

Macbeth

William Shakespeare

What argument does Macbeth make against himself?

TOTAL TIME

PASSAGE

30 minutes	Macbeth argues against the murder
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FIND THE ANCHOR TEXT

Use the Anchor Text Table of Contents in the Enhanced Reader to open the START anchor. Then use the dropdown to select the END anchor.

SECTION / LOCATION	Act I, Scene VII
START	If it were done when 'tis done
END	False face must hide what the false heart doth know.
PASSAGE ID	sec-09-macbeth

THE MOVE

Map an argument inside a character's conflict

WHY THIS PASSAGE

Macbeth lists reasons not to murder Duncan—kinship, hospitality, Duncan's virtues, public consequences, and the danger of violent example—before admitting that ambition is the only force pushing the other way. The soliloquy is an argument in which Macbeth supplies most of the evidence against his own intended action.

MARK

Number each reason Macbeth gives against the murder. Circle the one motive he gives in favor of it. Star the moment where the balance of the argument is clearest.

NOTICE

- What kinds of reasons does Macbeth use—personal, moral, political, practical?

- How much evidence does he produce for murder compared with evidence against it?
- What does it reveal about the conflict that Macbeth can articulate the opposing case so well?

THINK

Answer provisionally: What argument does Macbeth make against himself? Choose the strongest interpretation you can defend from this passage alone.

WRITE

Write a short evidence-based response to: What argument does Macbeth make against himself? Use at least two details from the assigned passage and explain how they support your interpretation.

CLOSE

Name the single detail that most changed or sharpened your interpretation, and explain why.

STRONG ANSWER	Macbeth builds the case against murder himself: Duncan is his king, relative, and guest; Duncan is virtuous; murder teaches violence that may return on the murderer; and pity/public judgment will condemn the act. Against all of that, Macbeth can name only ambition.
EVIDENCE	Use at least two different categories of argument—personal duty, hospitality, political consequence, Duncan's virtue, or reciprocal violence—then contrast them with 'vaulting ambition.'
WATCH FOR	Do not list reasons without showing the imbalance. The dramatic point is that Macbeth's own argument against the murder is far stronger than his argument for it.
SOLO	Read the exact passage independently.
SUPPORTED	Use narration and sentence highlighting while reading the same passage.
LISTENING	Listen to the exact passage; visual following is optional. Same question and evidence demand.

STUDENT PAGE · SAME PASSAGE, SAME THINKING

Macbeth

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What argument does Macbeth make against himself?

START ANCHOR	If it were done when 'tis done
END ANCHOR	False face must hide what the false heart doth know.

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OPEN THE MARKED PASSAGE IN TUMBLELIT

SOLO: read independently. SUPPORTED: use narration + highlighting. LISTENING: listen to the exact passage. The question and evidence task stay the same.

1. MARK - Number each reason Macbeth gives against the murder. Circle the one motive he gives in favor of it. Star the moment where the balance of the argument is clearest.
2. NOTICE - What kinds of reasons does Macbeth use—personal, moral, political, practical? How much evidence does he produce for murder compared with evidence against it? What does it reveal about the conflict that Macbeth can articulate the opposing case so well?
3. THINK - Answer provisionally: What argument does Macbeth make against himself?
4. WRITE - Write a short response using at least two pieces of evidence from this passage.

Use evidence from the assigned passage. Show what you noticed and how the text supports your interpretation.