

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S

MACBETH

RETOLD BY IMITATING THE DOG

"OUT, DAMNED SPOT" (THE DIFFERENCE!)

Can you recall the plot/character changes in ITD's Macbeth and complete the table to compare them to Shakespeare's original, and vice versa? How do the different plot points affect how you feel about the characters? Do they highlight particular themes, or make the story more or less relevant to a contemporary audience?

SHAKESPEARE'S MACBETH	ITD'S MACBETH
1.	The Macbeths are young, late teens/early twenties. They are street kids, working their way up from the bottom rungs of an organised crime empire. Macbeth is an orphan, who rescued Lady Macbeth from a life of sexual exploitation.
2. At the beginning of the play, Macbeth and Banquo are equal in status and titles. They have both fought heroically in battle, Macbeth especially so having killed the traitor MacDonwald.	
3.	When Macbeth first meets the witches, he is with Lady Macbeth. The witches tell Macbeth that he will be 'Capo (Thane) Cawdor', and thereafter 'Oyabun' (boss/leader). They tell Lady Macbeth that not she, but her children shall be Oyabun.
4. Lady Macbeth suggests the couple previously had a child: "I have given suck, and know how tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me". But there is no mention or appearance of any Macbeth children during the play, and indeed Macduff says later, after his own are killed, 'they have no children'.	
5.	As Macbeth works his way up the ranks, growing in status and power, Duncan begins to fear and suspect him. Duncan has also been eyeing up Lady Macbeth, which they have both noticed, and Macbeth feels bound to protect her.
6. Lady Macbeth loses her sanity, and is subsequently reported dead.	
7.	Unable to get through to the guards holding Lady Macbeth at Dunes Link Range, Macbeth drives across the city to check she's OK. He is followed by two of Malcolm's men out to kill him. When they arrive at the golf club, Macbeth sees that the men's car bears the number plate BRNM W0D. The faulty letters blacked out on the club's neon sign spell out 'Dun_s _in_ _an_e', thus making true the witches' prophecy.

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ANSWERS

1. There is little suggestion of the Macbeths' age in Shakespeare's text, although the play is often cast with older actors. Macbeth is already Thane of Glamis in the original, so a nobleman with land and titles.
2. Macbeth is at the bottom of the pecking order, and much lower in rank than Banquo who has been preparing Macbeth for greater things. Macbeth outshines Banquo in a gunfight near the beginning of the play, winning Duncan's admiration and igniting his meteoric trajectory.
3. When Macbeth first meets the witches, he is with his friend Banquo. They tell Macbeth that he will become Thane of Cawdor and thereafter King of Scotland. They tell Banquo that he will not be king, but he will beget kings.
4. Lady Macbeth becomes pregnant by Macbeth, after he has risen to the top of their criminal organisation. But she chooses not to tell him, beginning to imagine instead a life without him.
5. After Macbeth is made Thane of Cawdor, he and Lady Macbeth both begin to consider the rest of the witches' prophecy, and hatch a plot to kill Duncan and hasten the process of Macbeth becoming king.
6. Lady Macbeth attempts to escape from Macbeth and start a new life with their as yet unborn child, but is captured by Macbeth's men. She pretends to be mad in order to escape a second time, killing one of her guards in the process.
7. Malcolm & Macduff's army use boughs chopped from trees in Birnam Wood for camouflage as they close in on Dunsinane hill, making true the witches' prophecy.