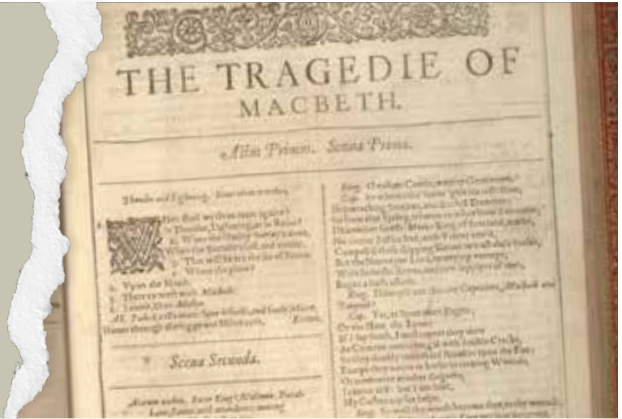


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The Play



Macbeth is one of Shakespeare's most intense tragedies and one of his shortest major plays. It was written to please the new king of England, James I (who reigned from 1603 to 1625) and was inspired partly by historical fact and partly by fiction.

1 The language used to talk about history uses special terminology.

- a Look at these expressions. Find them in the text and say what you think they mean. Use a dictionary if necessary.

to seize control	the ruler of Moray	a leader
to go into exile / to return from exile	the king of Scotland	a chief
to revenge <i>his</i> father	the descendants of Banquo	a clan
to be declared king	the Scottish royal family	
to be killed in battle	a Celtic princess	
to rule	a feast	
to bring peace and prosperity to the lands	Macbeth's rule	
to defeat		

- b  Read the text, then go to *Macbeth* online and do the vocabulary activity.

The real Macbeth

Macbeth and his wife are real figures in Scottish history. Mac Bethad, Macbeth in English, was born around 1005 and was the son of Finlay, the ruler of Moray, in the north-east of Scotland. Macbeth's father was killed by his nephew, Gillacomgain, who then seized control of Moray, forcing Macbeth to go into exile. Macbeth learned that some families were not happy with Gillacomgain as their leader and, in 1030, he returned to Moray to revenge his father, killing his cousin and his men at a feast. He then married Gruoch, his cousin's widow.

The king of Scotland, Duncan I, attacked Moray but was killed in battle, possibly by Macbeth who was defending his territory. Macbeth was declared king of Scotland, and Duncan's son, Malcolm, went into exile. Macbeth ruled Scotland and Moray for 14 years, bringing law, order and prosperity to the lands, and encouraging the spread of Christianity. Malcolm returned from exile, challenged Macbeth's rule, and defeated him in 1058, becoming Malcolm III, king of Scotland.

Shakespeare's sources

Shakespeare read about these events in the works of two authors: Raphael Holinshed (1529-1580), an English historian, and George Buchanan (1506-1582), a Scottish scholar and tutor to the young king, James VI of Scotland, who was to become James I of England. In *Holinshed's Chronicles* (1577), the story tells of Macbeth and Banquo meeting with three witches who speak to them and prophesy their coming to power. It describes how Macbeth, pushed by his wife's ambitious desire to be queen and with Banquo's full knowledge, kills King Duncan but then, later, murders Banquo, too, and how, after this bloodshed, "nothing prospered with the foresaid Makbeth" until he is killed by Macduff. Holinshed based his account on the *Scotorum Historiae*, written in 1527 by Hector Boece. Buchanan's account of Scottish history, *Rerum Scotticarum Historia* (1582), is largely based on Holinshed's work but adds some more psychological insights into the character of Macbeth, which served as further inspiration for Shakespeare.

James and Banquo

Soon after James VI of Scotland became James I of England in 1603, he took Shakespeare's theatre company under his patronage and changed their name from The Lord Chamberlain's Men to The King's Men. Shakespeare clearly felt it was important to express his gratitude for this patronage – they were called frequently to the Court to perform, and they received money to help the company survive. James was a Stewart and was theoretically a descendant of Banquo. Shakespeare, in fact, makes wide use of Holinshed's story while, at the same time, placing the character Banquo in a much better light. In his play, Banquo knows nothing about Macbeth's plan to kill the king. Shakespeare probably wrote and first staged the play in the year 1606, although the first written record of it being performed is in April 1611 at the Globe Theatre.

