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| 10.4.2 | Lesson 25 |

# Introduction

In this lesson, students view and analyze the 2011 Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) production of *Macbeth* (00:00–14:55) to compare the film version of Act 1.1 through 1.3 to the original text. Students consider the staging of the film version in the opening scenes. They then explore how the RSC’s directorial choices might influence their understanding of Shakespeare’s setting of these scenes and introduction of the characters. As they view the film, students record their observations on the RSC Film Viewing Tool. Students use their observations as the basis for a discussion of character development, setting, and cinematic choices in the first three scenes of the RSC production of *Macbeth*. Student learning is assessed via a Quick Write at the end of the lesson: Analyze how the RSC production develops and transforms the first three scenes of *Macbeth*.

For homework, students write a paragraph in response to the following prompt: Analyze the impact of the directors’ choice of setting in Kurosawa’s *Throne of Blood* and the RSC production of *Macbeth*. Additionally, students continue to read their Accountable Independent Reading (AIR) text and prepare for a brief discussion on how they applied their chosen focus standard to their text.

# Standards

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| Assessed Standard(s) | |
| RL.9-10.9 | Analyze how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work (e.g., how Shakespeare treats a theme or topic from Ovid or the Bible or how a later author draws on a play by Shakespeare). |
| Addressed Standard(s) | |
| W.9-10.2.c- e | Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.   1. Use appropriate and varied transitions to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts. 2. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to manage the complexity of the topic. 3. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing. |
| SL.9-10.1.a-e | Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grades 9–10 topics, texts, and issues*, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.   1. Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas. 2. Work with peers to set rules for collegial discussions and decision-making (e.g., informal consensus, taking votes on key issues, presentation of alternate views), clear goals and deadlines, and individual roles as needed. 3. Propel discussions by posing and responding to questions that relate the current discussion to broader themes or larger ideas; actively incorporate others into the discussion; and clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions. 4. Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives, summarize points of agreement and disagreement, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views and understanding and make new connections in light of the evidence and reasoning presented. 5. Seek to understand other perspectives and cultures and communicate effectively with audiences or individuals from varied backgrounds. |

# Assessment

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| 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 film.   * Analyze how the RSC production develops and transforms the first three scenes of *Macbeth*. |
| High Performance Response(s) |
| A High Performance Response should:   * Identify choices made by the RSC production of *Macbeth* about text, characters, setting, and cinematic choices (e.g., the decision to update the setting to a twentieth-century military hospital, the rearrangement of the text that places the Witches’ meeting in Act 1.1 in the middle of Act 1.2, the use of old war footage, etc.). * Describe how these choices develop and transform the play (e.g., The director’s decisions about text, setting, and staging develop and transform the role of the Witches by highlighting their evil influence while reducing the importance of their supernatural aspect. The choice to move the opening scene to the middle of Act 1.2 delays the revelation of the Witches’ identity and intentions, especially as they are dressed as nurses and seem to be treating the Captain. Even though they are onscreen during the dialogue between Duncan and the Captain, they do not reveal themselves until they kill the Captain (a detail that is not part of Shakespeare’s text). The moment of revelation is highlighted by the use of sound and visual cues, such as the removal of the Witches’ masks and the panning out of the camera, accompanied by menacing sound effects. As the Witches walk to meet Macbeth, the close-ups of the props they are carrying increase the sense of danger, and the dummy that they create using an IV stand and the Captain’s coat represents visually how they treat men as puppets. At the same time, however, the RSC production places less emphasis on the Witches as supernatural beings. Much of their dialogue about their activities is cut from the text. They look like women, especially in their nurses’ uniforms, not like the “withered” and “wild” creatures (Act 1.3, line 41) that Banquo addresses, and their “beards” (Act 1.3, line 48) are their masks. Rather than vanishing, as they do in Shakespeare’s stage directions, they walk off camera after their meeting with Macbeth. In this way, the RSC production highlights the witches’ malicious role in the tragedy but downplays their supernatural character.). |

# Vocabulary

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| Vocabulary to provide directly (will not include extended instruction) |
| * None.\* |
| Vocabulary to teach (may include direct word work and/or questions) |
| * None.\* |
| Additional vocabulary to support English Language Learners (to provide directly) |
| * None.\* |

\*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/9-12_ela_prefatory_material.pdf>.

