

BBC



Macbeth

Programme Notes



Feedback

We are always pleased to hear how you use our resources and how your own school performance of **Macbeth** has gone. Please send any feedback to:

BBC School Radio
3rd Floor Bridge House
MediaCityUK
M50 2BH

Or email us at:

teach.bbc@bbc.co.uk

Using the *Macbeth* videos

The videos on the *Macbeth* web pages use the BBC media player.

If you are using the resources in school you may need to create an exemption to your firewall.

If you are using Internet Explorer as your browser you will need to ensure it is a recent version. Other browsers - such as Firefox, Chrome or Safari - will also work.

Macbeth

based on the play by William Shakespeare

Contents

The programme titles in these Notes have been hyperlinked: click on the titles to access the content online.

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Introduction

*When shall we three meet again?
In thunder, lightning or in rain?*

Welcome to **Macbeth**...

Whatever your musical experience, this resource can help you and your Key Stage 2 pupils enjoy music in the classroom while exploring one of Shakespeare's most famous plays.

We've created a special adaptation of *Macbeth* which you can watch in eight short video episodes and we've written eight songs based on the story episodes - Nigel Pilkington is here to coach you, one song per programme - and we've also provided a playscript to download, which you can use to stage your own musical performance of the play.

The style of the songs includes raps and chants and ranges from blues to anthems to laments...with opportunities for two-part singing along the way...so something for everyone to enjoy!

Shakespeare set *Macbeth* in 11th century Scotland. Macbeth is the Thane of Glamis, a successful soldier and loyal to King Duncan. However, when he meets three strange creatures on a heath and they prophesy that he will become king Macbeth becomes ambitious for power...and his wife, Lady Macbeth, is determined he should do whatever is necessary to seize the crown.

Navigating the *Macbeth* website

Navigate the content using the navigation bar at the top of each page, which links to each of the songs plus a Video clips :

School Radio

KS2 Music: Macbeth

BBC Teach > School Radio > Music KS2 > Macbeth

Part 1 - Part 2 - Part 3 - Part 4 - Part 5 - Part 6 - Part 7 - Part 8 - Video clips

Each song has its own dedicated page on the site, where you can also find the episode of the story which accompanies it. There are a number of videos on each page:

The story video - use this to watch each episode of the story. The episodes relate the main events of Shakespeare's play and range from about 3 to 6 minutes in length.

The story



Episode 1 of the story

The tutorial player - use this video to learn the song. The tutorial is split into two parts so that you can break from the song to watch an episode of the story.

Tutorial: 'Sonic battle' - Part 1



Tutorial 1: Part 1 - join Nigel Pilkington to learn the song 'Sonic battle'

The song player: full vocal and backing track - once you are familiar with the song use the full vocal and backing track videos to really polish your performance. The videos includes all the words of the song on-screen.

Song: 'Sonic battle'



Song 1: 'Sonic battle' (vocal)

Song 1: 'Sonic battle' (backing)

NB Rather than use the video players to rehearse the songs you can download the audio for each song as an mp3 file from the individual web pages. Downloading the song audio will be particularly helpful if you are struggling with a slow internet connection or firewall issues in school.



Macbeth
Age 9 - 11 +

Curriculum links:

Macbeth is primarily a music resource for children aged 9 to 11. It has been written to fulfil objectives of the new Music curriculum at Key Stage 2 in England and equivalent curriculum requirements in other UK nations.

Additionally the resource has strong cross-curricular links to English / Literacy and the study of a play by William Shakespeare.

Credits:

Presenter: Nigel Pilkington

Composer: David Chilton

Lyrics: David Chilton / Neil Richards

Playscript: Neil Richards / Matt Costello

Lead vocalist: Roy Hamilton

Audio producers: Katherine Freeman (song tutorials) and John Taylor (drama episodes)

For the BBC: Andrew Barnes

Macbeth by Shakespeare

William Shakespeare was born in 1564 and spent his life in Stratford-upon-Avon and in London. **Macbeth** dates from 1606, three years after the death of Elizabeth I and the accession of James I.

Synopsis

Scotland in the 11th century. A group of Scottish rebels has joined forces with an invading Norwegian army to threaten King Duncan's kingdom. Macbeth - Thane of Glamis - and his friend Banquo lead those loyal to Duncan on the battlefield and their bravery ensures success.

