10.4.2 Lesson 21

Introduction

In this lesson, students prepare for their End-of-Unit written and oral assessments by considering William Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* in its entirety and beginning to form an argument in response to the question of which character bears primary responsibility for the tragedy. Student learning is assessed via a Quick Write at the end of the lesson: Which character bears the most responsibility for the tragedy of *Macbeth*? Use reasoning to support the claim and provide one piece of evidence to support your choice and strengthen your reasoning.

For homework, students continue to gather evidence to support their arguments, using a *Macbeth* Argument Outline Tool.

Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessed Standard(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RL.9-10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W.9-10.1.a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence. Explore and inquire into areas of interest to formulate an argument.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Introduce precise claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that establishes clear relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Addressed Standard(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>W.9-10.1.b-e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence. Explore and inquire into areas of interest to formulate an argument.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly, supplying evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience’s knowledge level and concerns.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.

d. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.

e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.

Assessment

Assessment(s)

Student learning is assessed via a Quick Write at the end of the lesson. Students respond to the following prompt, citing textual evidence to support analysis and inferences drawn from the text.

- Which character bears the most responsibility for the tragedy of *Macbeth*? Use reasoning to support the claim and provide one piece of evidence to support your choice and strengthen your reasoning.

High Performance Response(s)

A High Performance Response should:

- Name a character from the play who can reasonably be considered to be responsible for the tragedy (i.e., the Witches, Macbeth, or Lady Macbeth).

- Identify one reason for selecting the character (e.g., The Witches are supernatural figures who controlled Macbeth’s fate; Macbeth was an ambitious man throughout the play who chose to use violence to fulfill the Witches’ prophecy; Lady Macbeth was an ambitious woman who controlled her husband.).

- Provide one piece of evidence supporting the claim (e.g., The Witches used a charm that set the action in motion: “Peace, the charm’s wound up” (Act 1.3, line 38); or Macbeth always had ambitions for the crown, as is suggested when Banquo notices Macbeth’s reaction to the Witches’ greeting: “Good sir, why do you start and seem to fear / Things that do sound so fair?” (Act 1.3, lines 54–55); or Lady Macbeth urged Macbeth to carry through on the murder even when he began to reconsider the plan: “Was the hope drunk / Wherein you dressed yourself? … Would’st thou … live a coward in thine own esteem …? … What beast was’t, / then / … had I so sworn as you / Have done to this” (Act 1.7, line 39–49, 53–67).).
**Vocabulary**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocabulary to provide directly (will not include extended instruction)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• None.*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocabulary to teach (may include direct word work and/or questions)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• None.*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Additional vocabulary to support English Language Learners (to provide directly)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• None.*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Because this is not a close reading lesson, there is no specified vocabulary. However, in the process of returning to the text, students may uncover unfamiliar words. Teachers can guide students to make meaning of these words by following the protocols described in 1e of this document [http://www.engageny.org/sites/default/files/resource/attachments/9-12ela_prefatory_material.pdf](http://www.engageny.org/sites/default/files/resource/attachments/9-12ela_prefatory_material.pdf).

**Lesson Agenda/Overview**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student-Facing Agenda</th>
<th>% of Lesson</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Standards &amp; Text:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Standards: RL.9-10.3, W.9-10.1.a, W.9-10.1.b-e</td>
<td>1. 5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Text: <em>Macbeth</em> by William Shakespeare</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning Sequence:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Introduction of Lesson Agenda</td>
<td>2. 10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Homework Accountability</td>
<td>3. 45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Small Group Outline Activity</td>
<td>4. 25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Gallery Walk</td>
<td>5. 10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Quick Write</td>
<td>6. 5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Closing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Materials**

- Copies of the *Macbeth Argument Outline Tool* for each student
- Chart paper
- Student copies of the Short Response Rubric and Checklist (refer to 10.4.1 Lesson 1)
- Student copies of the 10.4.2 End-of-Unit Text Analysis Rubric and Checklist (refer to 10.4.2 Lesson 20)
Learning Sequence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How to Use the Learning Sequence</th>
<th>Type of Text &amp; Interpretation of the Symbol</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Percentage indicates the percentage of lesson time each activity should take.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no symbol</td>
<td>Plain text indicates teacher action.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bold text indicates questions for the teacher to ask students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Italicized text indicates a vocabulary word.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▸</td>
<td>Indicates student action(s).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✙</td>
<td>Indicates possible student response(s) to teacher questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>⌜</td>
<td>Indicates instructional notes for the teacher.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Activity 1: Introduction of Lesson Agenda**  
5%

Begin by reviewing the agenda and the assessed standards for this lesson: RL.9-10.3 and W.9-10.1.a. In this lesson, students consider the main characters of *Macbeth* as they seek to understand the source of the drama’s tragedy. Students work in small groups to evaluate evidence, develop supporting claims, and participate in a gallery walk to view the work of students with alternate perspectives.