2 Answer the questions.

- Why is it true to say that Shakespeare's story of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth has its origins both in fact (true stories) and fiction (invented stories)?
- Write the names of the real people from Scottish history and add a few words to say who they were, as in the example.

Name in Shakespeare's Macbeth	Real name	Information
Macbeth	Mac Bethad	King of Scotland and Moray for 14 years in the early years of the 11th century
Lady Macbeth		
King Duncan		
Malcolm		
Banquo		

-  What do these dates refer to? Tell a partner.

1603 1606 1611

- Why did Shakespeare change Holinshed's story about Banquo?

The Main Characters

- 1 Look at the characters below and read the texts. Highlight the words referring to **relationships or role** and those referring to **personality** in two different colours.
- 2 Focus on the words referring to personality. Which characters do you think seem to be the most complex?

Duncan's family



King Duncan

is the king of Scotland at the beginning of the play. He is a good king who rewards his supporters and deals with his enemies swiftly. He is loved by his people and is considered to be honest, fair and virtuous.



Malcolm

is Duncan's son and the rightful heir to the throne of Scotland. In the first part of the play, he seems to be frightened, weak and uncertain. As the story progresses, he becomes stronger and more determined.



Donalbain

is Duncan's younger son and Malcolm's brother. Like Malcolm, he is frightened by events and fears he and his brother are in danger. He responds to the danger by running away.

Macbeth's household



Macbeth

is a brave general in Duncan's army and is the thane of Glamis. He is very ambitious. He becomes increasingly violent as the play progresses and grows indifferent to atrocities. When he becomes king, he is called a 'tyrant' rather than a leader.

Other nobility



Macduff

is a Scottish nobleman who does not accept Macbeth as king. He escapes to support Malcolm as the rightful heir to the throne and returns to lead the fight to get rid of Macbeth. He is filled with anger and vengeance for Macbeth's actions.



Lady Macduff

is Macduff's wife and a loving mother to their children. She is angry at her husband for having abandoned them, leaving them unprotected against Macbeth's violence.



Lennox

is a Scottish nobleman who at first stays with Macbeth but then joins Macduff in his attempt to overthrow him.



Ross

is another Scottish nobleman who suffers under Macbeth's tyranny.

Supernatural characters



The three witches

are described as "black and midnight hags". They cast spells and tell Macbeth his future. They represent evil and disorder, but they are also the cruel hand of fate which manipulates human destiny.



Lady Macbeth

is Macbeth's wife, and she and her husband seem deeply in love. When she hears she might become queen, she proves to be very ambitious. However, as the play progresses, she begins to suffer from feelings of guilt and eventually she goes mad.



The gentlewoman

attends Lady Macbeth and calls the doctor when she falls ill.



Seyton

is an officer who attends Macbeth.

Banquo's family



Banquo

is ambitious but, unlike Macbeth, he is also loyal, noble and virtuous.



Fleance

is Banquo's son.

Other characters



The doctor

observes Lady Macbeth in her state of madness.



The murderers

are a group of ruthless villains who Macbeth employs to murder Banquo, Fleance and Macduff's wife and children. They succeed in killing all of them except Fleance.



THE THREE WITCHES

The play opens with this scene of three horrible witches planning evil acts in a terrible thunderstorm. It underlines the importance of the supernatural in the play and sets the scene for what is to follow.

1 Before you read, predict.

- a Where will the scene be set?
- b What might the witches be planning?



2 Read the text. Use the notes on the right.

THE THREE WITCHES

ACT I SCENE I

(A desert place. *Thunder and lightning.*
Enter three WITCHES)

FIRST WITCH

- 1 When shall we three meet again
In thunder, lightning, or in rain?

SECOND WITCH

When the hurlyburly's done,
When the battle's lost and won.

THIRD WITCH

- 5 That will be ere the set of sun.

FIRST WITCH Where the place?

SECOND WITCH Upon the heath.

THIRD WITCH

There to meet with Macbeth.

FIRST WITCH I come, Graymalkin!

- 10 **SECOND WITCH** Paddock calls.

THIRD WITCH Anon.

ALL Fair is foul, and foul is fair:
Hover through the fog and filthy air.
(*Exeunt*)

The first witch asks the others when their next meeting will be, and if it will be in stormy weather.

The second witch says they will meet when the noise and confusion of war is over, and when the winners and losers of the battle have been decided.

