

Young Shakespeare Company

PAUSE and INTERACT - a guide

The filmed workshop includes seven *Pause and Interact* sections.

These are marked by 'PAUSE HERE FOR QUESTIONS AND IDEAS' appearing on your screen.

At this point, simply stop the film and hear your students' responses to the questions they've just been asked.

You can also take this as an opportunity to chat with the students about any comprehension issues that may have arisen.

The time you take for these pauses is up to you!

The cues and ideas for possible answers and discussions in the seven *Pause and Interact* sections are below to give you some guidance.

Tip: I always say to teachers that there are no 'right' answers. The more the children put themselves in the shoes of the characters and imagine how the characters are feeling in the story, the more engaging and exciting the experience will be for them.

I hope you enjoy exploring the world of this story together.

Sarah

**Sarah Gordon
Artistic Director
Young Shakespeare Company**

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1

Cue : *"Imagine that all of you are Macbeth and you've just heard these strange words from the witches. All of you think very carefully what you might want to ask the witches. Perhaps something like "Who are you?" or "How do you know this?" or "Why me?" All of you think of your questions for the witches and get ready to shout these words as if you are Macbeth shouting at the 3 witches, but wait until your teacher asks you to in a moment. Don't worry if someone else has asked a similar question already as Macbeth, just shout out what's on your mind as if you're Macbeth."*

PAUSE.....

Really encourage students to think up questions AS IF they are Macbeth.

Tip: Questions work better than statements.

e.g. Encourage use of questioning words such as
"where" ("Where do you come from?")
"what" ("What will happen to King Duncan?")
"who" ("Who told you this?")

These encourage interesting and insightful responses.

Repeat your students' suggestions back to them once you get them. Share the idea with them and the rest of the group. This validates them and encourages the idea that this is a shared activity, that you are finding the answers *together*.

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Cue : “That night something happens to King Duncan which means he cannot leave Macbeth’s castle the next morning. Why? What do you think happens to him? Think of all your ideas and all the possibilities and be ready to share with your teacher.”

PAUSE...

Encourage students to imagine an interesting range of possibilities of things that could happen to King Duncan to prevent him from leaving Macbeth’s castle.

Sometimes a student will hone in immediately on the ‘right’ answer...”Macbeth/Lady Macbeth kills him”.

Tip: The word ‘maybe’ is useful here. Allow all answers to be treated as imaginative possibilities.

Hear as many as possible. Praise each idea as you hear it and, particularly with the older students, probe a bit further if you think they have suggested a good starting point for a thought or idea.

Their suggestions might include...”Is he too tired to leave?” “He’s enjoying himself too much” or “Is he ill?” or “Has he been trapped by the witches?” or “Is the castle surrounded by a magic force field?” And others of course. It’s worth fishing for as many as possible.

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Cue : “Macbeth is King and Lady Macbeth is Queen. And so soon after Macbeth met the witches. In a moment it will be time to share with your teacher your ideas on how Macbeth and Lady Macbeth are feeling now?”

PAUSE...

This is an example of how the children can explore how it is to be in the shoes of the characters by imagining what they are feeling at any given moment .

Questions like this one aim to enable a deeper engagement in the story.

The more obvious answer here is “happy” or an equivalent and this is fine.

This is however a chance to stretch their vocabulary so some synonyms for happy might be good. And sometimes suggestions also include such words as “insecure” or “guilty”.

Interesting discussions arise out of one word answers so a question back from you like “OK, so why are they feeling....?” can lead that student or another to extend this thought into a more detailed or complex reason for why they MIGHT be feeling this way.

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Cue : “What does Macbeth see - or think he can see - sitting on his throne? Please think about what he can see and share your ideas with your teacher.”

PAUSE...

Sometimes these suggestions are straightforward and perhaps linked to the witches, for example “a spider” or “a witch” or “a message from the witches”.

Sometimes students relate their answers to what has gone on previously plot-wise, for example “King Duncan” or “the ghost of King Duncan”.