▸ Students look at the agenda.

**Activity 2: Homework Accountability**  
10%

Instruct students to share their *Macbeth* Character Responsibility Tool and discuss which notes will help them respond to the End-of-Unit Assessment prompt and meet the criteria on the 10.4.2 End-of-Unit Rubric and Checklist.

❄ See the Model *Macbeth* Character Responsibility Tool at the end of this lesson for possible student responses.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

**Activity 3: Small Group Outline Activity**  
45%

Remind students of the work they did with standard W.9-10.1.a-e in Module 10.3, when they developed clear claims supported by evidence and reasoning. Explain to students that for the End-of-Unit Assessment they will use the same skills and strategies to support a literary claim.
Pose the following question:

What are the elements of a strong argument?

- Student responses should include:
  - A strong argument has a clear central claim.
  - A strong argument uses supporting claims.
  - A strong argument uses relevant evidence.
  - A strong argument uses valid reasoning.
  - A strong argument considers and refutes reasonable counterclaims.

Differentiation Consideration: If students have trouble answering this question, pose the following questions for students to answer in pairs, using their Module 10.3 notes and references as needed:

What is an argument?
- An argument is the composition of precise claims about a topic, including relevant and sufficient evidence and valid reasoning.

What is a central claim?
- A central claim (or thesis) is an author or speaker’s main point about an issue.

What is a supporting claim?
- A supporting claim is a smaller, related point that reinforces or advances the central claim.

What is evidence?
- Evidence is the topical and textual facts, events, and ideas from which the claims of an argument arise and which are cited to support those claims.

What is reasoning?
- Reasoning refers to the logical relationships among ideas, including relationships among claims and relationships across evidence.

What is a counterclaim?
- A counterclaim is a claim that refutes another claim.

Display the 10.4.2 End-of-Unit Assessment prompt for students to review:
Select a central character from *Macbeth*. Write an argument about how this character is primarily responsible for the tragedy. Support your claims using evidence that draws on character development, interactions, plot, and/or central ideas.

**Differentiation Consideration:** Consider simplifying the language by posing the following guiding question:

Which character causes the tragedy in *Macbeth*?

Instruct students to form small groups with other students who selected the same character. Student groups will focus on gathering evidence to support this choice. Explain to students that the statement about the character’s responsibility for the tragedy in *Macbeth* will be the central claim for their End-of-Unit Assessment, and the claims they develop to support this central claim will be their supporting claims.

Distribute the *Macbeth* Argument Outline Tool. Instruct students to record their central claim in the top box of the tool. Instruct students to work in their groups to review their text, notes, and annotations to collect textual evidence from *Macbeth* that supports their central claim. Students then use this evidence to establish at least three supporting claims. Explain to students that they should then complete the Reasoning portion of their tool, explaining how the evidence they selected supports their claims.

Students work individually on their *Macbeth* Argument Outline Tools, developing their own claims and evidence but consulting their fellow group members for support as necessary.

See the Model *Macbeth* Argument Outline Tool at the end of this lesson for possible student responses.

Students have worked with a similar tool in 10.3.3 Lessons 1 and 2, so they should be familiar with the process of completing the *Macbeth* Argument Outline Tool.

**Differentiation Consideration:** If students have difficulty using this tool, consider offering the following supports:

Write a single sentence that names the character you think bears the most responsibility for the tragedy in *Macbeth*.

Student responses should include:
- The Witches are most responsible for the tragedy in *Macbeth*.
- Macbeth is most responsible for the tragedy in *Macbeth*.
- Lady Macbeth is most responsible for the tragedy in *Macbeth*.

Explain that this sentence is the central claim of the argument.
Remind students that claims and evidence should be ordered in a logical manner that clearly supports their central claim and demonstrates valid reasoning to connect the evidence to the claim.