The third witch says that it will be before the end of the day.

The first witch asks where to meet. The second says they will meet on the heath (an open field). The third witch says they will meet Macbeth there.

Attendant spirits in the shape of animals call the witches. The first witch is called by a grey cat, the second by a toad. The third witch says she's coming soon, presumably to her animal spirit.

The witches chant their spell, saying that what is beautiful is horrible and what is horrible is beautiful, and that they will fly through the mist and the storm.

Understand and Analyse

UNDERSTAND

- 1 Where is the scene set and where will the next scene with the witches be set?
- 2 What do these places have in common and what effect does that create?
- 3 Which of the following are part of the witches' plans? Choose the correct options.

a <input type="checkbox"/> to meet again soon	e <input type="checkbox"/> to go to the heath
b <input type="checkbox"/> to take part in the battle	f <input type="checkbox"/> to meet at night
c <input type="checkbox"/> to stop the war	g <input type="checkbox"/> to see Macbeth
d <input type="checkbox"/> to control the weather	h <input type="checkbox"/> to call their animals
- 4 Which other elements and imagery, apart from the witches themselves, add to the supernatural atmosphere?

ANALYSE

- 5 The way the witches speak adds to the sense of mystery. Find the following, add examples from the scene and explain the effect each one creates.

a Rhyming words

Examples:

.....

.....

.....

The effect of the rhyme

.....

b Use of opposites

Examples:

.....

.....


The effect of the opposites

.....

THINK

- 6 In Shakespeare's times, many people believed in witches, and many women were accused of witchcraft and executed. Given this information, think of how Elizabethan audiences would have reacted to this opening scene.

PRODUCE

- 7  How do you imagine a witch? In pairs, brainstorm words to describe witches then write a description.

Vocabulary Building

“A desert place”

The natural world

1 Look at these pictures of the Scottish landscape.

a Describe what you can see.

b Which setting would you choose for the opening scene of *Macbeth*? Say why.



2 Complete the sentences with natural world vocabulary.

a Geneva in Switzerland stands on the shore of a huge

b The Amazon is one of the longest in the world.

c The Mediterranean is a, whereas the Atlantic is an

d The largest in Africa is the Sahara.

e Asia is a, but China is a

f Many have died trying to climb Everest, the highest in the world.

g Etna, which is on the of Sicily, is an active

h Although there is a land mass at the south, the is entirely made up of ice.

3 What's the correct preposition? Fill in the gaps.

a When we travelled to Florida, we flew the Atlantic. Florida is 5 hours London, but 3 hours California.

b The ferry goes the channel at its narrowest point.

c The road goes all the way Loch Lomond.

d Australia is the southern hemisphere, while Indonesia is the equator.

e Walk the river bank until you reach the farmhouse.

f Death Valley in California is one of the hottest places Earth, but the coldest place the world is in Antarctica.

4 Go to *Macbeth* online and do the vocabulary worksheet.

CULTURE

A Brief History of Scotland until the reign of James VI



Shakespeare wrote *Macbeth* during the reign of James I, who was also James VI of Scotland. The play is, in fact, set in Scotland in the Middle Ages. Find out more about Scotland's history from ancient times to the 1600s.

Read the text and complete the tasks which follow.

Scotland has a long and colourful history. The first important settlements occurred during the Stone Age, and archaeological sites, such as Skara Brae, show that the Orkney Islands were the centre of a sophisticated Neolithic people. However, we know little about them because there are no written records. The first records date back to the Roman invasion of present-day Scotland in AD 84. Legions under Agricola defeated the Picts and the Caledonians, the two tribes that lived in the area that is now Scotland, at the battle of Mons Graupius, in that year.


After the battle, the Romans retreated some distance, and only the southern part of what is now Scotland was under Roman rule for a time. It was very difficult to keep control of a country that was mountainous, cold and full of violent, warlike tribes. In 117 the Emperor Hadrian moved Roman soldiers even further south and built the famous Wall. It was designed to protect Roman Britain, but it was also a place of economic and cultural exchange.

The Romans gradually abandoned Britain during the early fifth century, and over the following three centuries Scotland converted to Christianity. The native Gaelic language was a focal point of unity, and by 840, the various kingdoms had become one. In the same century, the Vikings raided Scotland and many settled there.

