

Week 1: Researching the context of Macbeth.

Task: This term, you are studying Macbeth by William Shakespeare. To help you understand the play more clearly, please research the areas in the table below.

<p>Who was Shakespeare?</p> <p>Shakespeare, whose full name is William Shakespeare, was a playwright, poet and actor in the Elizabethan period. Shakespeare is a well known British writer who wrote many tragedies, comedies and histories such as Hamlet, A Midsummer Night's Dream and Macbeth. Shakespeare was born in April 1564 and passed away in April 1616.</p>	<p>Who was on the throne at the time?</p> <p>James I, who was known as James VI before he succeeded the English throne in 1603, was on the throne at the time. James was known as James VI because he was the former king of Scotland.</p>	<p>What were the Jacobean beliefs surrounding the supernatural?</p> <p>In Shakespeare's time, people believed in supernatural things, such as witches. It is believed that these people made a 'pact with the devil' in exchange for some supernatural powers. If an animal was ill, it was easily believed that it was cursed. Those who were accused of being witches were often old, single and poor.</p>	<p>What is the Divine Right of Kings?</p> <p>The Divine Right of Kings is a belief that the monarchs were chosen from God, and that nobody else could be the monarch unless you were chosen by God. This means that this right would have caused many arguments about who was the rightful heir to the throne.</p>
<p>The Book of Demonology.</p> <p>Who wrote it?</p> <p>What was it about?</p> <p>The Book of Demonology, which is written by James VI, was a book about Witchcraft and magic. It is believed that James wrote this book to prove the existence of these things through religious teachings to make it more believable. The first part of this book is about Magic and Necromancy, which means the prediction of the future by communicating with the dead. The second part of this book contains information about Witchcraft and Sorcery and the final part was about Spirits and Spectres.</p>	<p>Can you list other Shakespeare tragedies?</p> <p>Some examples of Shakespeare tragedies are Hamlet, Romeo and Juliet, King Lear, Othello, Anthony and Cleopatra and there are many more.</p> <p>Romeo and Juliet - A love story which ends with the two lovers dying for each other.</p> <p>Hamlet - The ghost of the king of Denmark tells his son, Hamlet, to go and kill the new king as revenge for his death. The new king, who is Hamlet's uncle, fears for his life and they both come up with a plot to kill each other.</p>	<p>Why did Shakespeare write Macbeth?</p> <p>Shakespeare wrote Macbeth because it was a tribute to King James I. He also wrote it to warn people and to show others what would happen if you abused power.</p>	<p>Was the character of Macbeth based on a real character? If so, state who.</p> <p>Macbeth was only slightly based on a real character, whose name was also Macbeth. Macbeth was a Scottish king who ruled in the 11th century. Though it is not based on a real character, many events from Macbeth were inspired from the Gunpowder Plot.</p>