Macbeth and Banquo leave the battlefield to meet King Duncan, but on their way they come across three strange creatures - the 'Weird Sisters' - who prophesy that Macbeth will become the Thane of Cawdor and one day will be the king. They also prophesy that Banquo's heirs will be kings.

Shortly after, Macbeth learns that he has indeed become the Thane of Cawdor...and so the prophesy appears to be coming true.

Macbeth shares the news of the prophesy with Lady Macbeth...and she is determined that when King Duncan arrives at their castle at Dunsinane to celebrate the victory he shall be killed so that Macbeth can take the crown.

Supporting online resources

On each page you will also find links to a variety of downloads intended to support your use of the videos. These are:

PDF downloads

The pdf files offer:

- this document - guidance on how to use the resources
- the *Pupils' pamphlet* - the lyrics for each song and some additional activities for pupils to complete
- the *Tutorial transcript* - a convenient way to read through the content of the tutorial audio
- the *Words for song* - the song as an individual page
- the *Music for song* - the vocal line of each song as music, including chords
- the *Playscript* - the text of our version of *Macbeth*, an ideal performance combining all the songs.

Audio / video downloads

These resources are particularly useful if you are having any issues using the video players. They enable you to download some of the key resources and use them offline. The downloads are:

- the *Tutorial audio* - download the mp3 files of Nigel teaching each of the songs
- the *Song audio* (full vocal) - download the mp3 file to sing along to the song
- the *Song audio* (backing track) - use this mp3 download once you have become familiar with the song
- *Song video* (full vocal) - sing along with the guide vocal and the lyrics on screen. It is in mp4 file format.
- *Song video* (backing track) - the video of the backing track. Again, it is in mp4 file format.

The audio / video downloads also include a .zip file offering all the music and **special sound effects** ('SFX') needed to put on a performance of the playscript.

How to use the content

We have tried to make this resource as flexible as possible so we hope you will find the way of using it that best works for you and your group. However, here are some suggestions that you may find useful...

The tutorial audio

The song tutorials are the key element for delivering the music learning of **Macbeth**. Each tutorial features a single song and pupils are guided by our vocal coach, Nigel Pilkington. Each tutorial is about 15 minutes long and has been split into two separate videos, with key timings marked beside the video player. The pace is lively so make sure you are ready to mediate the use of the video. Each tutorial has possible 'pause points' indicated in these Notes - a natural place to pause so that the group can take a break, either to go back over what they've learnt or to catch up with an episode of the story.

Note: in many tutorials the class will need to split into two groups at some stage - for example to sing the harmony and melody parts of a song together. Time is not given in the tutorials for arranging this grouping, so make sure you read the Notes for each tutorial carefully beforehand and ensure each member of the class understands which group they are in before commencing the tutorial video.

It is a good idea to print the words of each song from the PDF download section and distribute them before commencing. The lyrics for each song can be found in the Pupil Pamphlet (where they appear alongside other information and activities) or as individual files. Better still - project the words of each song on your IWB!

The song videos

Use the song videos once you have learnt the songs using the tutorial video. The full-vocal version is easy to join in singing alongside our vocalists. Use the backing track once your group is feeling really confident.

Both versions of the song video / audio can be downloaded so that they can be used offline.

Vocal warm-ups prior to each session

It is sensible to 'warm-up' before each session. On the Macbeth homepage Nigel invites you to join him for a **short vocal warm-up** that will help to prepare everyone for the main song tutorial video.

Additional warm-up activities that you can introduce yourself include:

Vowels: sing up and down a scale to the numbers 1 - 8, using B played on a chime bar as a starting note. Ask pupils to omit a number (eg '4') and sing it silently in their heads and challenge them to pitch the following note ('5') correctly. Change the number to be omitted and increase the omissions as the children progress.

Sing down a scale to 'Do you chew blue glue?', 'We three bees need trees', 'Chocolate and banana sponge' or other suitable combinations.

After singing down from C' - C, start the next scale one note higher and continue higher each time while it remains comfortable.

Consonants: 'Scrape your windscreen with your credit card'.

Tongue-twisters: (say or sing as four vowels) 'Red lorry, yellow lorry; red leather, yellow leather'.

Rhythmic chants: use a chant or a rap from *Macbeth* - such as the Weird Sisters' spell.

