'imps'. Explain that this can help pupils with remembering how writers create special visual effects by playing with words (this is figurative language).

I=Imagery
M=Metaphor
P=Personification
S=Simile



In Macbeth's soliloquy, there are some examples of 'imps' hiding. Distribute a copy of the soliloquy and challenge the children in pairs or groups to identify a few, and note M, P or S next to each.

Bank and shoal of time=metaphor
(Our life on earth is compared to a shoal with its shallow water, and our afterlife is the deep and wide ocean).

Poisoned chalice=a metaphor for the King's murder

Plead like angels=simile

Trumpet tongued=metaphor

Pity like a naked new-born babe=simile

Vaulting ambition=Personification.

(Macbeth's desire to commit murder is personified as a leaping horse).

Sightless couriers of the air= metaphor (the wind).

Writing

Provide a list of opposing abstract nouns (for examples see below). Model to children how to compose some poetic phrases using references from nature to create a range of strong images (metaphor, personification, and simile). Arrange in opposing pairs. Consider writing on white paper with black ink, and the opposites in white pencil on black sugar paper:

Peace & Conflict

Freedom & Imprisonment

Light & Dark

Beauty & Ugliness

Truth & Lies

Dreams & Nightmares

Riches & Poverty

Bravery & Weakness

Victory & Loss

Honesty & Deceit

e.g.

Honesty is a scattering of golden buttercup petals

Deceit is a hot crack of snake venom

Bravery looks like a solitary green shoot, springing up through the parched, dusty earth

Weakness looks like a cowering branch, punished by the whips and scorns of a winter wind

As a class, 'magpie' favourite examples and celebrate brave language choices; this is a challenging task!