Sometimes students suggest objects, such as “a dagger” or “a dagger covered in blood” and sometimes they are caught up in an imaginative moment and say something like “the picture of his own death”.

Some will hone in on the ‘right’ answer sooner or later (Banquo’s ghost) which is fine but, as above, simply take that as just another answer and give equal praise to all ideas as you hear them.

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Cue : “Macbeth looks at his throne. The Ghost is no longer there and he sits down with his crown in his hands. Lady Macbeth is furious with her husband. All of you now imagine that you are now Lady Macbeth. What do you want to shout at your husband as if you are Lady Macbeth after the way he has just behaved in front of all the guests? Are you ready to shout at your husband to tell him off? Share these Lady Macbeth words with your teacher - something like “What were you doing?” might be a good start.”

PAUSE...

The aim in this pause section is to get each student to imagine they are Lady Macbeth shouting at her husband after this awful experience at the banquet.

All students, from the younger to the older, understand what it is to be scolded by a parent or other for bad behaviour and often weave this into their answers!

The important thing is for them to BE Lady Macbeth saying their words as if to Macbeth, so try to encourage them to strike this tone as they shout their ideas.

Sometimes examples include “What’s going on?” or “Why did you behave like that?” or “You’re a disgrace” or “You can’t believe how much you embarrassed me just now”.

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Cue : “Now I want all of you to imagine that you are the witches sitting around the cauldron. And I’d like you to think of something to throw into the cauldron, part of something you might find around you here on the heath, something with special magical properties. Everyone needs one idea each. Start to think of your ideas so you can share them with your teacher.”

PAUSE...

There are any number ideas which could be suggested here.

It is best if you encourage the students to keep suggestions within the brief of “part of something you might find around you here on the heath, something with special magical properties” as this tends to yield more interesting, imaginative and appropriate suggestions.

The idea here is to get as many students as possible to come up with really interesting ‘magical’ suggestions for ingredients.

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Cue : *“These are not the only words Lady Macbeth says as she sleepwalks around the castle, lost in her nightmares. She talks out loud about all the terrible things that she and Macbeth have done. All their guilty secrets come pouring out. So, without knowing it, Lady Macbeth gives all these secrets away. Imagine we all overhear her as she speaks in her sleep. Listen out for how she is feeling and also listen out for what moments she is remembering and be ready to share these ideas with your teacher after Lady Macbeth has finished speaking.”*

PAUSE....

A copy of Lady Macbeth’s words can be found in your *Follow-Up Materials* document - Appendix One. It may be useful for you to have this in front of you for this discussion.

Any and every suggestion that the students make about Lady Macbeth’s state of mind and her memories of what she and her husband have done are interesting here and feed into a wider discussion of what Lady Macbeth is going through at this time.

Depending on their age and vocabulary, students may come up with one word answers such as guilty, sad, lonely, devastated, unhappy, distraught, disturbed, terrified, which can all, with further probing or extension, form the basis of a more extended reason behind WHY she feels like this.

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Equally, some more complex observations may be suggested, for example “she thinks she sees blood on her hands in the same way that Macbeth thought he saw Banquo’s ghost” or “she’s feeling guilty about killing King Duncan” or “she’s haunted by the sight and the smell of the blood” or “she’s remembering all the terrible things they have done”.

So this can be a two part discussion, focussing both on her feelings and on the particular moments she is remembering.

The level of sophistication of thoughts and responses will depend on the emotional and intellectual maturity of the students. But any level of engagement (even if the students don’t understand all the words here) is great as long as they gain some feeling and understanding of Lady Macbeth’s state of mind.

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Script for teachers to read/speak to students before sharing part two (workshop film).

“We are going to be working together this week with the Young Shakespeare Company who have created a very exciting online experience for us for our “We love books” week. Some of you will have already seen their performances as they visit our school each year. This year they have created an interactive online experience so that we can still enjoy a virtual visit with them. We are the first school in the world to do this!