Other things to keep in mind when singing include:

Posture: encourage good posture by encouraging children to stand tall, knees loose and feet apart.

The singing face: encourage pupils to lift their face muscles by smiling. Humming phrases of songs will also encourage an unforced, well-blended sound.

Facial: smile - screw up the face - stick out tongue - chewing toffee - open mouth as widely as possible.

Breathing: encourage low breathing (that is without breathing into the chest and without raising the shoulders) by asking the children to imagine an inflatable ring around the waist. Breathe in silently through the mouth, causing the ring to inflate all the way round the middle - taking a drink of air that goes right down low, as if their tummy is a tank of air - hold - and then release the air slowly and silently through the mouth. As you breathe out count 1 to 5 slowly, then 1 to 10, controlling a steady release of air and increasing the time with practise.

Technical issues

If you are attempting to view the videos in a school location it is possible that your school's firewall will prevent the videos from playing. In these circumstances you will need to talk to your technical co-ordinator about adding exemptions to your firewall.

If you are experiencing problems you can also contact us at:

teach.bbc@bbc.co.uk

Macbeth - the main characters:

Macbeth: the Thane of Glamis, a successful soldier and initially loyal to King Duncan. Thereafter King of Scotland.

The Weird Sisters: three strange creatures who appear to be able to foretell events.

Lady Macbeth: eager to support her husband's ambition to become king.

King Duncan: King of Scotland. He names his son Malcolm as his heir.

Banquo: friend to Macbeth and loyal to King Duncan. The Weird Sisters foretell his descendants will be kings.

Malcolm: King Duncan's elder son and rightful successor to his father.

Donalbain: King Duncan's younger son.

Macduff: the Thane of Fife, loyal to King Duncan. His family are killed by Macbeth.

Lennox, Angus, Ross: noblemen loyal to King Duncan who join Malcolm's cause.

Fleance: son to Banquo.

Assassins: Macbeth's henchmen who kill Banquo...but fail to kill his son, Fleance.

1

Sonic battle

Focus

Singing in unison, moving mainly by step

Musical style

Steady march with rap

You will need...

Untuned percussion instruments for the follow-up activities

Before the programme

Warm up the body for singing. Stand up and rotate the shoulders backwards, forwards, together and individually.

Be ready to split into two groups for the rap and percussion work.

Listening music

An excerpt from the *Symphony No 5* by Beethoven, *1st movement*. Listen to this famous passage from the symphony. Can pupils hear the 'sequence' - the pattern of notes repeated at different pitches (ie higher and lower)?



Sonic battle

Episode 1 of the story

Scotland in the 11th century. A group of Scottish rebels has joined forces with an invading Norwegian army to threaten King Duncan's kingdom. Macbeth - the Thane of Glamis - leads the loyal Scottish soldiers on the battlefield, supported by his friend Banquo. Their bravery ensures success.

After the battle Macbeth and Banquo go to see King Duncan. On the way they meet three strange creatures - the 'Weird Sisters' - who appear to be able to foretell events. They prophesy that Macbeth will become Thane of Cawdor and thereafter King of Scotland ... and they tell Banquo that one day his heirs will also be kings.

Duration of video: 04 17

http://teach.files.bbc.co.uk/schoolradio/music/macbeth/episode_01.pdf

The tutorials for 'Sonic battle'

Learning the song 'Sonic battle':

- Learn Verse 1
- Learn Verse 2
- Learn the rap. Split into two groups - one group chants the rap and the other shouts out the accented words (see the underlined words on the song sheet)
- Learn the middle section
- Add body percussion to the instrumental section. Learn an 8-bar pattern using knee slaps and hand claps.

