

Macbeth Paraphrase Practice: Paraphrasing is a process in which you read text then change the wording to simpler vocabulary. Paraphrasing follows the text exactly, but replaces the words with concise and modern terminology. For this assignment you will paraphrase a key scene from each of Macbeth's five acts. The original text is on the left side of the page. On the right side, paraphrase each sentence. Remember that in poetry a sentence can take up several lines.

(Do not simply copy the text from a website such as No Fear Shakespeare. Not only is this immoral and illegal, you are learning nothing. Push yourself to understand the language!)

Act One, Scene 6

LADY MACBETH Give him tending;
He brings great news.
Exit Messenger.
The raven himself is hoarse
That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan 40
Under my battlements. Come, you spirits
That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here,
And fill me from the crown to the toe top-full
Of direst cruelty! make thick my blood;
Stop up the access and passage to remorse,
That no compunctious visitings of nature
Shake my fell purpose, nor keep peace between
The effect and it! Come to my woman's breasts,
And take my milk for gall, you murdering ministers,
Wherever in your sightless substances 50
You wait on nature's mischief! Come, thick night,
And pall thee in the dunnest smoke of hell,
That my keen knife see not the wound it makes,
Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark,
To cry 'Hold, hold!'
Enter MACBETH.
Great Glamis! worthy Cawdor!
Greater than both, by the all-hail hereafter!
Thy letters have transported me beyond
This ignorant present, and I feel now
The future in the instant.
MACBETH My dearest love,
Duncan comes here to-night.
LADY MACBETH And when goes hence? 60
MACBETH To-morrow, as he purposes.

Paraphrasing:

Even the messenger knows that bad things are going to happen.
Change me into a man and make me mean.
Don't make me feel guilty about my actions.
Take away everything that makes me a woman so I can get things done right. Don't let me stop my plan.
Praise Macbeth of high power
I feel your future of becoming king close.
My love, the king is coming.
When?
Tomorrow.

Act 2, Scene 1

MACBETH Is this a dagger which I see before me,
The handle toward my hand? Come, let me clutch thee.

I have thee not, and yet I see thee still.
Art thou not, fatal vision, sensible
To feeling as to sight? or art thou but
A dagger of the mind, a false creation,
Proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain?
I see thee yet, in form as palpable 40
As this which now I draw.
Thou marshall'st me the way that I was going;
And such an instrument I was to use.
Mine eyes are made the fools o' the other senses,
Or else worth all the rest; I see thee still,

Paraphrasing:

Is this the knife? If so, hand it over.
I cannot grab it, but I still see it. Am I seeing things? It looks so real. It's telling me what to do and what to use. I can see what I can't touch. There 's about to be blood on the dagger that wasn't there before. I know the dagger is not there but it pushes me on to fulfill my plan. Evil roams around while the good nature is gone. Help me be sneaky. While we plan, he continues breathing. (being alive)

And on thy blade and dudgeon gouts of blood,
Which was not so before. There's no such thing:
It is the bloody business which informs
Thus to mine eyes. Now o'er the one halfworld
Nature seems dead, and wicked dreams abuse 50
The curtain'd sleep; witchcraft celebrates
Pale Hecate's offerings, and wither'd murder,
Alarum'd by his sentinel, the wolf,
Whose howl's his watch, thus with his stealthy pace.
With Tarquin's ravishing strides, towards his design
Moves like a ghost. Thou sure and firm-set earth,
Hear not my steps, which way they walk, for fear
Thy very stones prate of my whereabouts,
And take the present horror from the time,
Which now suits with it. Whiles I threat, he lives: 60
Words to the heat of deeds too cold breath gives.
A bell rings.
I go, and it is done; the bell invites me.
Hear it not, Duncan; for it is a knell
That summons thee to heaven or to hell.
Exit.

A bell rings.
The bell is telling me it's time. Duncan is about to
be determined once he dies.

Act 3, Scene 3

[The GHOST OF BANQUO enters, and sits in MACBETH's place]

MACBETH Here had we now our country's honour roof'd,

Were the graced person of our Banquo present;
Who may I rather challenge for unkindness
Than pity for mischance!

ROSS His absence, sir,
Lays blame upon his promise. Please't your highness
To grace us with your royal company.

MACBETH The table's full.

LENNOX Here is a place reserved, sir.

MACBETH Where?

LENNOX Here, my good lord. What is't that moves
your highness?

MACBETH Which of you have done this?

LORDS What, my good lord?

MACBETH Thou canst not say I did it: never shake
Thy gory locks at me.

ROSS Gentlemen, rise: his highness is not well.

LADY MACBETH Sit, worthy friends: my lord is
often thus, And hath been from his youth: pray you,
keep seat; The fit is momentary; upon a thought
He will again be well: if much you note him,
You shall offend him and extend his passion:
Feed, and regard him not. Are you a man?

Paraphrasing:

Our country's of highest honor, are all now
together.
Where's our honored guest, Banquo? If he's not
here, who can I compete with for unkindness
rather than pity!
He's not here because of his promise. Sit down
with us.
The table is full.
Here is your place, sir.
Where?
What's wrong?
Who did this?
Do what?
Don't accuse me.
Men, let's go, he is not well.
No, stay he is fine. This is normal. He has been
like this since he was small. If you leave, he will
get mad.

Act 4, Scene 1

ALL Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire burn and cauldron bubble.

Second Witch Cool it with a baboon's blood,
Then the charm is firm and good.

Paraphrasing:

All "the witchy stuff" the charm is ready

[Enter HECATE to the other three Witches]

HECATE O well done! I commend your pains;
 And every one shall share i' the gains; 40
 And now about the cauldron sing,
 Live elves and fairies in a ring,
 Enchanting all that you put in.

[HECATE retires]

Second Witch By the pricking of my thumbs,
 Something wicked this way comes.
 Open, locks,
 Whoever knocks!

[Enter MACBETH]

MACBETH How now, you secret, black, and
 midnight hags!
 What is't you do?

ALL A deed without a name.

Act 5, Scene 5

MACBETH She should have died hereafter;
 There would have been a time for such a word.
 To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,
 Creeps in this petty pace from day to day 20
 To the last syllable of recorded time,
 And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
 The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!
 Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
 That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
 And then is heard no more: it is a tale
 Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
 Signifying nothing.

Well done, I control your pain. Everyone will share the benefits of it. The live elves and fairies will enchant all that you put in. Someone wicked is coming! How are you doing? You can't know.

Paraphrasing:

She should have died later than when I would have time to grief. Tomorrow slowly comes, and our past lights the way to death. Our light goes out in a small breath. Life has no purpose and is nothing more than a joke told by an idiot.