Before we start the workshop together (I am going to enjoy doing it with you as well) there are a couple of things you need to know.

You will be sitting and moving around in this workshop, so be prepared. You will be given clear instructions about what to do when. You will always be given an example before doing any words or actions in the workshop and it will be very clear so you know exactly what to do. Sometimes words or names will come up on your screen for you to use and repeat from your homes, so we all be saying the words from the play and doing the actions together from our own homes when we are told to do so! When words come up on the screen there will be pointers to help you to follow what the characters in the story are saying.

There will also be moments in the story when I will pause the film when it tells me to on the screen. You’ll see this too! At these moments, when I stop the film it will be for all of us together in our classroom to discuss together what is going on - to check everyone understands and also to get lots of your answers and ideas. Just before the pause you will have been asked a question or given something to think about and I will be looking forward to hearing all of your thoughts and ideas when I pause with you.

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Another fun thing...there will be moments in the story when all of you will need to be divided into two teams. So we are going to organise this together now, ahead of the play so that you all know which team you are in and can join in the play in your correct team. Please could everyone with a first name which starts with the letters A to M be in team gold - that's team gold please, and could everyone with the a first name that begins with the letters N to Z be in team silver please. Has everyone got that - you'll need to remember this for when it happens in the story!

So there are going to be lots of things for all of us to be involved in as the story and the play unfolds over the next (few days?). You'll need to watch and listen very carefully, have lots of imaginative ideas and be ready to leap into action or speak words when instructed. This is a great adventure for all of us. And remember there will be pause sections where we can catch up with each other in the classroom and there will be gaps between sections too for you to check in with me.

So... are you ready to listen, follow and most importantly enjoy!!"

Section timestamps:

Section 1: Introduction

00:00-04:00

Section 2: The Heath

04:00-15:18

Section 3: Macbeth's Castle

15:18-25:49

Section 4: The Banquet

25:49-36:00

Section 5: Back to the Witches

36:00- 43:37

Section 6: Sleepwalking

43:37- 48:55

Section 7: The Battle

48:55-58:10

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MACBETH

by William Shakespeare

Follow-up materials for “Macbeth” online experience

Devised by Sarah Gordon

April 2020

For the *British Council School, Madrid.*

Artistic Directors: Sarah Gordon and Christopher Geelan

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About the Young Shakespeare Company

The Artistic Directors, Sarah Gordon (M.Ed) and Christopher Geelan (M.A) founded the Young Shakespeare Company in 1989.

Sarah Gordon has a Master's Degree in Education and is the author of "Active Approaches To Primary School Shakespeare" (1989). Sarah took part in Dr. Rex Gibson's ground-breaking "Shakespeare and Schools" project at the Cambridge Institute of Education and has subsequently become the national pioneer of Primary School Shakespeare. In addition to her work for the Young Shakespeare Company she has devised and led workshops and INSET courses for Cambridge University, the National Theatre, the English Shakespeare Company, the Orange Tree Theatre, TAG Theatre in Scotland and for local education authorities throughout the country. Sarah's work has been featured on BBC Radio 4. From 2007 to 2011 Sarah was the Head of Education at the Open Air Theatre, Regent's Park.

Christopher Geelan is a theatre director specialising in making Shakespeare accessible to young audiences. Productions directed for the Young Shakespeare Company include: "Macbeth", "A Midsummer Night's Dream", "Hamlet", "The Tempest", "Twelfth Night", "Much Ado About Nothing" and "Henry V". His work as a freelance director includes a national tour of "Romeo and Juliet" for the English Shakespeare Company, open air productions of "Henry IV Parts 1 and 2", "The Merry Wives of Windsor" and "Twelfth Night" for Principal Theatre Company, "Measure For Measure" and "Othello" at the Cochrane Theatre for Theatre Unlimited and ten different productions for the Orange Tree Theatre in Richmond. Christopher has been a guest lecturer on 'Shakespeare in Performance' for the Open University and his educational projects have been featured on News at Ten and on BBC Newsround.

