

Text Structure and Language Features: Example 1

Text Structure - Narrative

Orientation - includes setting and introduces main characters

Initial complication

Further complication

Further complication

Further complication

Resolution

Coda

MACBETH, THE KILLER KING

A long time ago there was a brave soldier who lived in Scotland with his wife, Lady Macbeth. Macbeth had fought bravely for his country and his King, Duncan and was respected by everyone, including his best friend, another brave and honorable soldier called Banquo. Lady Macbeth was very proud of her husband, but she was also very ambitious and wanted him to get more power and glory.

One dark night Macbeth and Banquo were travelling home after a battle. A fierce thunderstorm was raging around them. Suddenly, as they turned a corner, they saw a group of three terrifying witches huddled around a cauldron full of evil-smelling liquid. The witches called out to Macbeth, telling him that one day he would be King of Scotland and Banquo would be the father of kings. Macbeth and Banquo did not believe them, as Duncan was healthy and had two sons. Macbeth told his wife about the prophecy of the witches and she listened very carefully.

A short time later, King Duncan came to stay at Lord and Lady Macbeth's castle. Lady Macbeth wanted her husband to be King. "You're too weak," she said scornfully. "If you want the best for us, you must have more ambition. You can't be kind. You must be ruthless. Here's a dagger. Go and kill the King!" She had persuaded Macbeth to stab Duncan to death, making him forget all his loyalty to his King. He was gradually turning into a monster. When Duncan's sons found out about their father's murder, they left Scotland, and Macbeth, the noble warrior, was given the King's crown. He was now the killer king.

Macbeth realised that Banquo might blame him for what had happened and he did not want him ever to be the father of kings, so he arranged for two ruffians to kill Banquo and his son, Fleance. However, although Banquo was murdered, Fleance escaped. Macbeth wanted everyone to think all was well, so he held a huge feast to celebrate being king. Everyone was drinking, eating and laughing, when suddenly Macbeth gasped with horror. Banquo's ghost was pointing at him from the end of the great hall, but only he could see it. Macbeth was being haunted. He decided to ask the witches what to do.

The witches told him that he couldn't be killed by anyone who was born from a woman, and that he would not die until the forest of Birnam moved to his castle. Macbeth relaxed, as he thought this was impossible. Little did he know! By now, several people had realised that Macbeth was no longer a noble warrior and that he had killed Duncan. Malcolm and Duncan began to form an army to take the King's crown away from Macbeth. When Macbeth found out that his friend Macduff, with whom he had fought many battles, had joined Malcolm's army he flew into a rage and sent a murderer to kill Lady Macduff and her children. This time, even Lady Macbeth thought he had gone too far. Lady Macbeth went mad from guilt and kept thinking she was seeing blood everywhere. At last she collapsed and died. Macbeth's life was falling apart.

The armies led by Malcolm and Macduff gathered and attacked Macbeth. They hid behind tree branches which they carried, until they were right up to the castle. Birnam wood had moved! Macduff was full of rage and grief when he found out that Macbeth had caused the murder of Lady Macduff and their children. Macduff was a man who had been born by Caesarean section, a special procedure used when the baby is too big for a normal birth, and the person who had done the operation was a man. He was not born from a woman. Macduff was the man whom Macbeth needed to fear. Full of fury, Macduff rushed at Macbeth, killing him. His wife's death was avenged. The killer king was dead.

Malcolm was crowned king of Scotland. The rightful rulers were returned to the throne of Scotland.

Language Features

Use of a variety of tenses

Use of word chains to build topic information, e.g. haunted, ghost, horror, murder

Use of action verbs, e.g. escaped, stabbed

Use of saying verbs, e.g. said, called out

Use of thinking verbs, e.g. thought, decided, realised

Use of complex verbal groups, e.g. found out, did not believe

Use of detailed noun groups, e.g. a group of three terrifying witches

Use of conjunctions, e.g. when, so

Use of pronouns to track the subject i.e. referencing, e.g. it, they, he

Use of adjectives, e.g. terrifying, killer, special

Use of adverbs and adverbial phrases, e.g. scornfully, from the battle, around the cauldron (to build circumstances of situation)

Use of direct speech, e.g. "You're too weak."

Use of empty subject, e.g. There was a brave soldier

Use of complex sentences, e.g. Macduff was a man who had been born by Caesarean section, a special procedure used when the baby is too big for a normal birth, and the person who had done the operation was a man.