Although Scotland was united, it was not peaceful. Many kings were either killed in battle or murdered by their own families. King Macbeth ruled in the eleventh century. The real Macbeth, however, was very different from Shakespeare's one. He was king for seventeen years and seems to have been a very good one. Nevertheless, he was one of many kings who were killed by a rival.

The following centuries were marked by wars with both Norway and England, but also led to greater Scottish unity. Finally, in 1328, Edward III of England acknowledged the independence of Scotland, and in 1371 the first Stewart king came to the throne. The Stewarts ruled Scotland until 1702.

James VI was born in 1566, the son of Mary, Queen of Scots. He never really knew his mother as she was forced to abdicate when he was one year old. She fled to England and he never saw her again. Because of marriage alliances during the sixteenth century, James was next in line to the English throne, and, after the death of Elizabeth I, he became James I of England in 1603. Many of Shakespeare's most important plays were written during James's reign.

1  Find these dates in the text and tell a partner what they refer to.

The Stone Age	AD 84	117	early 5th century	
6th – 8th centuries	840	11th century	12th – 13th centuries	
1328	1371	1371 – 1702	1566	1603

2 Find the name(s) of ...?

a two ancient Scottish tribes

.....

b the wall which marked the northern boundary of Roman Britain

.....

c the native language of Scotland

.....


d the most important Scottish royal family

.....

e James I's mother

.....

INDEPENDENT LEARNING



3  Find out more about one of the subjects touched on in the text, such as Skara Brae, Hadrian's Wall, Mary, Queen of Scots, or the Gaelic language. Report back to your class.

From Reading to Performing



- 1** Before you listen, predict how the speeches will be read. What kind of atmosphere needs to be created? Choose words and add some of your own.

magical joyful mysterious dangerous frightening angry evil
confusing dramatic

-  **2**  Listen and see if you were right. Discuss the tone used. Try for yourself. Read the script aloud with the recording and then without. Imitate reading speed, intonation and tone.


Interpreting a scene

When you set about interpreting and staging a scene, you must have a clear idea of the function of that scene within the play as a whole. Based on this, you must then decide what effect you want the scene to have on your audience.

In this case, we are working with the opening scene, which sets the mood for what is to follow. Shakespeare left clear directions as to the setting: *"A desert place. Thunder and lightning, Enter three WITCHES."* The mood is dramatic, isolated and frightening. There is an immediate link created between the natural world (of the moor) and the supernatural (the witches). We are in a world of chaos and confusion, where anything is possible.

We learn a number of things:

- that the natural elements are in conflict;
- that there is a war or fighting underway;
- that the witches will meet Macbeth soon.


3  Discuss in groups of three or four students:

- a How would you recreate the setting?
- b How would you recreate the thunder and lightening?
- c How would you represent the witches (costume, make-up, voice and movement).


ON STAGE!

One way of preparing for a dramatic scene is by working in groups to create a **still image**, or **tableau**, to convey the general meaning of the scene. This allows actors to concentrate on the feelings they want to convey, and capture the mood.



- 4  In groups, create a silent tableau for this first extract. Then discuss what your tableau represented and whether it was effective or not.

WATCH AND PERFORM

- 5  Go to *Macbeth* online to watch a dramatization of the meeting of the witches and do the activities.

Test Yourself

THE THREE WITCHES

1 Find words in the extract that mean the following.

- a noise and confusion
- b open field
- c before
- d fly
- e horrible

2 Are the following statements true or false?

- a The three witches say they will meet again in stormy weather. True / False
- b They say it won't be long before they meet again. True / False
- c The sound of words has no importance in the witches' spell. True / False

3 Complete the sentences with the correct preposition.

- a The witches are not different one another. In fact, they are very similar one another.
- b They are excited meeting Macbeth.
- c Witches were known their power to predict the future.
- d King Duncan is very proud his soldiers.

▶ / 13 marks

VOCABULARY BUILDING

4 Match the following word pairs.

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|
| a <input type="checkbox"/> river | 1 mass |
| b <input type="checkbox"/> land | 2 pole |
| c <input type="checkbox"/> north | 3 volcano |
| d <input type="checkbox"/> desert | 4 bank |
| e <input type="checkbox"/> active | 5 place |

5 Complete the sentences with the correct preposition.

- a Common Scottish family names can be found all the world.
- b Edinburgh is the eastern part of Scotland.
- c Its rough and savage landscape makes Scotland one of the most beautiful countries earth.
- d Edinburgh Castle is right the middle of the city.
- e The area around the Cairngorms National Park is home five of the six highest mountains in Scotland.