The Young Shakespeare Company provides a year-round programme of workshops, performances, residencies and INSET courses. The company works in schools, theatres and professional development centres across the UK and internationally. Over 800 schools make a regular booking with the Young Shakespeare Company and over 100,000 young people see our work every year.

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WHAT IS ACTIVE STORYTELLING?

At the heart of the Young Shakespeare Company's exploration of Shakespeare's plays with young students lies the process of active storytelling.

Active storytelling is a practical, collaborative discovery process. The experience is an extension of the commitment and imaginative engagement which children bring to their own play. Through active storytelling the story, language and characters are interwoven in the creation of a unique fictional world, a world in which fantasy and reality blur and disbelief is willingly suspended.

The students themselves explore and define the world of the play and this world has few boundaries or rules. It certainly does not depend on historical or geographical accuracy.

Through active storytelling Shakespeare's language becomes a key point of access to the imaginative world. Young people have an innate love of rhythm and rhyme. They enjoy speaking Shakespeare's words and exploring different ways of saying them. Using short, accessible sections of the language enhances the students' involvement in the world of the play and deepens their understanding of the characters and their feelings.

Through the process of active storytelling young students live through the story, discovering it as they go. They become involved in the world of the play by putting themselves in the shoes of the characters, imagining how they feel. This inside knowledge allows them to discuss and predict what the characters are likely to do next. The process is participatory and non-competitive, involving all the participants all of the time. It is a collaborative venture between the storyteller, the teacher and the students.

Sarah Gordon M.Ed - project devisor

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Macbeth 2019. Young Shakespeare Company. Director: Christopher Geelan

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Who are the Witches?

Many students have storybook pictures of witches in their minds - old women with pointy black hats and warts on their noses, flying on broomsticks with their black cat by their side. But this is only one idea...

Brainstorm imaginative ideas of what these witches COULD look like.... Suggest students describe or sketch their ideas. Suggestions might include:

- “male witches”
- “witches that are part animal or can turn into animals”
- “futuristic robotic looking witches”

In our 2019 production of *Macbeth*, pictured on the previous page, we reimagined the witches as children. The possibilities are endless...!



What do they tell Macbeth?

Macbeth hears the following three premonitions from the witches when they first appear to him on the misty, foggy heath:

All hail Macbeth! hail to thee, Thane of Glamis!

All hail Macbeth! hail to thee, Thane of Cawdor!

All hail Macbeth! that shalt be King hereafter!

Write a short piece of creative writing as if you are Macbeth at this point in the story (e.g. a non-rhyming poem or diary entry.) Ask the students to describe how the witches made Macbeth feel and what their words mean to him.

Tip: They may wish to include some of the questions they asked the witches as Macbeth in the workshop!

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Where is the play set?

We learn about a number of locations in the workshop.

- Great Birnam Wood
- the King's Castle on High Dunsinane Hill
- the Heath
- Glamis Castle (where the Macbeths murder King Duncan.)

Design and create a map of the geographical set-up of the play, using the locations above.

Tip: Encourage students to invent and add other appropriate invented places for this area of Scotland (eg lakes, rivers and other geographical features).



Welcome to King Duncan's royal feast!

Ask the students to imagine they are making the preparations at Macbeth and Lady Macbeth's castle, for King Duncan's royal feast.

Encourage each student to create a piece of writing or art for this special royal occasion.

Tip: Ideas might include a beautifully decorated menu for the feast, a formal invitation to the feast from Macbeth and Lady Macbeth to King Duncan, a piece of music or a song either as a welcome fanfare or as entertainment during the feast.

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Diaries

Chart the progression of a chosen character's feelings through the play as it unfolds by setting up a personal diary.

Characters that work well for this exercise are Macbeth or Lady Macbeth, with the students charting their rise and fall 'as if' they are the characters.



Newspapers

Produce and design newspaper headlines and articles about the murder of King Duncan.