**Activity: Gallery Walk**

Instruct student groups to write a central claim at the top of a piece of chart paper, assigning responsibility for the tragedy of *Macbeth* to either the Witches, Macbeth, or Lady Macbeth. Instruct student groups to list on chart paper the supporting claims and evidence they found to strengthen their argument. Each member of the group should record at least one supporting claim and one piece of evidence from their individual *Macbeth* Argument Outline Tools.

- Student groups create charts for each central claim, listing textual evidence for supporting claims.

Instruct students to post their group’s chart paper and then rotate through the room to consider the work of other groups.

Instruct students to consider how the claims they notice about the responsibility of other characters might serve as counterclaims to their own arguments and how they might refute them. Students should note possible counterclaims on their individual *Macbeth* Argument Outline Tools as they circulate the room.

- Students circulate the room, recording possible counterclaims.

**Differentiation Consideration:** Consider providing students the following definition: *refute* means “prove that something is not true.”

Instruct students to rejoin their small groups and discuss how their ideas about which character is most responsible for the tragedy in *Macbeth* has changed. Instruct students to discuss counterclaims they noticed and how they can use text evidence to refute the counterclaims.

- Students discuss changes in their thinking about which character in *Macbeth* is most responsible for the tragedy, raising possible counterclaims and citing evidence that refutes the counterclaims.

**Activity 5: Quick Write**

Instruct students to respond briefly in writing to the following prompt:
Which character bears the most responsibility for the tragedy of Macbeth? Use reasoning to support the claim and provide one piece of evidence to support your choice and strengthen your reasoning.

Instruct students to look at their tools, charts, and annotations to find evidence. Remind students to use the Short Response Rubric and Checklist to guide their written responses.

- Students listen and read the Quick Write prompt.
- Display the prompt for students to see, or provide the prompt in hard copy.

Transition to the independent Quick Write.

- Students independently answer the prompt using evidence from the text.
- See the High Performance Response at the beginning of this lesson.

Activity 6: Closing

Display and distribute the homework assignment. For homework, instruct students to complete or revise the Macbeth Argument Outline Tool, selecting three to four pieces of evidence for supporting claims, as well as at least one piece of evidence that can be used to support a counterclaim. Instruct students to use the 10.4.2 End-of-Unit Text Analysis Rubric and Checklist to review the arguments they have outlined for the End-of-Unit Assessment.

- Students follow along.

Homework

Complete the Macbeth Argument Outline Tool, selecting three to four pieces of evidence for supporting claims, as well as at least one piece of evidence that can be used to support a counterclaim.

Use the 10.4.2 End-of-Unit Text Analysis Rubric and Checklist to review the argument you have outlined for the End-of-Unit Assessment.
Model *Macbeth* Character Responsibility Tool

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>Class:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Directions:** Choose a character from *Macbeth* (Macbeth, Lady Macbeth, or the Witches) whom you believe is responsible for the tragedy in the drama. Answer the questions below to support your choice. Use text evidence to support your responses.