Tutorial audio and transcript as single files

http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/schoolradio/macbeth/music/song_01_tutorial.mp3

http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/schoolradio/pdfs/macbeth/01_sonic_battle.pdf

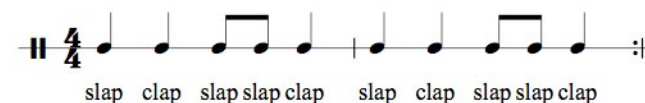
Download the song 'Sonic battle' as audio (mp3) files

[Download the vocal version](#)

[Download the backing track](#)

Follow up activities

1. For the percussion section, begin by learning the 2-bar phrase below:



Then, split into two groups and perform as follows:

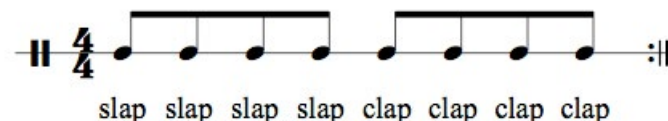
Group 1: 2-bar phrase

Group 2: 2-bar phrase

Group 1: 1-bar phrase

Group 2: 1-bar phrase

Groups 1 & 2: 1-bar phrase + new 1-bar phrase



2. When pupils are confident with this pattern, try transferring the rhythms from body percussion to untuned percussion. For example, they could use tambours for the knee slaps and cymbals for the hand claps.

3. Practise the song making sure everyone is clear about which sections they need to sing. Think about dynamics. Perhaps the armies are approaching from a distance, so children could start each verse quietly and end loudly on 'They/you will not pass'.

Literacy links

Reading and writing:

Look at a selection of recipe books, then make a list of gruesome ingredients for the magical potion. The 'Weird Sisters' use fenny snake (ie from a 'fenland' area), toe of frog and tongue of dog. What else could be added? Set out the method, step-by-step, then compile the recipes into a class book!



Episode 2 of the story

When Macbeth and Banquo arrive at King Duncan's camp they learn from the nobles Lennox, Ross and Angus that the rebel Thane of Cawdor is under sentence of death and his title has been awarded to Macbeth. Thus Macbeth is now Thane of Cawdor ... and the prophecy of the 'Weird Sisters' appears to be coming true.

Macbeth begins to wonder if the second part of the prophecy might also come true ... but when King Duncan arrives he names his son Malcolm as his heir. Macbeth departs for his castle at Dunsinane to ready it for a victory celebration.

Duration of video: 04 15

http://teach.files.bbc.co.uk/schoolradio/music/macbeth/episode_02.pdf

The tutorials for 'Destiny'

Learning the song 'Destiny':

- The opening chant
- Learn Verse 1
- Learn Verse 2
- Learn the Middle 8
- Learn overlapping the chant with the verses in groups

Tutorial audio and transcript as single files

http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/schoolradio/macbeth/music/song_02_tutorial.mp3
http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/schoolradio/pdfs/macbeth/02_destiny.pdf

Download the song 'Destiny' as audio (mp3) files

[Download the vocal version](#)
[Download the backing track](#)

Follow up activities

1. Recap the Italian terms used for dynamics: *piano* (quiet), *forte* (loud) and *crescendo* (gradually getting louder). Agree hand signs to indicate dynamics, then practise performing the song following hand signs from a conductor (teacher or child).
2. Learn to play the chant. Tell children to start on note B, and use the notes B, C# and D. Allow time for children to work out the notes in pairs, or use the musical notation if you prefer:



Encourage children to use two beaters, alternating left then right.

3. Still working in pairs and using the notes B, C#, D, E and F#, ask children to explore the pattern with different starting notes. Remind children that repeating a pattern at a different pitch is called a 'sequence'.
4. Working in groups of four and using the notes B, C#, D, E and F#, ask children to compose a dark piece of music for the 'Weird Sisters'. Children should use sequences, a drone on the note B and some untuned percussion. Record each group's music and use it to accompany the literacy activity below.

Literacy links

Speaking and listening:

In groups of three read and rehearse the Weird Sisters' opening text, beginning 'When shall we three meet again' through to 'There to meet with Macbeth' (you can find it in the Pupil's pamphlet).

Perform the text with the musical accompaniments you have created (see above).

Focus

Minor key; chromatic sequence

Musical style

Pop anthem with chant

You will need

Tuned and untuned percussion instruments (notes B, C#, D, E and F#) for the follow-up activities

Before the programme

Warm up the voice by singing 'ooh' as a siren, moving up and down in pitch in response to your hand movements. Start with a small range of pitch and gradually develop this to a wider range.

Familiarise yourself with the song to enable you to support children while learning. Identify a small group of children ready to perform the chant.

Listening music

The Hall of the Mountain King by Edvard Grieg. Can pupils hear how the melody moves up the minor scale?



3

Temptation

Focus

Swing and syncopated rhythms

Musical style

Blues

You will need

Tuned percussion instruments (notes C, E at, F, F#, G, B at) for the follow-up activities.

