

The Tragedy of Macbeth, Act I, by William Shakespeare
Vocabulary Warm-up Word Lists

Study these words from the selection. Then, complete the activities.

Word List A

ambition [am BISH uhn] *n.* strong desire to achieve something

The pitcher's ambition was to play baseball in a major league.

assault [uh SAWLT] *n.* an attack

The soldiers began an assault on the enemies' fort.

plight [PLYT] *n.* bad condition or situation that someone is in

As the scared kitten climbed further up the tree, her plight grew worse.

rebel [REB uhl] *n.* one who opposes a government or other authority

The rebel refused to obey the laws of his country and fought its government.

revolt [ree VOHLT] *n.* actions taken to overthrow an authority

In revolt against the babysitter, the twins locked themselves in their room.

swarm [SWAWRM] *n.* a large, moving group of people, animals, or insects

A swarm of flies landed on the picnic sandwiches.

traitor [TRAYT uhr] *n.* disloyal person; someone who turns against his or her country

The traitor gave his own government's secrets to the enemy.

vanished [VAHN ishd] *v.* disappeared

The box is still on the table, but the cookies inside have all vanished.

Word List B

banquet [BANG kwit] *n.* feast; large, fancy meal attended by guests

The king held a banquet for his knights, and they ate and talked for hours.

foul [FOWL] *adj.* unpleasant; rotting

The river was full of dead fish and smelled foul.

haste [HAYST] *n.* speed; rush; hurry

In her haste to leave the house, she left her keys behind.

heath [HEETH] *n.* area of land covered with low shrubs or bushes

A variety of small plants grow wild on the heath, but no trees.

prediction [pree DIK shuhn] *n.* statement or idea about what will happen in the future

My prediction is that the dog will return when he is hungry.

registered [REJ is tuhrrd] *adj.* entered something, such as your name, on a record

The names of students who have registered appear on the official list.

valiant [VAHL yent] *adj.* heroic; brave

The firefighters risked their own lives in their valiant attempt to save the building.

withered [WITH ird] *adj.* shriveled; dried up; without life

After weeks without rain, the plants are dry and withered.

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Vocabulary Warm-up Exercises

Exercise A Fill in each blank below using the appropriate word from Word List A.

Many tourists who visit England explore the historic Tower of London. The landmark is an eighteen-acre complex of buildings entirely surrounded by thick walls designed to protect against an enemy [1] _____. Today, the Tower serves as a museum where the crown jewels are stored. But for many hundreds of years, it was a prison and a place of execution, where people would come in a [2] _____ to witness the terrible [3] _____ of doomed prisoners. These public displays reminded nobles with political [4] _____ and common people tempted to [5] _____ that challenging the king could be fatal.

Anyone who spoke out against a ruling monarch was considered either a [6] _____ or a [7] _____ and risked being convicted of treason. Many of those who suffered that fate are buried in a chapel on the site. Still others lived and died there, but the records of their lives have [8] _____.

Exercise B Revise each sentence so that the underlined vocabulary word is used in a logical way. Be sure to keep the vocabulary word in your revision.

Example: The flowers withered because the florist put them in water.

The flowers withered because the florist forgot to put them in water.

1. The boy saw lots of trees but no shrubs on the heath.

2. Work on the construction project was going too slowly, so the workers were asked not to make haste.

3. All of the guests felt hungry after the twelve-course banquet.

4. The car was registered, so the motor vehicles bureau has no record of the owner.

5. The town built the stadium close to the swamp because the air nearby was so foul.

6. The professor made a prediction about which students passed the test last year.

7. A valiant lifeguard would hesitate to rescue a swimmer.

The Tragedy of Macbeth, Act I, by William Shakespeare**Reading Warm-up A**

Read the following passage. Pay special attention to the underlined words. Then, read it again, and complete the activities. Use a separate sheet of paper for your written answers.

Everything most people know about the historical Scottish leader Macbeth they learned from William Shakespeare's play *The Tragedy of Macbeth*. In the play, Macbeth and his queen are ruthless murderers eager for power and driven by ambition. The fictional Macbeth is introduced as a hero, but he soon becomes a desperate character. He listens to witches and plots to take the Scottish crown. His first victim is King Duncan. Many others follow, as Macbeth uses murder to clear a path to the throne. Macbeth's descent into evil and his plight as one crime forces him to commit another make great drama. However, most of the story is not historically accurate.