# Lesson Agenda/Overview

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| Student-Facing Agenda | % of Lesson |
| **Standards & Text:**   * Standards: RL.9-10.9, W.9-10.2.c, d, e, SL.9-10.1.a-e * Text: *Macbeth* by William Shakespeare, Act 1.1–1.3 |  |
| **Learning Sequence:**   1. Introduction of Lesson Agenda 2. Homework Accountability 3. Film Viewing 4. Group Discussion 5. Quick Write 6. Closing | 1. 5% 2. 15% 3. 45% 4. 15% 5. 15% 6. 5% |

# Materials

* Copies of the RSC Film Viewing Tool for each student
* Excerpt from Rupert Goold’s *Macbeth* (00:00 – 14:55) (<http://www.pbs.org/>)
* Student copies of the Short Response Rubric and Checklist (refer to 10.4.1 Lesson 1)
* Consider previewing the film excerpt in advance in order to determine its suitability for students. If the film excerpt does not seem appropriate, consider using a different film version for this lesson.

# Learning Sequence

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| How to Use the Learning Sequence | |
| Symbol | Type of Text & Interpretation of the Symbol |
| **10%** | **Percentage indicates the percentage of lesson time each activity should take.** |
| no symbol | Plain text indicates teacher action. |
| **Bold text indicates questions for the teacher to ask students.** |
| *Italicized text indicates a vocabulary word.* |
| ⏵ | Indicates student action(s). |
| 🗨 | Indicates possible student response(s) to teacher questions. |
| 🛈 | Indicates instructional notes for the teacher. |

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

Begin by reviewing the agenda and the assessed standard for this lesson: RL.9-10.9. In this lesson, students explore how the RSC production uses character, setting, and cinematic choices to develop and transform the first three scenes of *Macbeth*. Students engage in a discussion and complete a brief writing assignment to close the lesson.

* Students look at the agenda.

Activity 2: Homework Accountability 15%

Instruct students to form pairs in order to discuss their response to the 10.4.2 Lesson 24 homework (What does Kurosawa choose to emphasize or omit in his treatment of the opening three scenes of *Macbeth*? Analyze the impact of these choices.)

* Student responses about Kurosawa’s choices may include:
  + Kurosawa’s omits the first scene with the Witches and replaces it with the chanting of an off-screen chorus.
  + Kurosawa reduces the number of Witches from three to one.
  + Kurosawa uses the forest setting to emphasize the spooky atmosphere of the scene.
  + Kurosawa chooses to set the action in medieval Japan, which emphasizes the violence of the play.
* Student responses about the impact of Kurosawa’s choices may include:
  + Kurosawa makes a series of choices that emphasize the power and evil nature of the spirit.
  + Kurosawa omits the opening scene with the Witches, so that we first meet the spirit as an off-screen voice, in the forest, which gives the scene a creepy atmosphere and highlights the supernatural power of the spirit.
  + The atmosphere of the scene is reinforced by Kurosawa’s emphasis on the creepy setting: Spider’s Web Forest is mentioned before it is seen and it is both from its name and the dialogue of the characters that it is a dangerous place with traps that destroy men.
  + The frightening atmosphere of Spider’s Web Forest is heightened by terrifying weather that is clearly strange to the characters who describe it as “peculiar.” The off-stage cackling which Miki and Washizu hear and their frightened reactions to it (Washizu shoots arrows into the trees) create the sense that the spirit represents the forest itself.
  + When Washizu and Miki finally meet the spirit, she is bathed in light, creating a supernatural effect, and her creepiness is intensified by the fact that she is spinning, which again associates her with the forest, suggesting that she is spinning a web to draw Washizu and Miki in.
  + The decision to have the camera linger over the piles of rotting corpses as the two warriors leave the shot emphasizes that the spirit is very dangerous. All of these choices create the impression that the spirit, like the forest, is a very powerful and dangerous force.
* Students will revisit their homework responses in 10.4.2 Lesson 26.

Lead a brief, whole-class discussion of student responses.

For classes that were assigned the optional extension, instruct students to form new pairs and to share their responses to the Lesson 24 homework. (Reread the Witches' dialogue from Act 1.3, lines 1–38 of *Macbeth* and the lyrics of the spirit's song from *Throne of Blood* and analyze how these two texts develop mood.)

* See the Model *Throne of Blood* Homework Tool at the end of this lesson for sample student responses.