▶ / 10 marks

CULTURE

6 Fill each gap with ONE word.

Today we are used **(a)** systems of monarchy in which the king's eldest son automatically becomes king when his father **(b)** In Shakespeare's time, however, the Scottish monarchy worked differently. The king could choose anyone he wished among his noblemen as his successor. Although Shakespeare mixed fiction and history, his play shows how this system inevitably drove the most ambitious **(c)** to wish for the king's early death, and even to arrange for it to happen, in order to lay their hands on the crown. In Duncan's case, however, the real **(d)** was murdered in battle in 1040, and not in bed as in the play.

7 Are the following statements true or false?

- | | |
|--|--------------|
| a Before 840 AD, Scotland was divided into a number of kingdoms. | True / False |
| b The Romans gradually left Scotland during the early fifth century. | True / False |
| c The Romans pushed two Scottish tribes to the southern part of the country. | True / False |
| d Many of Shakespeare's most important plays were written during Elizabeth I's reign. | True / False |
| e Mary, Queen of Scots, was forced to flee to England in 1567. | True / False |

8 Complete the paragraph with the correct article (*a/an or the*).

Macbeth is **(a)** play by William Shakespeare based on **(b)** true story of **(c)** Scottish king who ruled his country from 1040 until his death in 1057. It is **(d)** tragic play, even if it can also be classified as one of Shakespeare's history plays. But if in **(e)** historical plays **(f)** author's focus was on the character's political activities, here it is **(g)** psychological effect of their activities that is at **(h)** heart of the play.

▶ / 17 marks

▶ TOTAL / 40 marks

Exam Practice

P B1 PRELIMINARY ENGLISH TEST: READING PART 4

TIP: First read the text to understand the meaning. Then look at the sentences around each gap and decide which option fits best. Remember to read the sentence after the gap, in order to understand which is the best option. At the end, reread the text with your chosen options to check that it makes sense.

Five sentences have been removed from the text below about Elizabethan London. For each question, choose the correct answer. There are three extra sentences which you do not need to use.

NEXT IN LINE TO THE THRONE

Although it was the largest and most important city in the country, it took some time before London became a unifying centre and the heart of English public life **(1)**..... . With the long-awaited peace brought by the new royal family, London slowly became a hub through which the country absorbed new European cultural influences. Many adventurers, as well as rich country gentlemen in search of more exciting lives, moved to London to change their prospects. One of these was William Shakespeare.

In 1600, London numbered around 20,000 inhabitants, half of which lived in the old City, while the other half lived in the surrounding areas. The second largest city in England was Norwich (with 15,000 inhabitants), followed by Coventry and Bristol. The streets of the City were dirty and overcrowded. And the southern part of London had an exceedingly bad reputation. **(2)**..... South London led to Southwark and the part of town where the Globe would be built. Shakespeare lived first in the City, at Bishopgate, and then on the other side of the river, at Southwark.

(3)..... Apart from the problems in the City and the state of anxiety caused by a series of plots and conspiracies against Queen Elizabeth, Londoners were particularly worried about the question surrounding the queen's succession. They were very happy to have Elizabeth as their sovereign, as this had meant the end of years of civil war. But who would succeed her? **(4)**..... This was the most important problem of the time and the question on everyone's lips. Not only did the queen never marry, she did not even intend to name a successor, which made things worse and seemed to prepare the grounds for a civil war, with danger of intervention, or even invasion, from abroad.

Shakespeare's dramas and historic poems of the time reflect this state of anxiety which was felt by the country. The fate of the monarch was something that regarded every level of society, and the succession issue was certainly discussed among Shakespeare's audiences, allowing the playwright to take hold on his contemporaries.

Nor could the succession question be raised publicly or openly discussed. **(5)**.....

In 1571, the Treason's Act had been passed, which had made it treason to discuss the succession or the chance of any potential successor to the throne. Another Act, passed in 1581, subsequently reinforced the previous one.