---

**What is the earliest evidence that this character is responsible for the tragedy?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Witches cast a charm on Macbeth, finishing with the statement, “Peace, the charm’s wound up” (Act 1.3, line 38). When the Witches greet Macbeth as “king hereafter” (Act 1.3, line 53), he has already been thinking about becoming king, which explains why he “start[s] and seem[s] to fear / Things that do sound so fair” (Act 1.3, lines 54–55) and uses the Witches’ prophecy as an excuse for killing Duncan, hoping that “th’ assassination” will “trammel up the consequence and catch / With his surcease success” (Act 1.7, lines 2–4). As soon as Lady Macbeth receives the letter from her husband, she speaks her first lines of the play: “Glamis thou art, and Cawdor, and shalt be / What thou art promised. Yet do I fear thy nature; / It is too full o’ th’ milk of human kindness / To catch the nearest way” (Act 1.5, lines 1–4), revealing her ambition and her concern that on his own, Macbeth will not kill Duncan.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**What character traits explain the character’s motivation? Provide text evidence to support your response.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Witches are evil and spiteful. For example, their spitefulness motivates them to punish the husband of a woman who refused one of the Witches chestnuts (Act 1.3, lines 4–32, from “A sailor’s wife had chestnuts in her lap” to “Macbeth doth come”), so they would be just as likely to set up Macbeth. Macbeth is ambitious. Before Macbeth ever speaks to his wife, he is planning how to become king and considering how to “o’erleap” Malcolm (Act 1.4, lines 55–60, from “The Prince of Cumberland!” to “Which the eye fears, when it is done, to see”). Lady Macbeth is controlling. From the very beginning she starts thinking about how to control Macbeth so that he will not be ruled by his nature, which she fears is “too full o’ th’ milk of human kindness” (Act 1.5, line 17). She plans on urging him to get what is promised him, saying she will “pour [her] spirits in [his] ear” (Act 1.5, line 29).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| How does this character’s responsibility for the tragedy support a central idea of the play? | Having the Witches responsible supports the idea that we are controlled by fate, by powers beyond our choices.  
Having Macbeth responsible for the tragedy supports the idea that disrupting the natural order (having a subject kill the ruler) results in tragedy.  
Having Lady Macbeth responsible for the tragedy supports the idea that disrupting the natural order (having women control their husbands) results in tragedy. |
|---|---|
| How does Shakespeare develop the idea that this character is responsible for the tragedy? | Shakespeare begins the play with the Witches, so they are clearly important to the drama. He presents them as linked to evil and as petty, ambiguous characters. He develops their characters later in the play by having them give Macbeth misleading information, such as the Second Apparition’s prophecy that “none of woman born / Shall harm Macbeth” (Act 4.1, lines 91–92) and the Third Apparition’s prophecy that “Macbeth shall never vanquished be until / Great Birnam Wood to high Dunsinane Hill / Shall come against him” (Act 4.1, lines 105–107).  
Macbeth continues to plot to gain the crown throughout the play. After killing Duncan, he goes on to kill the guards, Banquo, and Macduff’s wife and children. He also attempts to kill Fleance, Banquo’s son, and vows to “fight the course” until the very end (Act 5.7, line 2).  
Shakespeare first introduces Lady Macbeth reading the letter from her husband and considering how best to convince Macbeth that he should kill Duncan to get the crown. Lady Macbeth wants to share Macbeth’s power as King of Scotland and convinces Macbeth to kill Duncan, telling her husband that Duncan’s murder will “to all [their] nights and days to come / Give solely sovereign sway and masterdom” (Act 1.5, lines 81–82). Lady Macbeth continues to develop the plans and tells Macbeth to put the “night’s great business” into her “dispatch” (Act 1.6, line 80). When Macbeth begins to have doubts, Lady Macbeth urges him on, telling him, “When you durst do it, then you were a man” (Act 1.7, line 56). After Macbeth kills Duncan, Lady Macbeth takes the knives and places them with the guards, smearing the men with Duncan’s blood before leaving (Act 2.2, lines 69–73, from “Give me the / Daggers” to “For it must seem their guilt”), demonstrating her willingness to take control. |
## Macbeth Argument Outline Tool

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>Class:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Text-Based Question: Which character is most responsible for the tragedy of *Macbeth*?

#### Central Claim:

#### Supporting Claim (character development, interactions, plot, central idea):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence:</th>
<th>Reasoning: How does the evidence support your claim?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence:</th>
<th>Reasoning: How does the evidence support your claim?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| Supporting Claim (character development, interactions, plot, central idea): |
|-----------|---------------------------------------------------|

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence:</th>
<th>Reasoning: How does the evidence support your claim?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<p>| Supporting Claim (character development, interactions, plot, central idea): |
|-----------|---------------------------------------------------|</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence:</th>
<th>Reasoning: <em>How does the evidence support your claim?</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Supporting Claim (character development, interactions, plot, central idea):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence:</th>
<th>Reasoning: <em>How does the evidence support your claim?</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Counterclaim *(to the central claim)*:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence:</th>
<th>Reasoning: <em>How does this evidence support the counterclaim?</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Supporting Claim (for the counterclaim):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence:</th>
<th>Reasoning: <em>How does this evidence support the counterclaim?</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
**Refuting Claim (for the counterclaim):**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence:</th>
<th>Reasoning: <em>How does this evidence refute the counterclaim?</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**[Conclusion]**

**Restate Central Claim:**

---

From Outline Tool, by Odell Education, www.odelleducation.com. Copyright (2012–2013) by Odell Education. Adapted with permission under an Attribution-NonCommercial 3.0 Unported license: [http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/3.0/](http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/3.0/).
Model Macbeth Argument Outline Tool (The Witches)

Name:  
Class:  
Date:  

Text-Based Question: Which character is most responsible for the tragedy of Macbeth?

