



# Macbeth Words to Know

It can be challenging to understand a play if you don't fully understand the meaning of the words used in the text. Reading Shakespeare can feel especially challenging as he uses many words that are unfamiliar to modern-day readers. Here is a list of words from *Macbeth* that you need to know to better understand the play. To complete the chart:

1. Read the term in column 1.
2. Find the quote in column 2 and read the quote in context.
3. Respond to the prompts in columns 3 and 4.

Word	Text from the Play	Based on the textual context, define the word to the best of your ability.	After creating your own definition from the context, provide the dictionary definition here.
<b>benediction</b>	"To the succeeding royalty he leaves / The healing <b>benediction</b> . With this strange virtue." (4.3.157–158)		
<b>chastise</b>	"Hie thee hither, / That I may pour my spirits in thine ear / And <b>chastise</b> with the valor of my tongue / All that impedes thee from the golden round[.]" (1.5.12–15)		
<b>conjure</b>	"I <b>conjure</b> you by that which you profess— / Howe'er you come to know it— answer me." (4.1.50–51)		

<b>contriver</b>	"And I, the mistress of your charms, / The close <b>contriver</b> of all harms, / Was never called to bear my part, / Or show the glory of our art?" (3.5.6–9)		
<b>enterprise</b>	"What beast was't, then, / That made you break this <b>enterprise</b> to me?" (1.7.48)		
<b>folly</b>	"But I remember now / I am in this earthly world, where to do harm / Is often laudable, to do good sometime / Accounted dangerous <b>folly</b> ." (4.2.69–72)		
<b>forsworn</b>	"I put myself to thy direction and / Unspeak mine own detraction, here abjure / The taints and blames I laid upon myself, / For strangers to my nature. I am yet / Unknown to woman, never was <b>forsworn</b> , / Scarcely have coveted what was mine own[.]" (4.3.124–129)		
<b>haste</b>	"Come, let's make <b>haste</b> ; she'll soon be back again." (3.5.36)		
<b>incensed</b>	"I am one, my liege, / Whom the vile blows and buffets of the world / Have so <b>incensed</b> that I am reckless what / I do to spite the world." (3.11.110–113)		

<b>knell</b>	"I go, and it is done. The bell invites me. / Hear it not, Duncan, for it is a <b>knell</b> / That summons thee to heaven or to hell." (2.1.62–64)		
<b>mortified</b>	"Revenues burn in them, for their dear causes / Would to the bleeding and the grim alarm / Excite the <b>mortified</b> man." (5.2.3–5)		
<b>pernicious</b>	"Where are they? Gone? Let this <b>pernicious</b> hour / Stand aye accursèd in the calendar!" (4.1.138–139)		
<b>sacrilegious</b>	"Confusion now hath made his masterpiece. / Most <b>sacrilegious</b> murder hath broke ope / The Lord's anointed temple, and stole thence / The life o' th' building!" (2.3.40–43)		
<b>tempest</b>	"Though his bark cannot be lost, / Yet it shall be <b>tempest-tossed</b> ." (1.3.24–25)		
<b>vulnerable</b>	"Let fall thy blade on <b>vulnerable</b> crests; / I bear a charmed life, which must not yield / To one of woman born." (5.8.11–13)		

RL.9–10.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language evokes a sense of time and place; how it sets a formal or informal tone).

L.11–12.4 Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on *grades 11–12 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.