Listening music

Find some examples of vocalists singing 'scat' on YouTube - there are some wonderful examples by the likes of Louis Armstrong (eg 'Dinah') or Ella Fitzgerald (eg 'One note Samba'). Be aware that these videos may display adverts and comments from other users.

We've included a brief snippet of Balloo scatting with King Louie in the song 'I wanna be like you' from Disney's classic 1967 film *The Jungle Book*. Again, the full song can be found on YouTube.

3

Temptation

Episode 3 of the story

Lady Macbeth is determined that King Duncan must die that night. Macbeth is reluctant at first but is persuaded to do the deed. After the celebratory banquet Macbeth is alone when he sees a bloodied dagger, its handle turned towards his hand.

Macbeth murders Duncan in his bed but brings the knives away with him. Lady Macbeth must return the knives to the bed-chamber and then daub the king's sleeping servants with blood to make it look as if they committed the crime.

Duration of video: 03 31

http://teach.files.bbc.co.uk/schoolradio/music/macbeth/episode_03.pdf

The tutorials for 'Temptation'

Learning the song 'Temptation':

- Verse 1
- Verse 2
- Verse 3
- Try 'scat' singing - vocal improvisation - using nonsense words such as doo-be-doo, bad-u-wa, etc

Tutorial audio and transcript as single files

http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/schoolradio/macbeth/music/song_03_tutorial.mp3
http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/schoolradio/pdfs/macbeth/03_temptation.pdf

Download the song 'Temptation' as audio (mp3) files

[Download the vocal version](#)

[Download the backing track](#)

Follow up activities

1. Some children (and teachers!) may feel self-conscious about scat singing. To break the ice, begin by exploring the range of sounds the voice can make. Think back to the Weird Sisters. What sort of sounds might they have made? Perhaps, laughing, cackling, whispering, whining, etc.
2. Use audio editing software - such as Audacity or Garage-band - to record individuals using their voices in this way, then explore ways of combining and changing the sounds by adding delay or echo effects. You could also add this recording to the group compositions created in the session for 'Destiny' (follow-up activities - see previous page).
3. Have another go at scat singing with the recording. Warm up by improvising as a whole class, then in smaller groups before asking for brave volunteers!
4. Try improvising using tuned instruments. Use the notes C, E flat, F, F#, G and B flat, as these fit quite well with the music. Tell children to start and end with the home note (C), to use dotted, or swing, rhythms and to move by step and leap.

Literacy links

Writing:

Lady Macbeth is extremely ambitious and in our adaptation of the play tells her husband to 'be a tiger not a dove'. What other metaphors might she have used? Ask children to send a message to Macbeth urging him to seize the moment and do as she wishes.

Speaking and listening:

Have you ever tried to persuade someone to do something against their wishes? Has anyone tried to persuade you to do something you didn't want to do? How did this make you feel? How do you think Macbeth feels? Is it OK to make someone do something against their will if it's for their own benefit?



Episode 4 of the story

King Duncan's body is quickly discovered. The nobles go to inform Duncan's sons - Malcolm and Donalbain - of the murder and when Macbeth arrives he says he has already given summary justice to the king's servants. Left alone, the nobles swear to root out any treachery, while Malcolm and Donalbain decide their best option is to flee Dunsinane altogether.

Macbeth is crowned king, but feels insecure while Banquo still lives (because of the prophecy that Banquo's descendents will become kings). So he engages two henchmen to kill both Banquo and his son Fleance.

Duration of video: 04 56

http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/schoolradio/pdfs/macbeth/episode_04.pdf

The tutorials for 'Assassins'

Learning the song 'Assassins':

- Chorus
- Verse 1
- Verse 2
- Chorus
- Go over the words to Verse 1. Clap as you rap. Then just clap.
- Verse 3. Listen for the accented words: 'like', 'business', 'certain', 'vroom' (in line 1) and 'any', 'wants', 'we', 'there' (in line 4).

Tutorial audio and transcript as single files

http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/schoolradio/macbeth/music/song_04_tutorial.mp3
http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/schoolradio/pdfs/macbeth/04_assasins.pdf

Download the song 'Assassins' as audio (mp3) files

[Download the vocal version](#)
[Download the backing track](#)



Follow up activities

1. Using tuned instruments, learn to play the chorus. Tell children to start on note C, and use the notes A, B and C. Allow time for children to work out the notes in pairs, or use the musical notation if you prefer:



If using tuned percussion, encourage children to use two beaters, alternating left then right.

