



"Reading" a Performance: *Macbeth*

Meet the Weird Sisters

Macbeth features a famous group of three supernatural characters. Shakespeare labels these characters "First Witch," "Second Witch," and "Third Witch." Within the play, however, the word "witch" is used only once to describe them! Most of the time, Shakespeare's characters call them the "weird sisters."

Every production of *Macbeth* makes decisions about the weird sisters. Who—or what—are they? How do they look? How do they move? How do they sound?

In this activity, you'll **CLOSE READ** three different versions of *Macbeth* that have been staged by Chicago Shakespeare Theater. As you're watching, carefully observe the weird sisters, taking note of specific details. After seeing the clip, record the details that you observed. You might include...

- what you **SEE**, including colors, gestures, facial expressions, movement, and lighting
- what you **HEAR**, including tone of voice, music, and sound effects
- the actors' and/or characters' **IDENTITIES**, including race, gender, and dis/ability
- anything else that stands out to you!

Remember—the more **SPECIFIC**, the better!

BEFORE YOU WATCH

When you hear Shakespeare's characters say "weird sisters," what do **YOU** imagine?

By writing or sketching, communicate **YOUR** idea of what a "weird sister" might look like. Get specific! How do they look? Sound? Move? Behave? You might also include settings, props, music, or lighting you associate with them.

BOX 1



Watch Macbeth clip #1

(directed by Marti Lyons, Chicago Shakespeare, 2019). Then sketch or describe these weird sisters using specific details.

BOX 2

Watch Macbeth clip #2

(directed by David H. Bell, Chicago Shakespeare, 2011). Then sketch or describe these weird sisters using specific details.

BOX 3

Watch Macbeth clip #3

(directed by Aaron Posner and Teller, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, 2018). Then sketch or describe these weird sisters using specific details.

BOX 4



Shakespeare and the art of theater open exciting, creative paths of learning. One of the largest arts-in-education programs in the country, Team Shakespeare brings Shakespeare's plays to life for middle and high school students. Team Shakespeare's expansive efforts to share Shakespeare with young people aims to empower them as interpreters, widen the scope of their imagination, and offer authentic opportunities to explore the complexities of human nature.



Chicago Shakespeare Theater
800 East Grand Avenue on Navy Pier
Chicago, Illinois 60611

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