

**Starting with this speech, explore how far Shakespeare presents Macbeth as a hero**

Write about:

* How Shakespeare presents Macbeth as a hero in this speech
* How Shakespeare presents Macbeth as a hero in the play as a whole



**Key Quotations from the Extract**

* ‘Doubtful it stood’ (1)
* ‘But all’s too weak for brave Macbeth’ (9-10)
* ‘Like Valour’s minion’ (13)
* ‘Till he unseamed him from the nave to th’chaps’ (16)

**Key Points on the Extract**

1. Macbeth and Banquo are likened to **swimmers drowning at sea**, yet they still manage to defeat Macdonald
2. This ‘doubtful’ situation on the battlefield, from which they **emerge triumphant**, emphasises their skill as warriors
3. The Captain states that Macbeth ‘deserves’ to be called ‘**brave**’ – and bravery becomes his defining characteristic
4. Macbeth’s **prowess** on the battlefield is further emphasised by his comparison to ‘Valour’s minion’
5. Indeed, he fights so **fiercely** that his sword appears to ‘smoke’ from the slaughter of so many enemy soldiers
6. Ultimately, Macbeth’s **unwavering loyalty** to Duncan is vividly demonstrated by his brutal execution of Macdonald
7. The message to the audience is clear: **loyalty is rewarded**, whilst treachery is punished
8. At this early stage of the play, Macbeth is a hero because he **upholds the established hierarchy**

**Links with Act 1**

* A1S3 – Macbeth reveals his ambitious nature by expressing his hope that ‘chance may crown’ him king
* A1S5 – Lady Macbeth expresses her concern that Macbeth is ‘too full o’th’ milk of human kindness’
* A1S7 – Macbeth has doubts about killing Duncan and Lady Macbeth accuses him of cowardice

**Feedback**

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| WWW: |
| EBI: |

**Reflection Tasks**

1. The witches are presented as looking particularly strange and grotesque. This is significant because…
2. Banquo describes the witches as the ‘instruments of darkness’. This is significant because…
3. Macbeth describes the thought of Duncan’s murder as a ‘horrid image’. This is significant because…
4. Macbeth uses the metaphor of a ‘step’ to describe Malcolm because…
5. Lady Macbeth accepts that Macbeth is ‘not without ambition’, but…
6. Before Macbeth arrives on stage, Lady Macbeth… This is significant because…
7. Macbeth is conflicted about murdering Duncan because…
8. After Macbeth states ‘we will proceed no further in this business’, Lady Macbeth… This is significant because…