2. 'Timbre' is a musical term to describe different tone qualities in instruments and voices. The speaking and listening activity below explores vocal timbre. To explore instrumental timbre, try to play the simple chorus pattern on as many different instruments as possible. Children could try different timbres (often called 'voices') on keyboards and other musical instruments if possible. Record examples of the pattern with different timbres, then play back and ask children to identify and discuss the timbre.

Literacy links

Speaking and listening:

Take a phrase from the rap - eg 'And if anybody wants to know, we was never there'. Try saying it in as many different ways as you can - a 'posh' voice, operatic voice, half-asleep voice, etc.

Speaking and listening:

In pairs one child is a newspaper reporter, sent to cover the murders at Dunsinane. Each partner should think about questions to ask key witnesses and how to turn their responses into quotes for an article. Remind them to start with a short, eye-catching headline. Record interviews for playback and discussion.

Focus

Timbre

Musical style

Latin-style rap and chorus

You will need

Tuned instruments (notes A, B and C) for the follow-up activities

Before the programme

Warm up voices with some tongue-twisters. Try singing 'Very well, very well, very well, well, well' to the well-known tune from Rossini's opera *William Tell* (finale). Repeat several times, gradually getting higher.

Be ready to split into two groups.

Listening music

The finale from the *Overture* to Rossini's opera *William Tell*.

5

Witches' brew

Focus

Counter-melody

Musical style

Latin-style dance and rap

You will need

Untuned percussion instruments for the follow-up activities

Before the programme

Good breathing is essential in this song to support the higher notes. To make children aware of this, ask them to move their stomach muscles in and out without breathing. Then, breathe in for four beats - feeling the ribs expanding outwards - and out for four beats, keeping the ribs engaged for as long as possible.

Be ready to split into two groups for Verse 2, which has a counter-melody.

Listening music

Find some examples of famous songs with counter-melodies - eg 'Help!' by The Beatles.

5

Witches' brew

Episode 5 of the story

Banquo and Fleance are returning to Dunsinane after a day's hunting when they are intercepted by the two assassins. They kill Banquo ... but Fleance manages to escape.

That evening there is a banquet at Dunsinane to celebrate the Macbeths' coronation. The assassins return to tell Macbeth of their failure ... and Macbeth is confronted by Banquo's ghost (or so he believes). Later Macbeth reflects on the fact that Macduff was not present at the celebration.

Duration of video: 05 55

http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/schoolradio/pdfs/macbeth/episode_05.pdf

The tutorials for 'Witches' brew'

Learning the song 'Witches' brew':

- Verse 1
- Verse 2 and counter-melody
- Middle 8
- Rap
- Verse 3

Tutorial audio and transcript as single files

http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/schoolradio/macbeth/music/song_05_tutorial.mp3

http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/schoolradio/pdfs/macbeth/05_witches_brew.pdf

Download the song 'Witches brew' as audio (mp3) files

[Download the vocal version](#)

[Download the backing track](#)

Follow up activities

1. Practise singing the song, in particular the second verse and counter-melody. Go over the counter-melody again with the class, then try singing this with the recording. Practise this several times, before splitting into two groups and trying the two parts together. Singing in two parts requires children to focus on their own part and listen to the other part at the same time. Make sure pupils don't cover their ears, as this won't help!

2. When all children are familiar with the melody and counter-melody, remind them to concentrate on singing through each phrase to keep the sound-quality consistent. Also, pay particular attention to diction - warm vowel sounds and clearly articulated consonants.

3. Ask pupils to enhance the recording by adding some untuned percussion - eg a guiro, cabassa, or bongos. Remind children to listen carefully - to keep in time with the recording - and to be careful not to play too loudly.

4. The lyrics of this song suggest dance movements. Ask groups to create a sequence of movements for part or all of the song, then perform with the recording.

Literacy links

Speaking and listening:

Macbeth goes to see the Weird Sisters because he wants to know more about his future. Imagine that you can ask the sisters three questions about the future. What would you ask and why?