Activity 3: Film Viewing 45%

Transition students to viewing the RSC production of *Macbeth*. Distribute the RSC Film Viewing Tool. Instruct students to use the tool as they view the film to organize their observations about the RSC’s treatment of the opening three scenes of *Macbeth*, focusing on characters, setting, and cinematic choices. Post or project the following focus question for students to consider as they view the film:

What do you notice about the characters, setting, and cinematic choices?

* **Differentiation Consideration**: Consider posting or projecting the following guiding prompts to support students in their viewing:

Look at the characters, their clothing, and the way they act. Look at when and where the story happens. Look at how the movie camera and lighting are used.

Show the opening of Rupert Goold’s *Macbeth* (00:00 to 14:55).

* Students view the opening of Rupert Goold’s *Macbeth* and record their observations on the RSC FilmViewing Tool.

Activity 4: Group Discussion 15%

Instruct students to form the small groups established in 10.4.2 Lesson 1. Post or project the following question for student groups to discuss before sharing out with the class:

What do you notice about the characters, setting, and cinematic choices?

* Students in groups discuss the focus question.
* See the Model RSC FilmViewing Tool at the end of this lesson for sample student responses.
* Consider reminding students that this is an opportunity to apply standard SL.9-10.1.a-e by participating effectively in a collaborative discussion. Students may especially focus on setting goals for the discussion, summarizing points of agreement and disagreement, and making new connections in light of new evidence and reasoning.
* **Differentiation Consideration:** If students struggle, consider posing the following scaffolding questions:

Where is the scene set and how does this impact the drama?

How do the costumes the actors wear develop their characters?

How do the gestures of the actors develop their characters?

How does the director choose to use lighting?

How does the director choose to use close ups?

How does the director choose to frame the action?

What is the impact of sound effects and music?

* See the Model RSC Film Viewing Tool at the end of this lesson for sample student responses.

Lead a brief, whole-class discussion of student responses.

Activity 5: Quick Write 15%

Instruct students to respond briefly in writing to the following prompt. Remind students to use appropriate and varied transitions, precise and domain specific language, and a formal style as required by standard W.9-10.2.c, d, e.

Analyze how the RSC production develops and transforms the first three scenes of *Macbeth*.

Instruct students to look at their RSC FilmViewing Tool 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.
* Students will revisit their Quick Write responses in 10.4.2 Lesson 26.

Activity 6: Closing 5%

Display and distribute the homework assignment. For homework, instruct students to write a paragraph on the following prompt:

Analyze the impact of the directors’ choice of setting in Kurosawa’s *Throne of Blood* and the RSC production of *Macbeth.*

Ask students to use vocabulary from the unit wherever possible in their written responses. Remind students to use the Short Response Rubric and Checklist to guide their written responses.

Additionally, students should continue to read their AIR text through the lens of a focus standard of their choice and prepare for a three to five minute discussion of their text based on that standard.

* Students follow along.

# Homework

Write a paragraph in response to the following prompt:

Analyze the impact of the directors’ choice of setting in Kurosawa’s Throne of Blood and the RSC production of *Macbeth.*

Also, continue reading your Accountable Independent Reading text through the lens of a focus standard of your choice and prepare for a three to five minute discussion of your text based on that standard.

