

Starting with the extract below, show how Shakespeare presents the influence of the witches over Macbeth.

Write about:

* how Shakespeare presents the witches in this speech
* how Shakespeare presents the witches in the play as a whole.

Task 1: Look at this exam question – what is it asking you to do?

What does present mean?

What does influence mean?

Task 2 : Read the following extract from Act 4 Scene 1 of *Macbeth* and then answer the question.

At this point in the play, Macbeth meets the witches and demands to know what they are doing. <https://www.sparknotes.com/nofear/shakespeare/macbeth/> (text + translation)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **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. |
| **MACBETH:** | I conjure you, by that which you profess,  Howe’er you come to know it, answer me:  Though you untie the winds and let them fight  Against the churches; though the yesty waves  Confound and swallow navigation up;  Though bladed corn be lodged and trees blown down;  Though castles topple on their warders’ heads;  Though palaces and pyramids do slope  Their heads to their foundations; though the treasure  Of nature’s germens tumble all together,  Even till destruction sicken; answer me  To what I ask you. |
| **First Witch:** | Speak. |
| **Second Witch:** | Demand. |
| **Third Witch:** | We’ll answer. |
| **First Witch:** | Say, if thou’dst rather hear it from our mouths,  Or from our masters? |
| **MACBETH:** | Call ’em; let me see ’em. |
| **First Witch:** | Pour in sow’s blood, that hath eaten  Her nine farrow; grease that’s sweaten  From the murderer’s gibbet throw  Into the flame. |
| **ALL:** | Come, high or low;  Thyself and office deftly show! |

How to tackle the answer: –

1. read then re-read the text
2. annotate the text ( using the link and translation) <https://www.sparknotes.com/nofear/shakespeare/macbeth/>
3. What are the witches doing? Saying? How do they come across
4. Then refer to the other acts that they are seen in Act 1, scene1 – Act1, Scene 3 – Act 3, scene 5 and Act 4, scene 1
5. Look at the mind map on the front page and use that in your analysis.
6. Again, what are they doing? what are they saying, what is the impact on the play?? What is the impact on the characters (mainly Macbeth and Banquo)
7. Why do you think Shakespeare put the witches into the play (context – who was interested in the play? What would the audience have made of the witches? What were the beliefs at that time? (Using the - link scroll up – further study and read the Witchcraft in Shakespeare’s England – put it into your own words)

If you struggle with an answer please contact me through Microsoft teams – I will respond as soon as I can – if you haven’t got access to teams then drop me an email.