Writing:

Extend the Witches' rap by writing another verse or two. Perform with the untuned percussion rhythms prepared above. Explore similes to describe the sisters in relation to all five senses: eg

The Weird Sisters look like...

The Weird Sisters smell like...

The Weird Sisters sound like...



Episode 6 of the story

An increasingly desperate Macbeth returns to the Witches for reassurance. They tell him to beware Macduff, but also that he cannot be harmed by anyone 'born of a woman'. Macbeth learns that Macduff has joined forces with Malcolm and vows to kill his wife and family.

Duration of video: 03 17

http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/schoolradio/pdfs/macbeth/episode_06.pdf

The tutorials for 'Dunsinane'

Listen to the opening of the song. What creates the mood of this lament? Listen for the smooth voices, tubular bell, low drum and quiet percussive sounds.

Learn the song 'Dunsinane':

- Chorus
- Verse 1
- Chorus
- Verse 2
- Chorus
- Recap on the Italian terms for getting louder and faster
- Verse 3
- Verse 4

Tutorial audio and transcript as single files

http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/schoolradio/macbeth/music/song_06_tutorial.mp3
http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/schoolradio/pdfs/macbeth/06_dunsinane.pdf

Download the song 'Dunsinane' as audio (mp3) files

[Download the vocal version](#)
[Download the backing track](#)

Follow up activities

1. The chorus of the song consists of several three-note patterns to fit the word 'Dunsinane'. Hum the chorus with children, asking them to internalise or hear the word 'Dunsinane' in their heads as they hum. Elicit that the word has three syllables and that the natural emphasis falls on the third syllable.

2. How many syllables are there in the phrase 'Lady Macbeth'? Where does the natural emphasis fall? Elicit that, while the phrase 'Lady Macbeth' can be said with different rhythms, the natural emphasis falls on the first and fourth syllables. Try different ways of clapping the name, then ask volunteers to try playing the phrase on a tuned percussion instrument, selecting from the notes E, F#, G, A and B.

3. Working in groups of four or five, ask pupils to compose their own lament. They should incorporate one or more 'Lady Macbeth' tunes, a drone on the note E, and start and end on the home note (E). When this is in place, ask each group to add some untuned percussion (eg a quiet cymbal or bell) and to think carefully about dynamics.

4. Allow time for all groups to practise their compositions, then perform to others. Encourage children to appraise each other's work, and discuss how each piece conveys the mood of a lament.

Literacy links:

Speaking and listening

Create a whole-class mood board to help children explore the word 'lament'. Use words, drawings, pictures, textiles, etc and encourage children to explain why they have chosen their particular item.

Use drama activities such as hot seating to explore the characters of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth. At this stage, children will most probably have more questions about the characters than answers, so you (or a colleague) may need to take the hot seat.

Focus

Music and mood

Musical style

Lament

You will need

Tuned and untuned percussion instruments (notes E, F#, G, A and B) for the follow-up activities

Before the programme

Warm up the body for singing by slowly rotating the head, first in one direction, then in the other. Use the breathing exercise from the 'Witches' brew' warm up, as good breathing is essential for this song too.

Be ready to divide into two groups to sing alternate lines in Verse 1.

Listening music

Find examples of other well-known Scottish laments - such as 'The flowers of the forest' - to compare to 'Dunsinane'.



7

Killing ground

Focus

Drones and fanfares

Musical style

Rap

You will need

Tuned percussion (notes F, G, A, C and D) and recorders (optional) for the first follow-up activity; keyboards for the second.

Before the programme

Get young mouths moving by asking the children to write the word 'Macbeth' in the air with their tongues!

Be ready to divide into two groups to explore the drone and pentatonic scale.

Listening music

Find some other examples of fanfares in classical and popular music - eg 'Fanfare for the common man' by Aaron Copland. What characterises a fanfare?

7

Killing ground

Episode 7 of the story

Lady Macbeth's servants have summoned a doctor and they watch as she sleepwalks through her rooms in the castle.

Macbeth's remaining supporters desert to Malcolm's cause and when his army approaches Dunsinane Macbeth prepares for battle.

Duration of video: 04 28

http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/schoolradio/pdfs/macbeth/episode_07.pdf

The tutorials for 'Killing ground'

Learning the song 'Killing ground':

- Chorus
- Verse 1
- Chorus
- Verse 2
- Chorus
- Verse 3
- Chorus

The final two tutorials are a little shorter than the others - so there is no invitation from Nigel to break the tutorial sessions in two. Indeed, you may wish to combine the last tutorials in a single session.