Model *Throne of Blood* Homework Tool

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| ***Macbeth* Act 1.3, Lines 1–38** | **Spirit Song from *Throne of Blood*** | **Vocabulary** |
| *Thunder. Enter the three Witches*  **First Witch** Where hast thou been sister?  **Second Witch** Killing swine.  **Third Witch** Sister, where thou?  **First Witch** A sailor’s wife had chestnuts in her lap  And munched and munched and munched. “Give 5  me,” quoth I.  “Aroint thee, witch,” the rump-fed runnion cries.  Her husband’s to Aleppo gone, master o’ th’ Tiger,  But in a sieve I’ll thither sail,  And, like a rat without a tail, 10  I’ll do, I’ll do, and I’ll do.  **Second Witch** I’ll give thee a wind.  **First Witch** Th’ art kind.  **Third Witch** And I another.  **First Witch** I myself have all the other, 15  And the very ports they blow;  All the quarters that they know  I’th shipman’s card.  I’ll drain him dry as hay.  Shall sleep neither night nor day 20  Hang upon his penthouse lid.  He shall live a man forbid.  Weary sev’nnights, nine times nine,  Shall he dwindle, peak and pine.  Though his bark cannot be lost, 25  Yet it shall be tempest-tossed.  Look what I have.  **Second Witch** Show me, show me.  **First Witch** Here I have a pilot’s thumb,  Wracked as homeward he did come. 30  *Drum within*  **Third Witch** A drum, a drum!  Macbeth doth come.  **All** editorial emendation*dancing in a circle*.editorial emendation  The Weïrd Sisters, hand in hand,  Posters of the sea and land,  Thus do go about, about, 35  Thrice to thine and thrice to mine  And thrice again to make up nine.  Peace, the charms wound up. | Strange is the world  Why should men  Receive life in this world?  Men's lives are as meaningless  As the lives of insects 5  The terrible folly  Of such suffering  A man lives but  As briefly as a flower  Destined all too soon 10  To decay into the stink of flesh  Humanity strives  All its days  To sear its own flesh  In the flames of base desire 15  Exposing itself  To Fate's Five Calamities  Heaping karma upon karma  All that awaits Man  At the end 20  Of his travails  Is the stench of rotting flesh  That will yet blossom into flower  Its foul odor rendered  Into sweet perfume 25  Oh, fascinating  The life of Man  Oh, fascinating | folly (n.) – foolish behavior  strives (v.) – tries very hard to do something  sear (v.) – burn and damage the surface of (something) with strong and sudden heat  base (adj.) – not honest or good  calamities (n.) – events that cause great harm and suffering  travails (n.) – difficult experiences or situations  stench (n.) – very bad smell  odor (n.) – disagreeable smell |
| **Reread the witches' dialogue from Act 1.3 of *Macbeth* and the lyrics of the spirit's song from *Throne of Blood* and analyze how these two texts develop mood.** | | |
| * Student responses may include:   + Shakespeare creates a tense and creepy mood as he shows the mean-spiritedness and evil intentions of the Witches through their gleeful descriptions of the mischief that they have caused and plan to cause. For example, the First Witch plans to torment a sailor because his wife refused to give her chestnuts: “I’ll drain him dry as hay” (line 19). The Third Witch’s cry that “Macbeth doth come” reveals that they are waiting for Macbeth, probably to do him harm (line 32). Finally, the last line of their chant “the charm’s wound up” implies that they have cast a spell (line 38).   + The witches’ dialogue also reveals their supernatural power; they can command the winds “[a]nd the very ports they blow” (line 16).   + The stage directions contribute to an unsettling mood, as the scene opens with thunder, and Macbeth’s entry is announced by the ominous sound of a drum.   + In *Throne of Blood*, the spirit song creates a sense of creepiness by emphasizing that the spirit is not human. She looks at man from the outside as something curious and “fascinating” (lines 26, 28), and believes that “Men’s lives are as meaningless / As the lives of insects” (lines 4–5), highlighting both the pointlessness and the fragility of life.   + The creepy mood of the spirit song is underlined by its constant references to death as the inevitable end of man’s life. Human life is as beautiful and brief as that of a flower (lines 8–9) and it must end in death, which the spirit describes in vivid and disgusting images that describe how man must “decay into the stink of flesh” (line 11) and end in “the stench of rotting flesh” (line 22).   + The references to “Fate’s Five Calamities” (line 17) and “karma” (line 18) also create a sense of a bad fate hanging over man, contributing to the unsettling and melancholy mood. | | |

RSC Film Viewing Tool

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| **Name:** |  | **Class:** |  | **Date:** |  |

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| **Directions:** Use this tool to record your observations about the RSC production of *Macbeth.* |
| **Focus Question: What do you notice about the characters, setting, and cinematic choices?** |

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| **Character Development** | **Setting** | **Cinematic Choices** |
| *e.g., Who is in each scene? Who gets most screen time? What are the characters wearing? How do the actors choose to portray their characters? Are they dramatic? Are they reserved?* | *e.g., Where is this scene set? What do you notice about this environment? What do you notice about the time and place?* | *e.g., What sounds do you hear in the scene? Is there a soundtrack? What do you notice about how the camera changes position at different moments in the scene? What is the camera angle? What or who is being framed? On who or what does light shine or not shine? What props are used in the scene? How are they used?* |
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| **Vocabulary:** | | |
| None. | | |

