

Crown or Curse: Leadership Lessons from Macbeth

Macbeth: Qualities of a Good Leader

Ashley Comstock, Margaret Salesky, Michael Kraus
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Grade Level	11th – 12th Grade	**Time Frame**	210 minutes
Subject	English/Language Arts	**Duration**	4 class periods
Course	A.P. Literature and Composition, British Literature, World Literature		

Essential Question

How do leadership qualities shape a leader's impact on history?

Summary

What are the qualities of a good leader? In this lesson, students will analyze the characteristics of leadership in William Shakespeare's "Macbeth" compared to those of famous historical leaders to determine how they contribute to success, downfall, or maintaining power. Students use excerpts from the original "Macbeth" as mentor texts throughout the lesson. Through the Honeycomb Harvest strategy, students evaluate and compare leadership qualities, considering factors such as ambition, morality, and decision-making.

Snapshot

Engage

Students will collaborate in pairs to sort and connect famous world leaders with leadership characteristics using Honeycomb Harvest cards; then they will share and discuss their grouping choices with partners and the whole class.

Explore

Students will analyze leadership qualities in soliloquies from Macbeth by watching video performances of both Lady Macbeth and Macbeth, using categorical highlighting to identify passages demonstrating moral courage, loyalty, and self-determination, and participating in class discussion.

Explain

Students will complete a Predict-View-Reflect activity about leadership traits by predicting qualities of community and Oklahoma leaders, watching and taking notes on an interview with Rep. Alonso-Sandoval, then engaging in reflection and class discussion.

Extend

Students will complete another Honeycomb Harvest activity connecting Macbeth characters to leadership qualities, discuss their work with partners, and reflect using the Triangle-Square-Circle strategy during class discussion.

Evaluate

Students will write a comparative analysis paragraph about leadership qualities shared between either Macbeth or Lady Macbeth and a historical leader of their choice, using the CER-ER (Claim-Evidence-Reasoning) strategy to organize their ideas with textual evidence from the play.

Standards

Oklahoma Academic Standards for English Language Arts (Grade 12)

12.3.R.3: Students will analyze how authors use key literary elements to contribute to meaning and interpret how themes are connected across texts.
12.3.R.6: Students will comparatively analyze the structures of texts (e.g., compare/contrast, problem/solution, cause/effect, claims/counterclaims/evidence) and content by inferring connections among multiple texts and providing textual evidence to support their conclusions.

Attachments

- CER-ER Rubric—Crown or Curse - Spanish.docx
- CER-ER Rubric—Crown or Curse - Spanish.pdf
- CER-ER Rubric—Crown or Curse.docx
- CER-ER Rubric—Crown or Curse.pdf
- CER-ER—Crown or Curse - Spanish.docx
- CER-ER—Crown or Curse - Spanish.pdf
- CER-ER—Crown or Curse.docx
- CER-ER—Crown or Curse.pdf
- Crown-or-Curse—Leadership-in-Macbeth.pptx
- Honeycomb Harvest—Crown or Curse - Spanish.docx
- Honeycomb Harvest—Crown or Curse - Spanish.pdf
- Honeycomb Harvest—Crown or Curse.docx
- Honeycomb Harvest—Crown or Curse.pdf
- Predict-View-Reflect—Crown or Curse - Spanish.docx
- Predict-View-Reflect—Crown or Curse - Spanish.pdf
- Predict-View-Reflect—Crown or Curse.docx
- Predict-View-Reflect—Crown or Curse.pdf
- Soliloquy Excerpts—Crown or Curse - Spanish.docx
- Soliloquy Excerpts—Crown or Curse - Spanish.pdf
- Soliloquy Excerpts—Crown or Curse.docx
- Soliloquy Excerpts—Crown or Curse.pdf
- Triangle-Square-Circle—Crown or Curse - Spanish.docx
- Triangle-Square-Circle—Crown or Curse - Spanish.pdf
- Triangle-Square-Circle—Crown or Curse.docx
- Triangle-Square-Circle—Crown or Curse.pdf

Materials

- Lesson Slides
- Honeycomb Harvest handout
- Macbeth: Soliloquy Excerpts handout
- Predict-View-Reflect handout
- Triangle-Square-Circle handout
- CER-ER handout
- CER Rubric handout
- Pens/Pencils
- Scissors
- Highlighters

30 minutes

Engage

Use the attached **Lesson Slides** to introduce the lesson to students by displaying **slide 2**. Present the lesson's essential question and learning objectives on **slides 3** and **4** to the extent you feel necessary.

Teacher's Note: Lesson Preparation

Before you begin the lesson, copy and cut out enough sets of Honeycomb Harvest hexagonal cards for each group of student pairs. (Alternatively, you can assign student groups to cut out their own cards.) Print on heavier paper, such as card stock, and laminate the cards to ensure that they last longer than just this one lesson. Use envelopes or paper clips to organize the sets of cards.

When you finish this activity and collect the cards, instruct students to separate the cards into two stacks: Leaders and Leadership Qualities. This step will facilitate reuse of the cards in the Extend section.

Display **slide 5.** Introduce students to the Honeycomb Harvest strategy. Group students into pairs and distribute the **Honeycomb Harvest cards** to them. Explain that collaborative groups will work to group famous world leaders with leadership characteristics. If students need scaffolded instructions, display **slide 6** to share an example. As they work, monitor and ask probing questions to help them determine why they chose these connections.

Teacher's Note: Honeycomb Harvest

The Honeycomb Harvest is similar to the Card Sort strategy but provides more flexibility for students to show their thinking. In this case, Honeycomb Harvest can demonstrate students' prior knowledge about logos, ethos, and pathos. If your class struggles with the activity, be prepared to share other examples for each mode of persuasion.