Tutorial audio and transcript as single files

http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/schoolradio/macbeth/music/song_07_tutorial.mp3
http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/schoolradio/pdfs/macbeth/07_killing_ground.pdf

Download the song 'Killing ground' as audio (mp3) files

[Download the vocal version](#)

[Download the backing track](#)

Follow up activities

1. Listen to some trumpet fanfares - there's plenty to choose from on YouTube. Then ask children to compose their own short fanfare. The fanfare will be based on the chords E minor (E, G, and B) and D major (D, F# and A). Use the following chord sequence, or make up your own if you prefer:



Organise children in pairs (one keyboard per pair). The child on the left should play the chords and the child on the right should create the fanfare tune, using the chord notes. Advise children to start and end the tune on the home note (E), to use repeated notes and, if possible, to select trumpet or other brass sounds.

Literacy links

Reading

Have a look at some of the text in *Macbeth* and discuss how language has changed since Shakespeare's time. For example, in Act V, Scene 6, Macduff says:

*Make all our trumpets speak; give them all breath,
Those clamorous harbingers of blood and death.*

Compare this with the chorus of the song:

*Hear them trumpets? Feel their breath?
That's the harbinger of death!*

How else might we convey this message?



Episode 8 of the story

On the battlefield Macbeth believes himself to be invincible. Finally he is confronted by Macduff and the full meaning of the Witches' prophecy becomes apparent.

Duration of video: 04 34

http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/schoolradio/pdfs/macbeth/episode_08.pdf

The tutorials for 'Finale'

Warm up voices by singing pentatonic scales. Sing each scale to a different vowel sound (air, ee, ah, o and oo), singing the whole scale in one breath. Gradually get higher each time. For example, you could begin with a pentatonic scale beginning on C: C, D, E, G, A, G, E, D, C.

Learning the song 'Finale':

- In Verse 1 the pupils play the melody of Finale and / or the *ostinati* composed (see follow-up activities)
- Verse 2
- Verse 3

The tutorial ends with an invitation to make sure you let us know how your own performance has gone. We'd be delighted to hear from you at: teach.bbc@bbc.co.uk

Tutorial audio and transcript as single files

http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/schoolradio/macbeth/music/song_08_tutorial.mp3
http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/schoolradio/pdfs/macbeth/08_finale.pdf

Download the song 'Finale' as audio (mp3) files

[Download the vocal version](#)
[Download the backing track](#)

Follow up activities

1. Extend the work on the pentatonic scale to produce a whole class composition in *rondo* form. Working in groups, ask pupils to join together the *ostinati* composed earlier to form a longer melody. Ask each group in turn to perform its melody to the class, while the rest of the class sing or play a drone on F. Which group has the most memorable melody? Let's call this Group A. Name the other groups B, C, D, etc. A *rondo* follows a set pattern: eg A, B, A, C, A, D, A, etc. Perform the whole-class *rondo*, starting and ending with Group A.

2. Revisit songs from the series and remind children about the musical elements: pitch, duration, dynamics, tempo, timbre, texture and silence. Brainstorm questions in relation to each musical element to help children know how to improve their performance. For example:

Pitch	Are we singing in tune?
Duration	How do we know when to come in?
Dynamics	Are we singing too loudly or too quietly?
Tempo	Are we rushing or singing too slowly?
Timbre	Should we sing 'sweetly' ... or like pirates?
Texture	Do we sing in unison or in two parts?
Silence	Are we quiet and ready to start singing?

Literacy links

Speaking and listening:

'Finale' is a reflective song. Through discussion, make a list of the key events in the play that led to Macbeth's downfall. Ask children to write each event on a yellow sticky. Then, working in small groups, arrange the events in order of importance. Discuss differences in opinion and encourage children to justify their viewpoint.

Focus

Pentatonic scale

Musical style

Ballad

You will need

Tuned instruments (notes F, G, A, C and D) for Verse 1 and follow-up activities

Listening music

Find other examples of well-known music that use the pentatonic scale - there are plenty of them...in many different genres. One famous example is the hymn 'Amazing Grace' - a favourite of bagpiper's all over the world!