- A** It was a long way to the monarchy.
- B** The queen had prohibited by law every public discussion of the issue.
- C** Why was she so determined?
- D** A public discussion was what everyone needed.
- E** You could get there by crossing London Bridge, which was still the only bridge on the river Thames.
- F** And what would happen if she died without an heir?
- G** This process started with the Tudors and their centralization of public administration.
- H** Elizabethan London was not a happy place at all.

Exam Practice

P B1 PRELIMINARY ENGLISH TEST: READING PART 5

For each question, choose the correct answer.

You may find it hard to believe, but for Shakespeare's audience, Julius Caesar, apart from being the great emperor we all know, was one of London's greatest architects. They thought that he had built most of the city, and London in the early 1600s saw itself as the living **(1)**..... of ancient Rome.

The Tower of London, for example, is one of the greatest monuments of medieval England, **(2)**..... the defining symbol of the Norman conquest. But in Shakespeare's days, people believed that it was a Roman building, namely Julius Caesar's tower. And since the procession to celebrate a new king's coronation was modelled on ancient Roman triumphal processions, it was **(3)**..... the Tower of London that the English kings, imagining themselves to be Roman emperors, set out on their triumphal processions. James I's great procession on March 15th, 1604, was no **(4)**..... It went from the Tower of London to The Strand through seven temporary triumphal arches made of wood and plaster and decorated with statues, paintings, classic icons, and Latin mottoes. They were placed **(5)**..... various points of the city along James's processional route. Everyone who attended the procession could imagine that London was ancient Rome.

- | | | | |
|------------|-----------|------------|-------------|
| 1 A son | B heir | C ancestor | D offspring |
| 2 A about | B perhaps | C always | D mostly |
| 3 A on | B in | C from | D along |
| 4 A matter | B model | C less | D exception |
| 5 A at | B between | C across | D in |

P B1  **PRELIMINARY ENGLISH TEST: SPEAKING PART 2**

TIP: Don't worry if you don't know the words for everything in the photo.

Just describe what you can and try to keep going for 1 minute.

- Talk about the people and what they are doing.
- Talk about the location.
- Talk about why they are doing what they are doing.

The photograph shows actors rehearsing for the battle scenes during the filming of *Macbeth* (2014).



Shakespeare Wordbank

Characters The people in a story, play or poem.

Comedy A type of drama that is amusing in tone and that has a happy ending, usually after the characters overcome a set of difficulties.

Context The situation (social, historical, biographical and geographical) in which a text is written.

Dialogue The words that the characters say to each other. Other types of speech include *monologue* (when only one character speaks) and *soliloquy* (when a character speaks alone and reflects on his/her feelings).

Drama A literary genre which begins as a written text but which is meant for performance. A single piece of drama is known as a *play*.

Figures of speech Phrases and expressions that use words in a figurative way. The most common figures of speech include *metaphor* (when something with similar characteristics is used to describe the original) and *simile* (when something with similar characteristics is compared to the original, using 'as' or 'like').

Form How a poem or piece of writing appears on the page.

Genre A type of literature. For example, drama is a literary genre.

Performance When a script is acted out on stage, on screen or on the radio.

Play A piece of drama. The author of a play is called a *playwright* or *dramatist*. Plays can be divided into acts, and acts can be subdivided

into scenes. A scene usually covers a single event in a single setting.

Poem A piece of writing with the words arranged in separate lines, often using rhyme, and chosen for the ideas they suggest and sounds they create.

Rhyme Same sounds usually at the end of lines (rhyme-time). Rhymes can create patterns, and these patterns are often indicated by using the letters of the alphabet (A, B, C, etc.) to mark rhyming words. The pattern generated is called the 'rhyme scheme'.

Sonnet A type of poem of which the earliest examples were Italian. Petrarch established the form with his *Canzoniere* (1366-1374), influencing poets worldwide.

Stage directions In a play, the instructions and information given by the playwright which accompany the dialogue. They are usually in italics to distinguish them from the dialogue. They can give information about the characters, their physical appearance, and their feelings and behaviour as well as their actions, movements, facial expressions and gestures.

Story(line) In drama, the main events given in chronological order.

Theme The central idea of a work, usually expressed in abstract terms, such as 'evil', 'love', etc.

Tragedy A type of drama that focuses on human suffering and its consequences. In tragedies, the initial situation is characterized by fortune and harmony, but it is undone by misfortunes and eventual disaster.