Records kept by eleventh-century monks report that the real King Duncan died in battle with Macbeth. Macbeth may have been a rebel, challenging the king's authority, but he certainly was not a secretly scheming traitor who murdered his sleeping king. In addition, Macbeth's loyal wife was innocent of any wrongdoing.

Macbeth became king after Duncan, but there are no reports of King Macbeth wiping out families who might challenge his claim to the crown. By all accounts, he ruled a united Scotland for seventeen years. In fact, his kingdom was so stable, he left the country to visit Rome without fear of an uprising or a revolt.

Any assault against Macbeth came from without, not from within. During his reign, a swarm of invaders attacked Scotland, making it the center of an ongoing battle for control of Britain. Norse, Danes, Romans, English Saxons, and others struggled to take over the country, but their campaigns were not successful.

Macbeth was hailed as a great king at the time of his death, but his reputation for peace and prosperity has almost completely vanished. Thanks to the vivid portrait created by Shakespeare, Macbeth is remembered not as a popular monarch, but as a warrior corrupted by his desire for power.

1. Underline the phrase that is a clue to the meaning of ambition. Tell what the word *ambition* means.
2. Circle the words that describe Macbeth's plight. Then, use *plight* in a sentence of your own.
3. Underline the words that help define the word rebel. Explain what a *rebel* is.
4. Circle the words that describe the way a traitor might act. Why might Macbeth seem like a *traitor* in the play?
5. Circle the phrase that suggests the opposite of revolt. Then, give an example of a *revolt*.
6. Circle the word that is a clue to the meaning of assault. Rewrite the sentence using a synonym for *assault*.
7. Underline the words that name the peoples making up the swarm. Explain what the word *swarm* means.
8. Circle the words that tell what vanished means. Then, give a synonym for *vanished*.

The Tragedy of Macbeth, Act I, by William Shakespeare**Reading Warm-up B**

Read the following passage. Pay special attention to the underlined words. Then, read it again, and complete the activities. Use a separate sheet of paper for your written answers.

Although many ancient cultures had games that involved hitting balls with sticks, modern golf was developed in Scotland. By the 1400s, the Scots were playing golf—hitting a ball with a club from starting point to finishing hole in as few strokes as possible. Even at that early stage, the game was about skill, not haste, and a game could last a long time. It was also a sport that got players hooked. In fact, the earliest known reference to golf comes from King James II of Scotland, who, in 1457, issued a ban on golf and soccer. James complained that these games kept his valiant archers from practicing for war with their bows and arrows.

Golf remains a favorite sport in Scotland, where almost every village has a course. Some of these include lavish clubhouses with halls for a banquet or other special occasion. Others are world-famous because of the championships that are played there. Private clubs have lists of members who have registered, but many are open to the public.

The Scottish heath is the ideal landscape for golf, providing the rolling, hilly terrain, the open spaces, and the natural hazards, such as ponds, that golf requires. Unfortunately, foul weather, such as rain, is a hazard that no one can control. Despite advanced methods in weather prediction, some tournaments in Scotland have had to be postponed because of rain and fog.

The local dampness used to be an advantage: Scotland has always had enough rainfall to prevent withered fairways and greens. Today, with modern methods of landscaping, almost any environment can support a lush golf course. Links in Hawaii, Florida, California, and other warm locations attract golfers, but few have the history and vistas a golfer can experience in Scotland.

1. Underline the phrase that shows that golf is not played with haste. Then, name a sport in which haste might be desirable.
2. Circle the word naming a time when it is necessary to be valiant. Then, rewrite the sentence using a synonym for valiant.
3. Underline the phrase that is a clue to the meaning of banquet. What modern buildings might have halls for a banquet?
4. Circle the word that tells where your name appears after you have registered. Then, tell what registered means.
5. Underline the words describing a heath. Why is a heath an ideal landscape for a golf course?
6. Circle the word that names an example of foul weather. Then, give another example of foul weather.
7. Circle the word that names the topic of the prediction. Then, describe a situation in which someone might rely on an expert's prediction.
8. Underline the phrase that tells what prevents golf courses from becoming withered. Explain what withered means.