

## Writing about the BIG IDEAS in 'Macbeth': Ambition

This resource has been designed to help you consider the BIG IDEAS explored by Shakespeare in 'Macbeth'. For Assessment Objective 1, you are required to:

*Read, understand and respond to texts. Students should be able to:* • maintain a critical style and develop an informed personal response • use textual references, including quotations, to support and illustrate interpretations

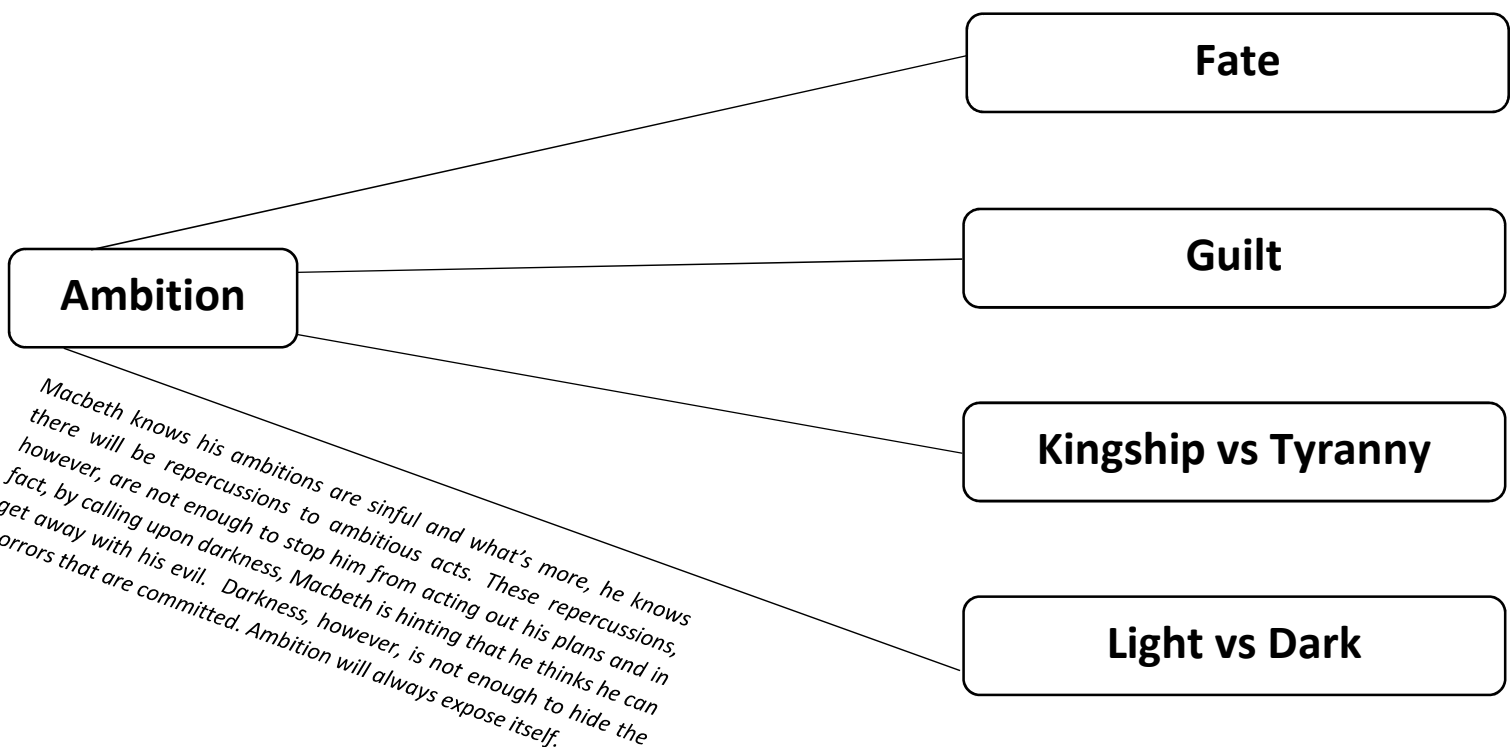
Exploring the BIG IDEAS will help you meet the requirements of this assessment objective. Complete the activities below in as much detail as possible to help you begin to consider how to discuss them in an exam answer.

**ACTIVITY 1:** Explain where the theme (Big Idea) of ambition appears in the play as annotations around the image. Link your answers to events and characters as well as Shakespeare's authorial intent. If you can, include examples from across the play.

# Ambition



**ACTIVITY 2:** Consider how Shakespeare connects ambition to other 'Big Ideas'/themes explored in the play. Explain in as much detail as possible. One has been done for you.



**ACTIVITY 3:** Complete the sentence stems that help you answer the following question: **How is ambition explored throughout the play?** Try and turn each sentence stem into a full paragraph by exploring your own interpretations of ambition. What do certain events, characters and motifs suggest to you? What does Shakespeare want his audiences to understand? Include quotations if you need to, but remember, you do not need to analyse language for AO1.

*As soon as the witches share their prophecies with Macbeth, audiences see ambition stirring within him. His request for stars to 'hide [their] fires' insinuates...*

*By the time King Duncan is dead, ambition is presented as something that has dangerous consequences. Macbeth is consumed by guilt, a price he has to pay for his ambition. This is seen when...*

*Once Macbeth has seized the crown, Shakespeare presents ambition as something that remains unfulfilled, for kingship is not enough for Macbeth. Once he is crowned, his ambition turns towards securing a lineage, or at the very least, eliminating other lineages that pose a threat to him. This unfulfilled ambition is dangerous because...*

*By the end of the play, Macbeth's ambitions have come undone. Through Macbeth's death, Shakespeare reminds audiences that ambition...*