Central Claim: The Witches are most responsible.

Supporting Claim (character development, interactions, plot, central idea):
The Witches have supernatural powers.

Evidence:
They can appear and disappear; they can control winds (Act 1.3, lines 12–15, from “I’ll give thee a wind” to “I myself have all the other”) and sleep (Act 1.3, lines 20–24, from “Sleep shall neither night nor day” to “Shall he dwindle, peak and pine”); they can cause apparitions to appear and reveal things (Act 4.1, lines 75–76, “Come high or low, / Thyself and office deftly show”); and they can tell the future (Act 1.3, lines 52–53, “All hail, Macbeth! Hail to thee, Thane of Cawdor! / All hail, Macbeth, that shalt be king hereafter!” and Act 1.3, lines 70–71, “Thou shalt get kings, though thou be none”).

Reasoning: How does the evidence support your claim?
Because the Witches have supernatural powers they are able to control the future.

Supporting Claim (character development, interactions, plot, central idea):
The Witches cast a charm to cause the events.

Evidence:
Act 1.3, lines 33–38 (from “The Weird Sisters, hand in hand” to “Peace, the charm’s wound up”).

Hecate is angry with them because, without her permission, they “trade[d] and traffic[ed] with Macbeth / In riddles and affairs of death” (Act 3.5, lines 4–5).

Reasoning: How does the evidence support your claim?
Because the Witches cast a charm, they control the future. The tragedy is fated.

Supporting Claim (character development, interactions, plot, central idea):
The Witches deceive Macbeth.
### Evidence:
They do not explain the meaning of the apparitions’ prophecies that “none of woman born” will harm Macbeth and that he will be safe “until / Great Birnam Wood to high Dunsinane Hill / Shall come against him.” (Act 4.1, lines 91–92, 105–107)

**Reasoning:** How does the evidence support your claim?
If Macbeth had understood the apparitions’ words better, he might not have allowed his castle to be besieged and might not have tried to fight off Malcolm’s forces.

### Counterclaim (to the central claim):
1. See the other Model Macbeth Argument Outline Tools for possible counterclaims and evidence.

### Supporting Claim (for the counterclaim):

### Evidence:

**Reasoning:** How does this evidence support the counterclaim?

### Refuting Claim (for the counterclaim):

### Evidence:

**Reasoning:** How does this evidence refute the counterclaim?
[Conclusion]

Restate Central Claim:
Model *Macbeth* Argument Outline Tool (Macbeth)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>Class:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Text-Based Question:** Which character is most responsible for the tragedy of *Macbeth*?

**Central Claim:** Macbeth is most responsible.

**Supporting Claim (character development, interactions, plot, central idea):**

As soon as the Witches greet Macbeth with the words, “Hail to thee, Thane of Cawdor!” and “All hail Macbeth, that shalt be king hereafter!” (Act 1.3, lines 52–53) he begins to plot how to gain the crown.

**Evidence:**
Banquo notices that Macbeth “start[s] and seem[s] to fear / Things that do sound so fair” (Act 1.3, lines 54–55).

In an aside, Macbeth admits that he is “yield[ing] to that suggestion / Whose horrid image doth unfix [his] hair / And make [his] seated heart knock at [his] ribs ... “ (Act 1.3, lines 147–149) and says that his thoughts, “whose murder yet is but fantastical” are disturbing him so that “nothing is but what is not” (Act 1.3, lines 150–155).

**Reasoning:** How does the evidence support your claim?

These lines show that Macbeth is not willing to accept the Witches’ prophecy as something that will come without any action on his part; instead, he begins to plan how to fulfill the prophecy right away.

**Supporting Claim (character development, interactions, plot, central idea):**

When Macbeth learns that Duncan is naming Malcolm as his heir, Macbeth realizes that he might have to kill Malcolm, too, to gain the crown.

**Evidence:**
Act 1.4, lines 55–60 (From “The Prince of Cumberland!” to “when it is done, to see”).

**Reasoning:** How does the evidence support your claim?

This quote shows that already Macbeth realizes that just killing Duncan might not be enough and he is already thinking about killing others in order to ensure that he can get and keep the crown.