When you see that students have had enough time to group their hexagonal cards, display **slide 7** and use the Elbow Partners strategy for nearby groups to explain and justify their sorting. Follow with a whole class discussion. Encourage questions and prompt student discussion.

50 minutes

Explore

Display **slide 8** and hand out the *Macbeth:* Soliloquy Excerpts. Explain that students will see and hear acclaimed performances of a soliloquy first of Lady Macbeth and then of Macbeth. If necessary, remind students that a soliloquy is speaking one's thoughts out loud either alone or regardless of any hearers as is often the convention in a play. Following each performance, students will analyze each excerpt for leadership qualities.

Display the video embedded in **slide 9**, asking students to focus on general comprehension of the excerpt. (If you prefer, display **slide 10** for the embedded video of a contemporary version of Lady Macbeth's soliloquy.) Then display **slide 11** and explain the Categorical Highlighting strategy in which students will look for and annotate information that fits in categories of leadership. Pass out highlighters, instructing students to mark passages in the excerpt with highlighter colors that conform to the following three leadership traits: A) Moral Courage, B) Loyalty, and C) Decision Making. Allow several minutes for students to analyze the first excerpt.

Teacher's Note

You may prefer to use the Why-lighting strategy both here (unhide **slide 12**) and following Macbeth's soliloquy (unhide **Slide 15**), which allows for themes to develop naturally; however, it may require more teacher direction. Categorical Highlighting requires you give them the categories up front and can help students focus tightly on themes like tone.

Display **slide 13** and repeat the process for Macbeth's soliloquy. After students have viewed the video, display **slide 14** and repeat the Categorical Highlighting for Macbeth's excerpt. Explain to students that as they reread the excerpts, they will again identify leadership traits from the text using the Categorical Highlighting or Why-lighting strategy. Assign students to complete the activity, then display **slide 16** and facilitate a whole class discussion, asking "What do the soliloquies reveal about the leadership traits that both Macbeth and Lady Macbeth possess?"

30 minutes

Explain

Display **slide 17** and distribute the **"Predict-View-Reflect"** handout. Instruct students to complete the "Predict" column using the prompts in that column. Use the transition questions on this slide:

- What do you already know about the leadership traits of leaders in your communities?
- What traits do you value in a leader?
- What traits are essential for Oklahoma leaders?

When students have completed the "Predict" column of the handout, display **slide 18**. Explain to students that Rep. Arturo Alonso-Sandoval is an Oklahoma State Representative. Ask students to fill out the "View" column of the handout while they watch the video. Display the video embedded in **slide 18**. After the video, facilitate a whole-group discussion about ideas encountered in the video. Then instruct the students to complete the "Reflect" column of the handout.

50 minutes

Extend

Teacher's Note

To prepare for this lesson, remove World Leaders hex cards and replace them with cards for only Lady Macbeth and Macbeth.

Display **slide 19**. Explain to students that they will be completing the Honeycomb Harvest again. During this round, ask the students to connect Lady Macbeth and Macbeth to Leadership Qualities. Redistribute just the leadership qualities from the Honeycomb Harvest hex cards to them. As they work, monitor and ask probing questions to help them determine why they chose these connections.

Have students then use the Elbow Strategy to talk with another group, comparing how that group constructed their honeycomb and contrasting their own work.

Display **slide 20**. Explain the Triangle-Square-Circle strategy and hand out copies of the **Triangle-Square-Circle** handout. Instruct students to complete the handout based on their thoughts from the activity and the lesson up to this point. Facilitate a whole group discussion.

50 minutes

Evaluate

Display **slide 21**. Introduce students to the writing prompt.

Prompt:

- Choose either Macbeth or Lady Macbeth.
- Select a famous historical leader who you believe either shares similarities or contrasts with your chosen character. The leader you choose may be one from the original Honeycomb Harvest or may be another famous leader. Write a paragraph comparing and contrasting the leadership traits of these two figures. Consider their ambitions, decision-making, strategies, and overall impact on their respective societies.

Example:

- If you choose Macbeth, you could compare him to Julius Caesar.
- If you choose Lady Macbeth, you could compare her to Elizabeth I.

Go to **slide 22**. Tell students that they will prepare for their response to the prompt by completing a CER-ER. Pass out copies of the **CER-ER** handout and discuss the CER-ER strategy as a class.

- The "C" stands for claim, the "E" stands for evidence, and the "R" stands for reasoning.
- The CER-ER instructional strategy assists students in identifying a claim along with evidence to support the claim and reasoning for the evidence.

Once students understand how to use CER-ER statements, they can begin brainstorming and organizing their ideas using the CER-ER graphic organizer. Remind students that the evidence they use must be from the text of the play. Students will work individually on their CER-ER.

Resources

- Bayraktar, Baris. (2023, October 24). *Great Performances - Macbeth (2010)* [Video]. Youtube.com. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xUKrxHUCmnU&ab_channel=Bar%C4%B1%C5%9FBayraktar
- Dench, Judi. (2019, October 17). *Macbeth by William Shakespeare* [Video]. Youtube.com. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7skhaOegpLA
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Categorical highlighting. Strategy. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/192
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Claim, evidence, reasoning (CER). Strategy. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/156
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Elbow partners. Strategy. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/116
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Honeycomb harvest. Strategy. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/61
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Triangle-square-circle. Strategy. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/65
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Why-lighting. Strategy. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/128
- Shakespeare, W. (1992). Macbeth. Wordsworth Classics.