**Notes about Macbeth**

The most important ideas are:

* Macbeth is a complex character who changes throughout the course of the play;
* He is clearly a brave warrior and leader at the start of the drama but he falls victim to the Witches' predictions. It is unclear whether they plant ideas in his mind or whether they simply highlight thoughts that he has already had;
* Having committed murder he finds himself caught in a spiral of evil from which he can see no escape;
* His actions become less heroic and more cowardly as he continues to murder and terrorise others in order to hold on to his power;
* Towards the end of the play, when he realises that he is doomed, he briefly returns to his old heroic self;
* Macbeth is: ambitious (He quickly becomes the more powerful Thane of Cawdor and then**murders his way to become and remain King of Scotland)**, brave ( At the start of the play, Macbeth shows that he is **a mighty warrior** when he leads the Scottish troops to victory over an invading force**. Macbeth regains some of his old bravery**, as he faces Macduff in single combat), changeable **(Macbeth keeps changing his mind about whether to murder Duncan or not) ,** guilty conscience (Throughout the play, **Macbeth is tormented by thoughts of the evil things he has done**. However, **he is caught in a spiral of evil** and does not seem able to stop himself) ;
* A king in Shakespeare's time was thought to rule by 'divine right'. This meant that God had chosen that person directly to rule over others;