An interesting preliminary activity is to look at how different styles of newspapers (tabloid and broadsheet) present the same story in different ways.

Talk about headlines selling newspapers and the use of pictures to accompany articles



The Royal Coronation Banquet

Imagine you are one of the Lords and Ladies at King Macbeth's Coronation banquet.

Write a piece which captures the atmosphere as you arrive at the banquet for this state occasion, including your feelings about how honoured you are to be invited to this event. Focus of the sensory nature of the whole experience - what you see, hear, smell, feel and taste.

Think carefully about use of colour and texture. Pay attention to detail in your choice of adjectives to capture this truly special night.

Tip: If you wish to extend this you could contrast the initial sweet feelings of excitement and colour with the sour experience of seeing the King behaving in such a strange way, shouting at his empty throne with his wife arguing with him, and your hurried, uncomfortable exit from the banquet.

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The argument at the banquet

Remind the class about the teams at the banquet (team gold representing the voice of Macbeth and team silver the voice of Lady Macbeth).

Macbeth (gold)

Lady M (silver)

Macbeth (gold)

Lady M (silver)

See there!

Why do you make such faces?

Quit my sight.

Fie for shame.

Ask each team to speak their words aloud, practising the correct sequence.

Discuss the mood of the characters and how to show this in their voices and facial expressions. Then experiment with 'performing' the words in a number of ways:

- sitting down
- standing up as they speak
- angry voices
- hushed voices
- Macbeth shocked while Lady Macbeth is embarrassed

Focus on the emotions of both characters - Macbeth's reaction to seeing Banquo's ghost and Lady Macbeth's desperation to make him sit down.

Follow this with a scripting task where the students develop and write their own dialogue in playscript form - imagining in their own words the sort of argument that the King and Queen are having.

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The witches' spell

Ask the students to think back to the moment in the workshop where they imagined their own magical ingredient to throw into the witches' cauldron. (Something you might find on the heath with special magical properties). Ask the students to create their own 'recipes' / spells full of magical ingredients in poem form - either rhyming or non-rhyming. They could include the words "double double toil and trouble, fire burn and cauldron bubble" if they wish. They may also want to make up their own tune for this final refrain and share it with their classmates.



Lady Macbeth sleepwalking

Lady Macbeth gives everything away in her sleep as she walks around the castle at night, rubbing her hands together and speaking out loud. (See photo on next page from our 2019 production). Attached below for reference, as Appendix One, are the words she speaks out loud. Lady Macbeth's state of mind at this time is an interesting source of discussion. If the students are able to see these words they provide an accessible stimulus for writing from the point of view of the character. Encourage the students to create insightful monologues in their own words about Lady Macbeth's thoughts. Some may wish to integrate small snippets or words from her speech.

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The story of Malcolm

The students have often been involved during the workshop in predicting what might happen next.

As a final prediction exercise ask the students to write the (unwritten) story or play of 'Malcolm'.

We know he becomes King... but what happens next?



Posters

Design the poster for a production of Macbeth by William Shakespeare in whichever medium you prefer - with whatever art equipment you have to hand.

For this activity each student should pick a moment which for them best represents the play.

Discuss the emphasis on simplicity, boldness of image and clarity of lettering.

The poster can include fictional details (dates/timing/location).

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Appendix One

Yet here's a spot

Out, damned spot!

Out I say

One, two

why then 'tis time to do it

Hell is murky

Fie, my lord, fie!

a soldier and afeard?

yet who would have thought

*the old man to have had
so much blood in him?*

The Thane of Fife

had a wife

where is she now?

What, will these hands ne'er be clean

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No more o' that my lord

No more o' that

you mar all with this starting

Here's the smell of the blood still

All the perfumes of Arabia

will not sweeten this little hand

Wash your hands

put on your nightgown

look not so pale

I tell you yet again, Banquo's buried

he cannot come out on's grave

To bed, to bed

there's a knocking at the gate

come, come, give me your hand

what's done cannot be undone

to bed, to bed, to bed