Model RSC FilmViewing Tool

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name:** |  | **Class:** |  | **Date:** |  |

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| **Directions:** Use this tool to record your observations about the RSC production of *Macbeth.* |
| **Focus Question: What do you notice about the characters, setting, and cinematic choices?** |

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Character Development** | **Setting** | **Cinematic Choices** |
| *e.g., Who is in each scene? Who gets most screen time? What are the characters wearing? How do the actors choose to portray their characters? Are they dramatic? Are they reserved?* | *e.g., Where is this scene set? What do you notice about this environment? What do you notice about the time and place?* | *e.g., What sounds do you hear in the scene? Is there a soundtrack? What do you notice about how the camera changes position at different moments in the scene? What is the camera angle? What or who is being framed? On who or what does light shine or not shine? What props are used in the scene? How are they used?* |
| It is clear that the characters are all members of the military, as they are all dressed in uniform. This emphasizes the background of violence and war in *Macbeth.*  The Witches’ opening meeting is moved to the middle of Act 1.2, delaying the revelation of the Witches and their evil intentions toward Macbeth.  By dressing the Witches as nurses, the director allows them to be onstage before they reveal themselves, increasing the shock and impact of their revelation: they appear to be treating the Captain before Duncan exits, when they kill their patient. The moment of revelation is underlined by the removal of their masks and the ripping out of the captain’s beating heart.  Much of the Witches’ dialogue among themselves from Act 1.1 and 1.3 is cut. This reduces the play’s emphasis on the supernatural; much of the omitted dialogue describes their activities and refers to their familiars.  When Ross announces to Macbeth that he is to be made Thane of Cawdor, the actor emphasizes the pleasure that Macbeth feels at this news by smiling and pointing at the medal that he has been awarded.  The production develops the relationship between Banquo and Macbeth in Act 1.3, suggesting an understanding between the two. When he is made Thane of Cawdor, Macbeth turns to Banquo and smiles, and the asides in which Macbeth reflects on possibilities are, in this production, directly addressed to Banquo. The friendly relationship between the two men is emphasized by the gesture at the end when they agree to keep silent about the Witches but to discuss it later; they both put their finger to their lips and smile. | The play has been updated to what appears to be the 20th century. Film footage of war is used, suggesting that the events are situated in the 20th century at the earliest, but the uniforms are old-fashioned.  The RSC production sets the action in a hospital full of wounded men, emphasizing the chaos and bloodshed all around. The hospital is clearly a military hospital, as it is full of injured soldiers.  The action is set underground, in a series of maze-like tunnels and basements, which emphasizes the claustrophobic and menacing atmosphere of the play. | The style of the title card immediately suggests a militaristic universe.  The opening close-up of a bloody hand situates the viewer immediately in a violent and bloody world.  The director uses black and white footage of war to create a sense of time and place: this is reinforced by the use of sound effects of guns and flickering lights, which gives a sense of chaos and danger.  The moment when the Witches reveal themselves is emphasized by the wiping out of background activity and characters as the camera pans out on the Witches, accompanied by menacing sound effects.  The director uses lighting and sound effects to increase the creepy impact of the Witches’ chanting: their faces are kept in shadow, and there is an echo effect as they all say the name “Macbeth.” As they walk to meet Macbeth, the atmosphere is intensified by the sound of slamming doors and echoes.  There are also visual cues to the sense of danger that the production creates around the Witches. The viewer sees close-ups of the props that they carry (the hacksaw and a sharpened knife), and the Witches make a dummy from the Captain’s coat and an IV stand, which represents visually to the viewer that the Witches treat men as puppets.  The RSC version of *Macbeth* builds up the suspense around Macbeth’s first appearance, as he is filmed in shadow, making it hard to see him.  The tension of the scene with the Witches is emphasized by the use of props, notably the guns which Macbeth and Banquo draw when they see the Witches, highlighting their fear.  Rather than vanishing, as they do in Shakespeare’s stage directions, the Witches walk off camera at the end of their meeting with Macbeth, making them seem less supernatural than in the play.  As Macbeth considers the Witches’ greetings, the film emphasizes that Macbeth is lost in his own thoughts by using a close-up of Macbeth, a fade-out of other characters’ speech, and an out-of-focus filming of other characters (when they can be seen at all). The viewer is given access to these thoughts of Macbeth. |
| **Vocabulary:** | | |
| None. | | |