**Supporting Claim (character development, interactions, plot, central idea):**

Macbeth goes beyond just killing Duncan; his violence exceeds the demands of the prophecy.
Evidence:
In addition to killing Duncan, Macbeth kills the guards (Act 2.3, lines 124–125, “O, yet I do repent my fury, / That I did kill them”), arranges the death of Banquo and tries to have Banquo’s son Fleance killed, too (Act 3.2, lines 146–158, from “Your spirits shine through you” to “I’ll come to you anon”). He orders the deaths of Lady Macduff and her children (Act 4.1, lines 171–174, from “The castle of Macduff I will surprise” to “This deed I’ll do before this purpose cool”) and kills Young Siward (Act 5.7, line 114 s.d., “[They fight, and young Siward is slain].”).

Reasoning: How does the evidence support your claim?
Because Macbeth is willing to kill not only Duncan, but also anyone he thinks might be a threat, Macbeth becomes more and more monstrous. Macbeth is the cause of all of the violence in the play.

Counterclaim (to the central claim):

1. See the other Model Macbeth Argument Outline Tools for possible counterclaims and evidence.

Supporting Claim (for the counterclaim):

Evidence:  
Reasoning: How does this evidence support the counterclaim?

Refuting Claim (for the counterclaim):

Evidence:  
Reasoning: How does this evidence refute the counterclaim?
[Conclusion]

Restate Central Claim:
Model Macbeth Argument Outline Tool (Lady Macbeth)

Text-Based Question: Which character is most responsible for the tragedy of Macbeth?

Central Claim: Lady Macbeth is most responsible.

Supporting Claim (character development, interactions, plot, central idea):
As soon as Lady Macbeth receives Macbeth’s letter she starts planning on how to get Macbeth to kill Duncan.

Evidence:
After reading the letter, Lady Macbeth considers Macbeth's character and is concerned that he is not ruthless enough to kill Duncan. She decides that she will “pour [her] spirits in [his] ear” (Act 1.5, line 29) and later prays to the “spirits / That tend on mortal thoughts” to “unsex” her and to fill her “from the crown to the toe top-full / Of direst cruelty” (Act 1.5, lines 47–50) so that she can do what needs to be done.

Reasoning: How does the evidence support your claim?
Lady Macbeth reveals in this scene that she wants the crown and that she will take whatever steps necessary to gain it.

Supporting Claim (character development, interactions, plot, central idea):
Lady Macbeth talks Macbeth into murdering Duncan when he starts questioning the idea.

Evidence:
Lady Macbeth uses a series of arguments, questioning Macbeth’s reliability (Act 1.7, lines 39–43, from “Was the hope drunk” to “Such I account thy love”), his courage (Act 1.7, lines 43–49, from “Art thou afeard” to “Like the poor cat i’ th’ adage”); his manliness (Act 1.7, lines 53–62, from “What beast was’t” to “their fitness / now / Does unmake you”); and his commitment (Act 1.7, lines 62–67, from “I have given suck” to “as you / Have done to this’). In addition, she encourages him by telling him to “screw [his] courage to the sticking place” to ensure success (Act 1.7, line 70).

Reasoning: How does the evidence support your claim?
Without Lady Macbeth’s numerous arguments and encouragements Macbeth might not have followed through on the plan to murder Duncan and so he would have avoided all the tragedy that follows.

Supporting Claim (character development, interactions, plot, central idea):
Lady Macbeth plans and assists in the murder.
**Evidence:**
Act 1.7, lines 71–82 (from “When Duncan is asleep” to “who shall bear the guilt / Of our great quell”).

**Reasoning:** How does the evidence support your claim?
By planning the murder, Lady Macbeth makes it difficult for Macbeth to say he can’t do it; Lady Macbeth maps it out for him and makes it sound like a simple, foolproof plan.

**Counterclaim (to the central claim):**
1. See the other Model Macbeth Argument Outline Tools for possible counterclaims and evidence.

**Supporting Claim (for the counterclaim):**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence</th>
<th>Reasoning: How does this evidence support the counterclaim?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Refuting Claim (for the counterclaim):**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence</th>
<th>Reasoning: How does this evidence refute the counterclaim?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
[Conclusion]

Restate Central Claim: