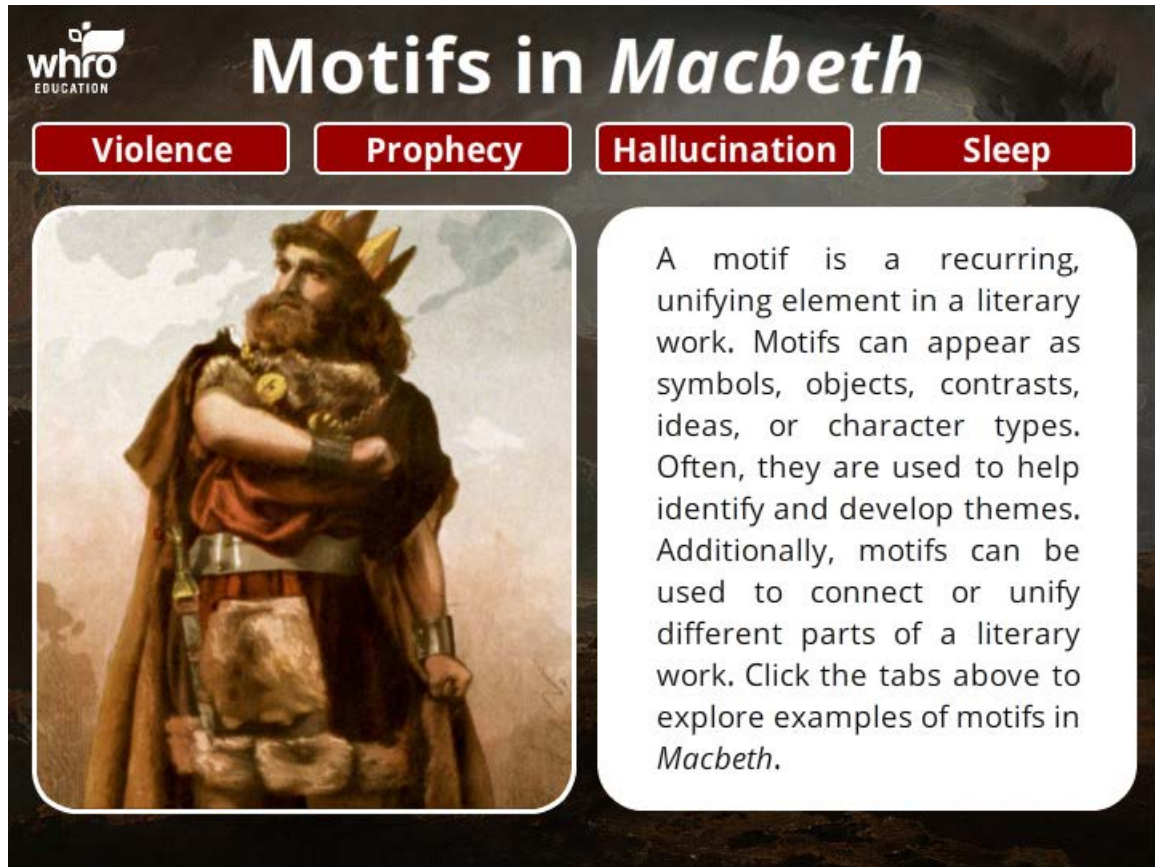


Module 4: Examining Love, Friendship, and Power
Topic 5 Content: Motifs in *Macbeth*


Introduction



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Motifs in *Macbeth*

Violence **Prophecy** **Hallucination** **Sleep**

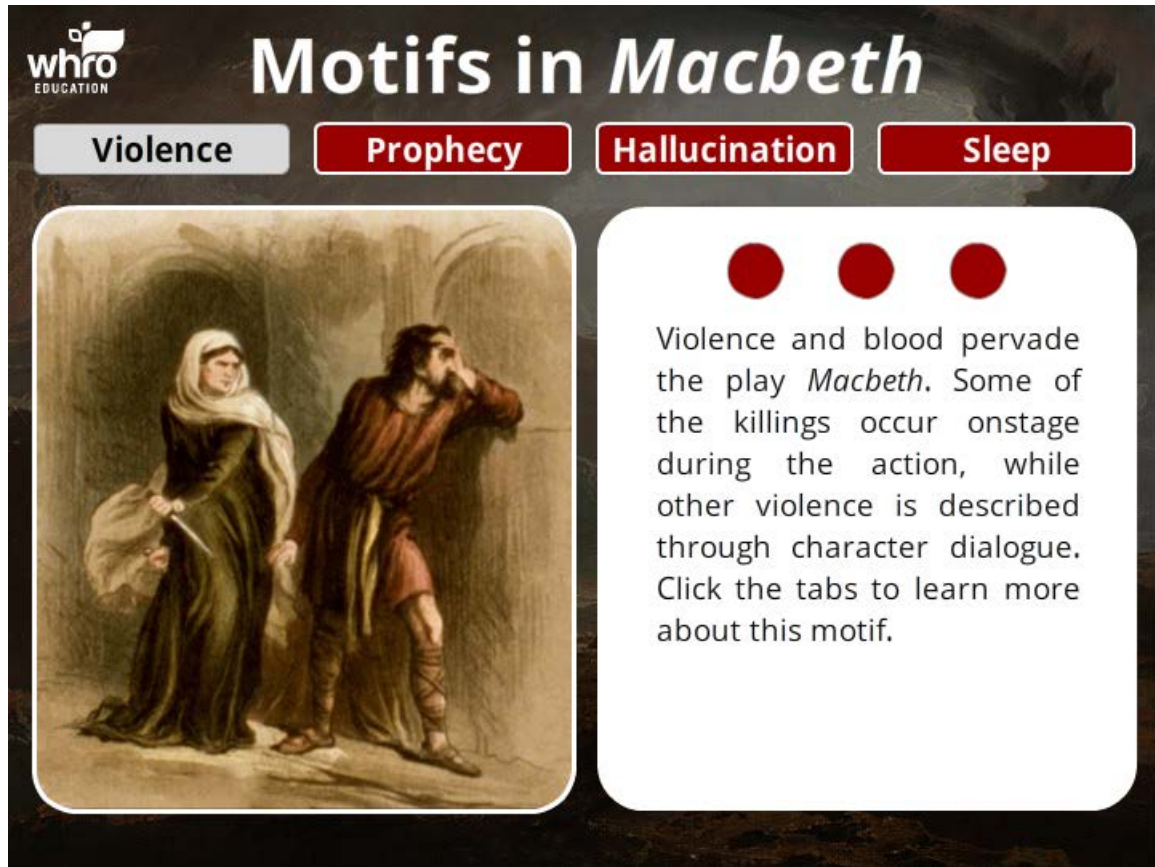


A motif is a recurring, unifying element in a literary work. Motifs can appear as symbols, objects, contrasts, ideas, or character types. Often, they are used to help identify and develop themes. Additionally, motifs can be used to connect or unify different parts of a literary work. Click the tabs above to explore examples of motifs in *Macbeth*.

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Module 4: Examining Love, Friendship, and Power
Topic 5 Content: Motifs in *Macbeth*


Violence



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Motifs in *Macbeth*

Violence Prophecy Hallucination Sleep

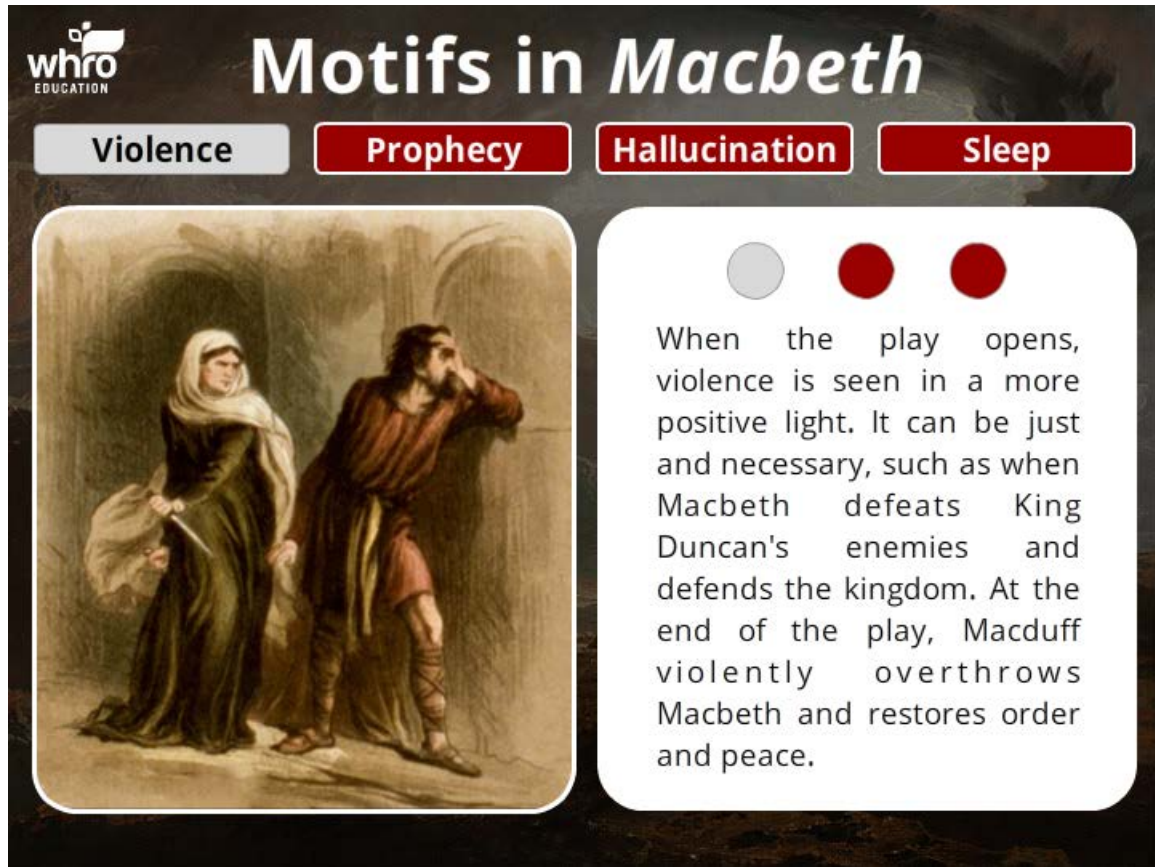


Violence and blood pervade the play *Macbeth*. Some of the killings occur onstage during the action, while other violence is described through character dialogue. Click the tabs to learn more about this motif.

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Module 4: Examining Love, Friendship, and Power
Topic 5 Content: Motifs in *Macbeth*

Justified Violence



Motifs in *Macbeth*

Violence Prophecy Hallucination Sleep

When the play opens, violence is seen in a more positive light. It can be just and necessary, such as when Macbeth defeats King Duncan's enemies and defends the kingdom. At the end of the play, Macduff violently overthrows Macbeth and restores order and peace.

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Module 4: Examining Love, Friendship, and Power
Topic 5 Content: Motifs in *Macbeth*

Violence Rooted in Evil

The infographic is titled "Motifs in *Macbeth*" and includes the WHRO Education logo. It has four tabs: "Violence" (selected), "Prophecy", "Hallucination", and "Sleep". Below the tabs is an illustration of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth. To the right of the illustration is a text box with three colored circles (red, grey, red) above the text. The text explains that violence is rooted in evil and lists victims of Macbeth's actions.

Much of the violence that upsets the world order is rooted in evil. Innocent victims of Macbeth's murderous rampage include Duncan, his guards, Banquo, and Macduff's family. As the bloodshed increases, Macbeth and his wife draw closer to their downfalls.


Module 4: Examining Love, Friendship, and Power
Topic 5 Content: Motifs in *Macbeth*

The Spreading of Violence

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Motifs in *Macbeth*

Violence Prophecy Hallucination Sleep



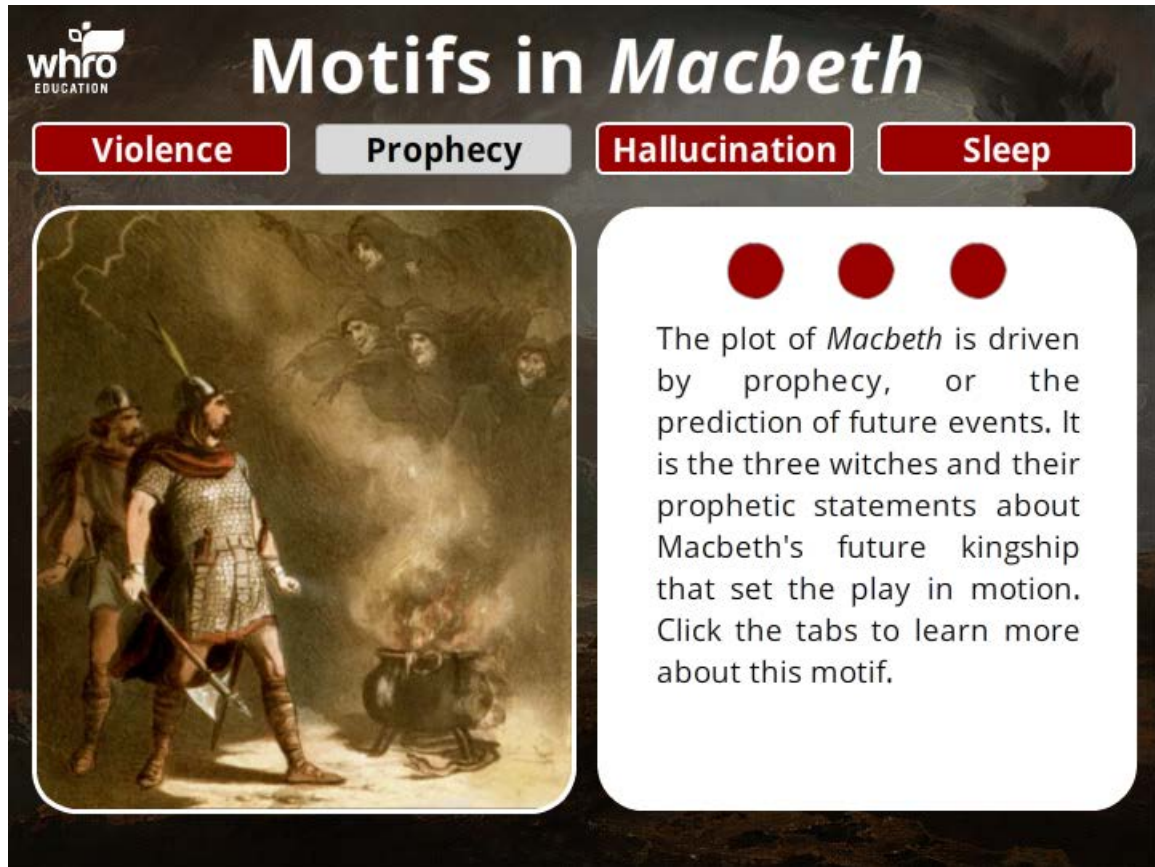
● ● ●

As Macbeth upsets the natural order of the world, violence manifests even in nature as a sign of the growing evil. After Duncan is murdered, Ross confirms that the king's horses suddenly grew violent and ate one another.

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Module 4: Examining Love, Friendship, and Power
Topic 5 Content: Motifs in *Macbeth*


Prophecy



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Motifs in *Macbeth*

Violence **Prophecy** **Hallucination** **Sleep**



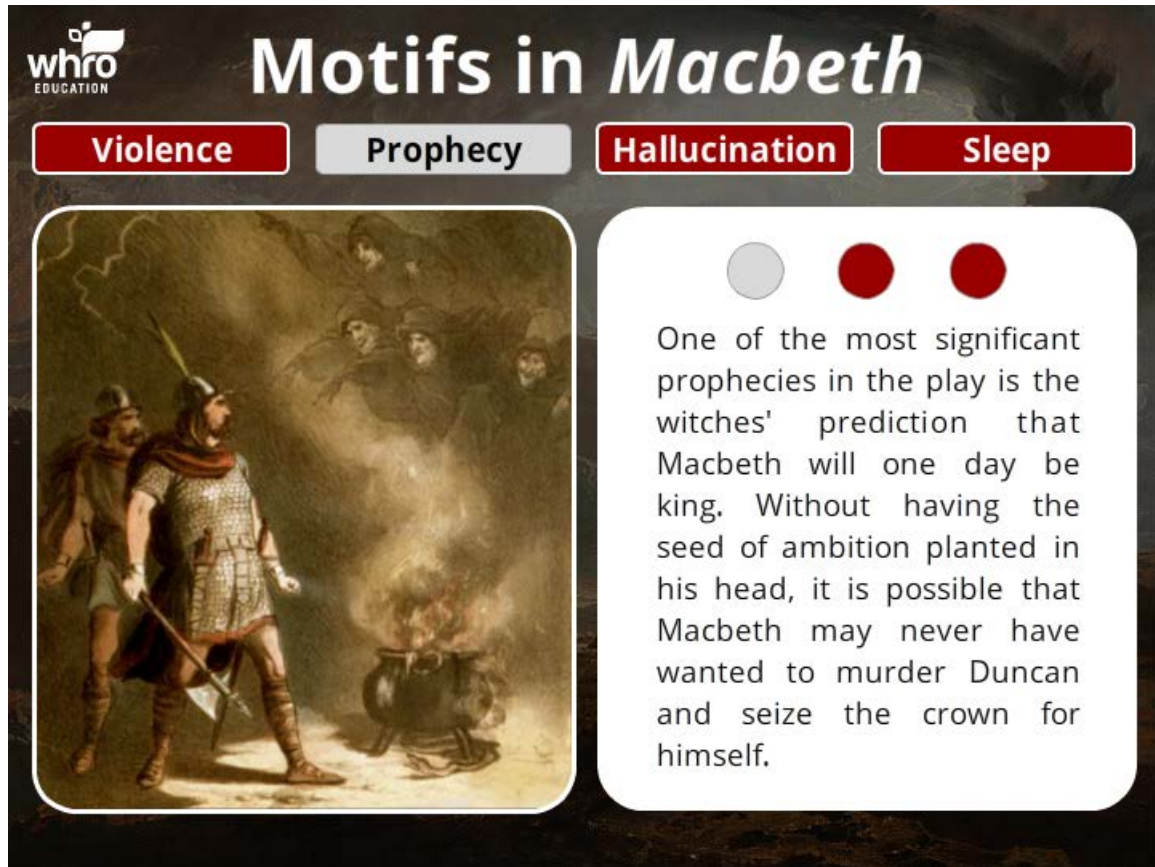
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The plot of *Macbeth* is driven by prophecy, or the prediction of future events. It is the three witches and their prophetic statements about Macbeth's future kingship that set the play in motion. Click the tabs to learn more about this motif.

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Module 4: Examining Love, Friendship, and Power
Topic 5 Content: Motifs in *Macbeth*


Future Kingship



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Motifs in *Macbeth*

Violence **Prophecy** **Hallucination** **Sleep**

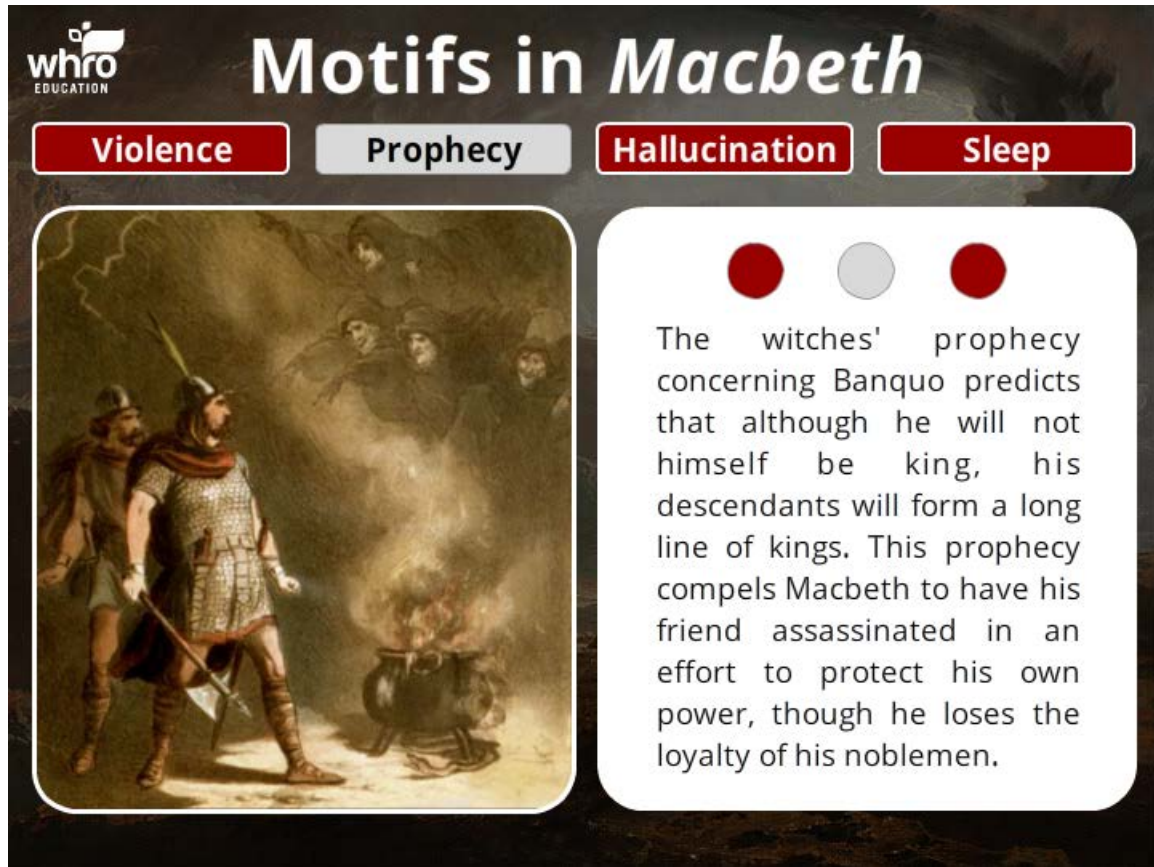


One of the most significant prophecies in the play is the witches' prediction that Macbeth will one day be king. Without having the seed of ambition planted in his head, it is possible that Macbeth may never have wanted to murder Duncan and seize the crown for himself.

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Module 4: Examining Love, Friendship, and Power
Topic 5 Content: Motifs in *Macbeth*


Banquo's Heirs



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Motifs in *Macbeth*

Violence **Prophecy** **Hallucination** **Sleep**



The witches' prophecy concerning Banquo predicts that although he will not himself be king, his descendants will form a long line of kings. This prophecy compels Macbeth to have his friend assassinated in an effort to protect his own power, though he loses the loyalty of his noblemen.

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Module 4: Examining Love, Friendship, and Power
Topic 5 Content: Motifs in *Macbeth*

No Man Born of Woman

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Motifs in *Macbeth*

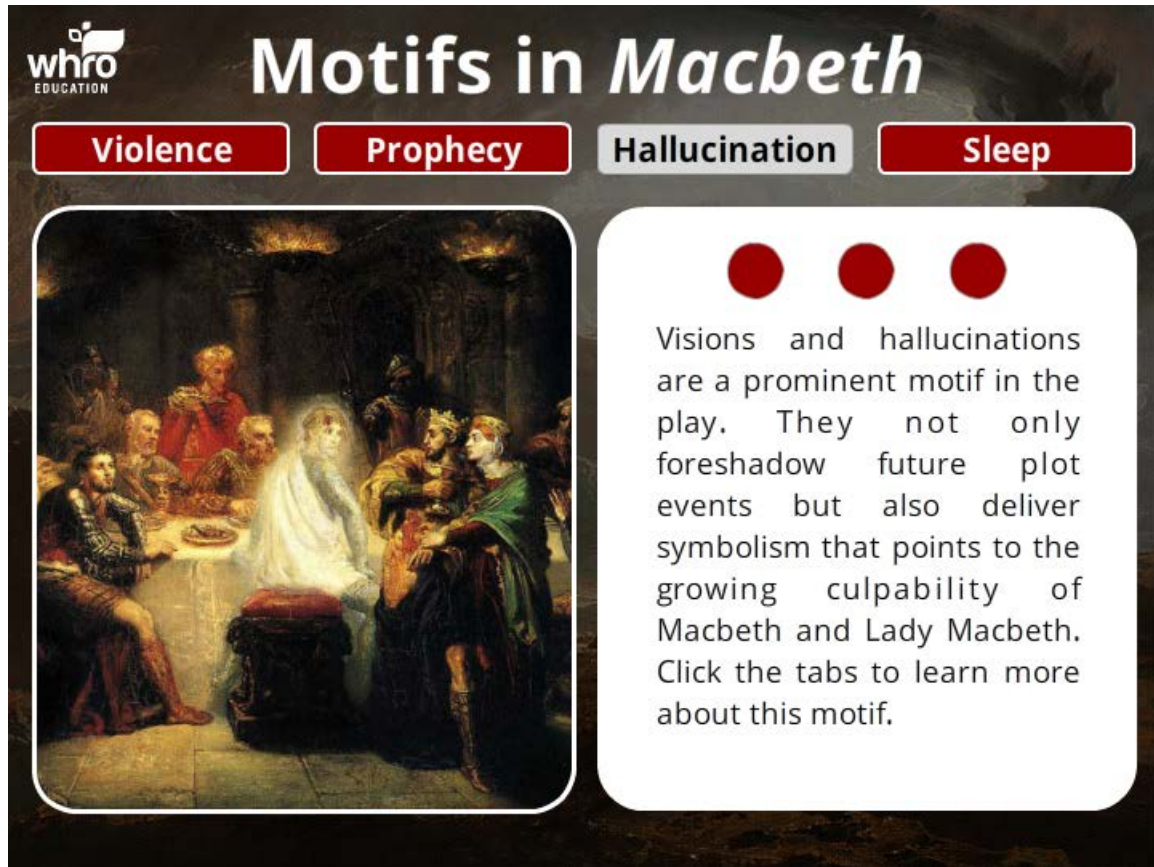
Violence **Prophecy** **Hallucination** **Sleep**

Despite Banquo's warning to disregard the witches' prophecies, Macbeth takes them literally and does not understand their meaning until it is too late. Their final prophecy that no man born of woman can harm Macbeth foreshadows his ultimate downfall rather than his eternal security.

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Module 4: Examining Love, Friendship, and Power
Topic 5 Content: Motifs in *Macbeth*

Hallucination



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Motifs in *Macbeth*

Violence Prophecy **Hallucination** Sleep

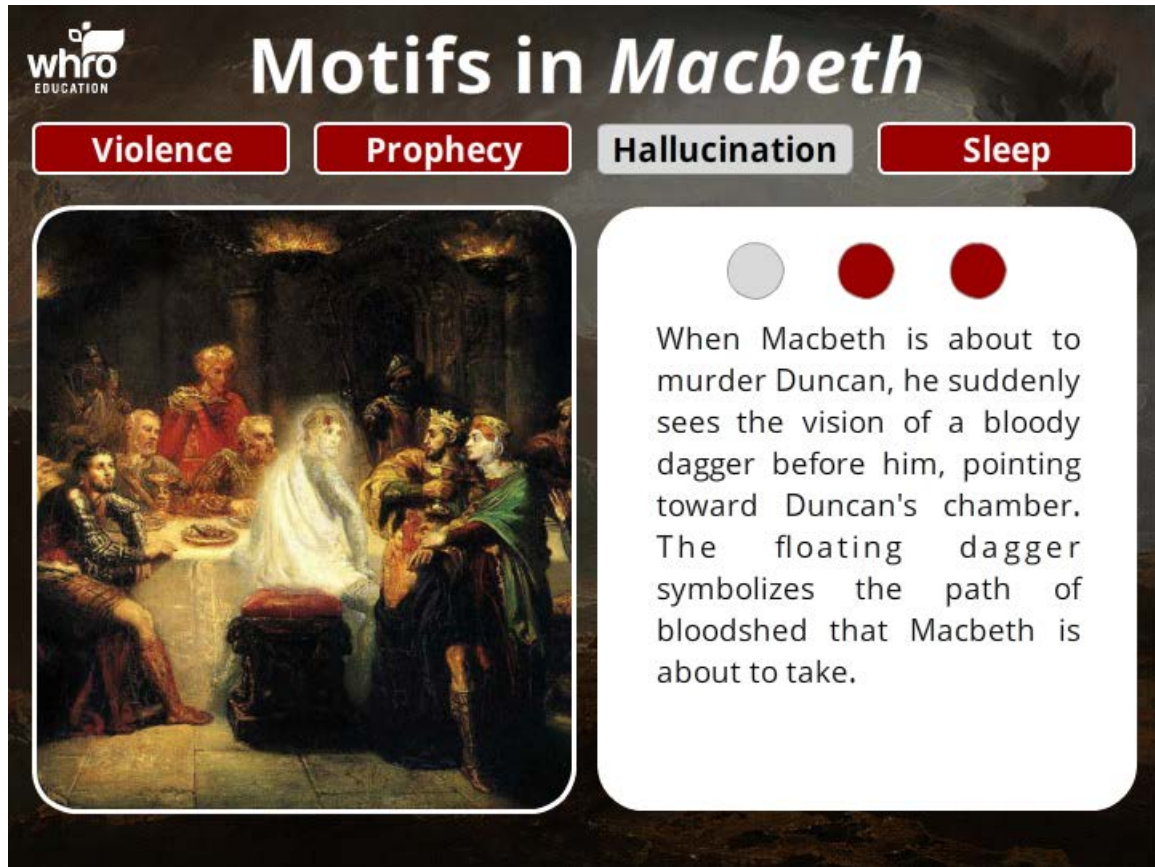
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Visions and hallucinations are a prominent motif in the play. They not only foreshadow future plot events but also deliver symbolism that points to the growing culpability of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth. Click the tabs to learn more about this motif.

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Module 4: Examining Love, Friendship, and Power
Topic 5 Content: Motifs in *Macbeth*

The Floating Dagger



Motifs in *Macbeth*

Violence Prophecy Hallucination Sleep

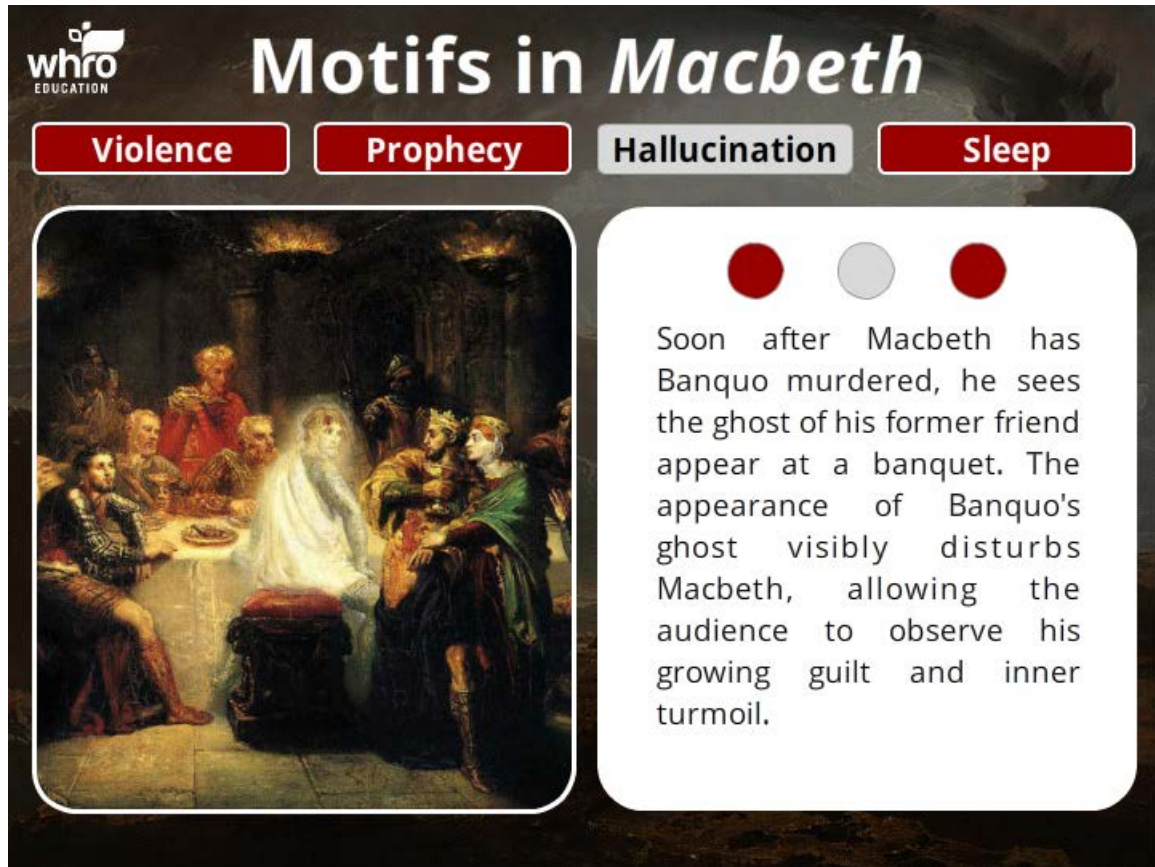


When Macbeth is about to murder Duncan, he suddenly sees the vision of a bloody dagger before him, pointing toward Duncan's chamber. The floating dagger symbolizes the path of bloodshed that Macbeth is about to take.

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Module 4: Examining Love, Friendship, and Power
Topic 5 Content: Motifs in *Macbeth*

The Ghost of Banquo



Motifs in *Macbeth*

Violence Prophecy Hallucination Sleep

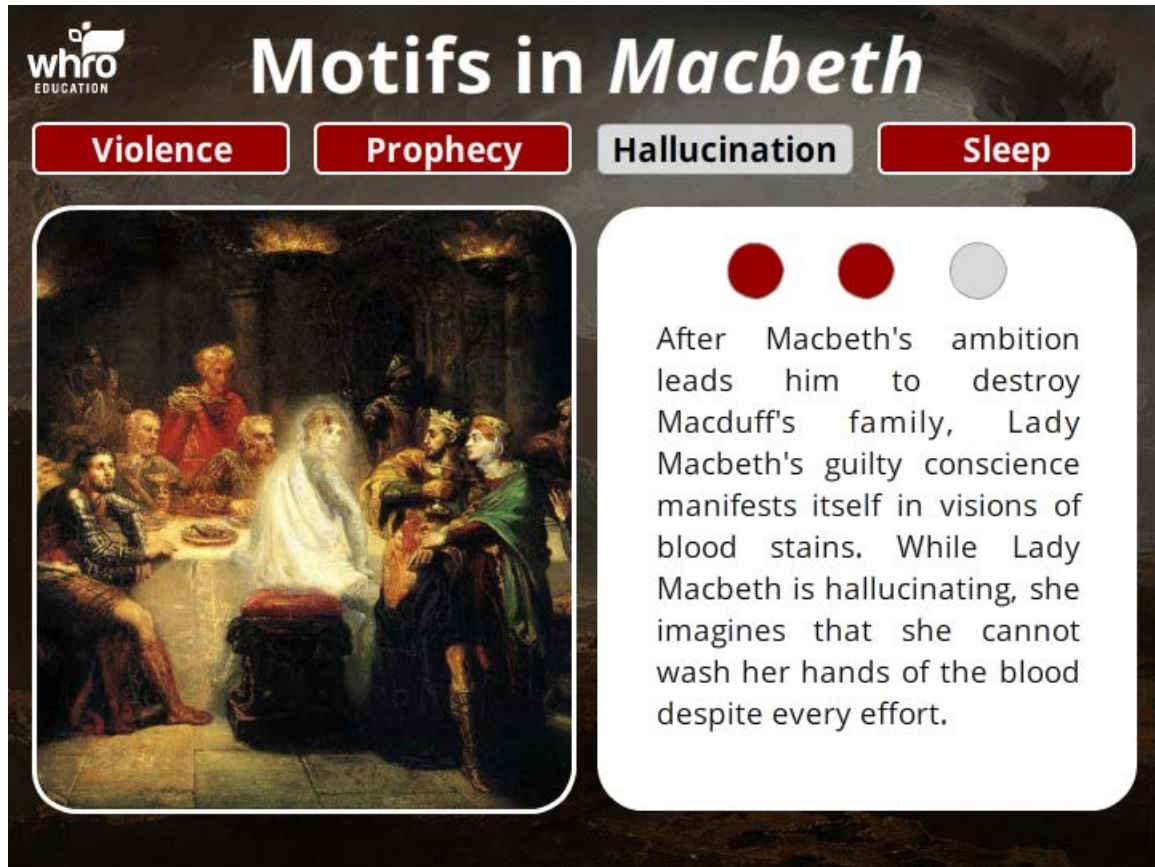


Soon after Macbeth has Banquo murdered, he sees the ghost of his former friend appear at a banquet. The appearance of Banquo's ghost visibly disturbs Macbeth, allowing the audience to observe his growing guilt and inner turmoil.

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Module 4: Examining Love, Friendship, and Power
Topic 5 Content: Motifs in *Macbeth*

Stains of Blood



Motifs in *Macbeth*

Violence Prophecy Hallucination Sleep

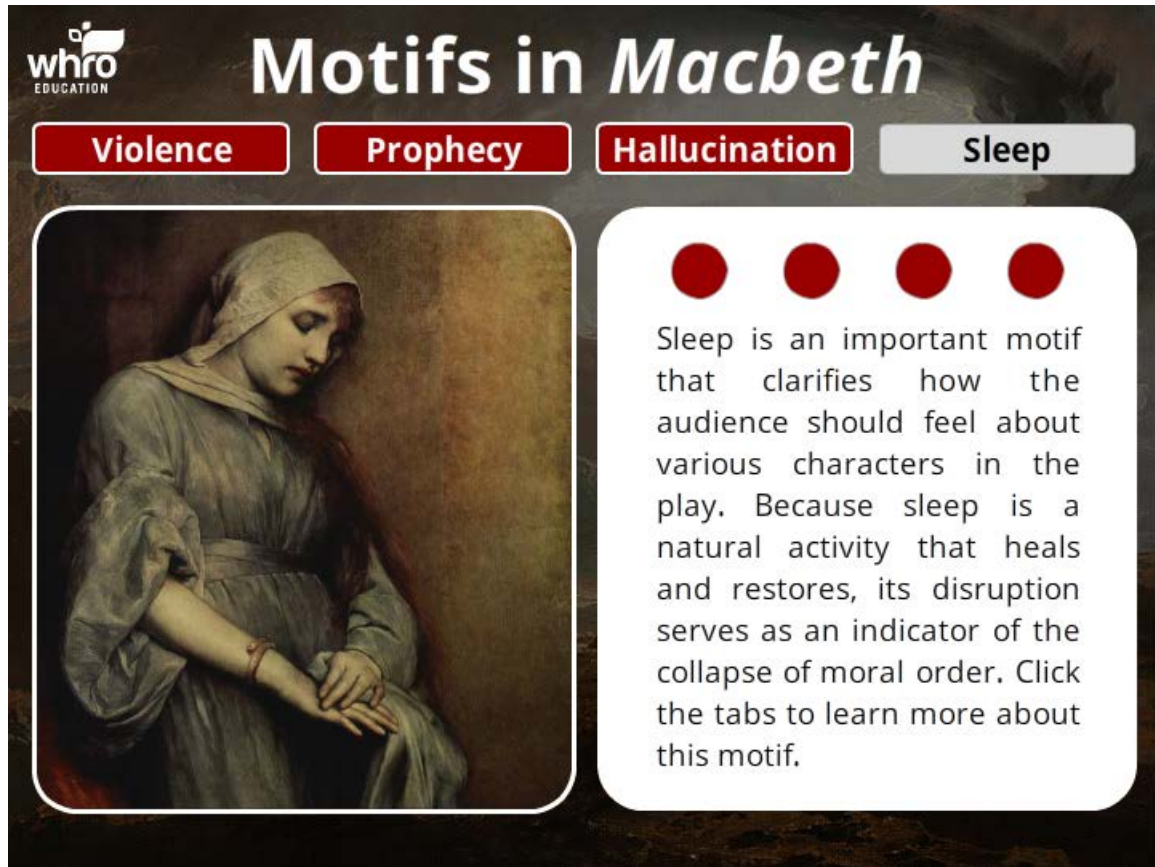


After Macbeth's ambition leads him to destroy Macduff's family, Lady Macbeth's guilty conscience manifests itself in visions of blood stains. While Lady Macbeth is hallucinating, she imagines that she cannot wash her hands of the blood despite every effort.

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Module 4: Examining Love, Friendship, and Power
Topic 5 Content: Motifs in *Macbeth*

Sleep



The screenshot shows a digital interface for a lesson on motifs in *Macbeth*. At the top left is the 'whro EDUCATION' logo. The main title is 'Motifs in *Macbeth*'. Below the title are four tabs: 'Violence', 'Prophecy', 'Hallucination', and 'Sleep'. The 'Sleep' tab is highlighted in grey. To the left of the text box is a painting of a woman in a white dress, likely Lady Macbeth, looking down with a somber expression. To the right of the painting is a text box with four red circles at the top, containing the following text:

Sleep is an important motif that clarifies how the audience should feel about various characters in the play. Because sleep is a natural activity that heals and restores, its disruption serves as an indicator of the collapse of moral order. Click the tabs to learn more about this motif.

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Module 4: Examining Love, Friendship, and Power
Topic 5 Content: Motifs in *Macbeth*

Restful Sleep

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Motifs in *Macbeth*

Violence **Prophecy** **Hallucination** **Sleep**



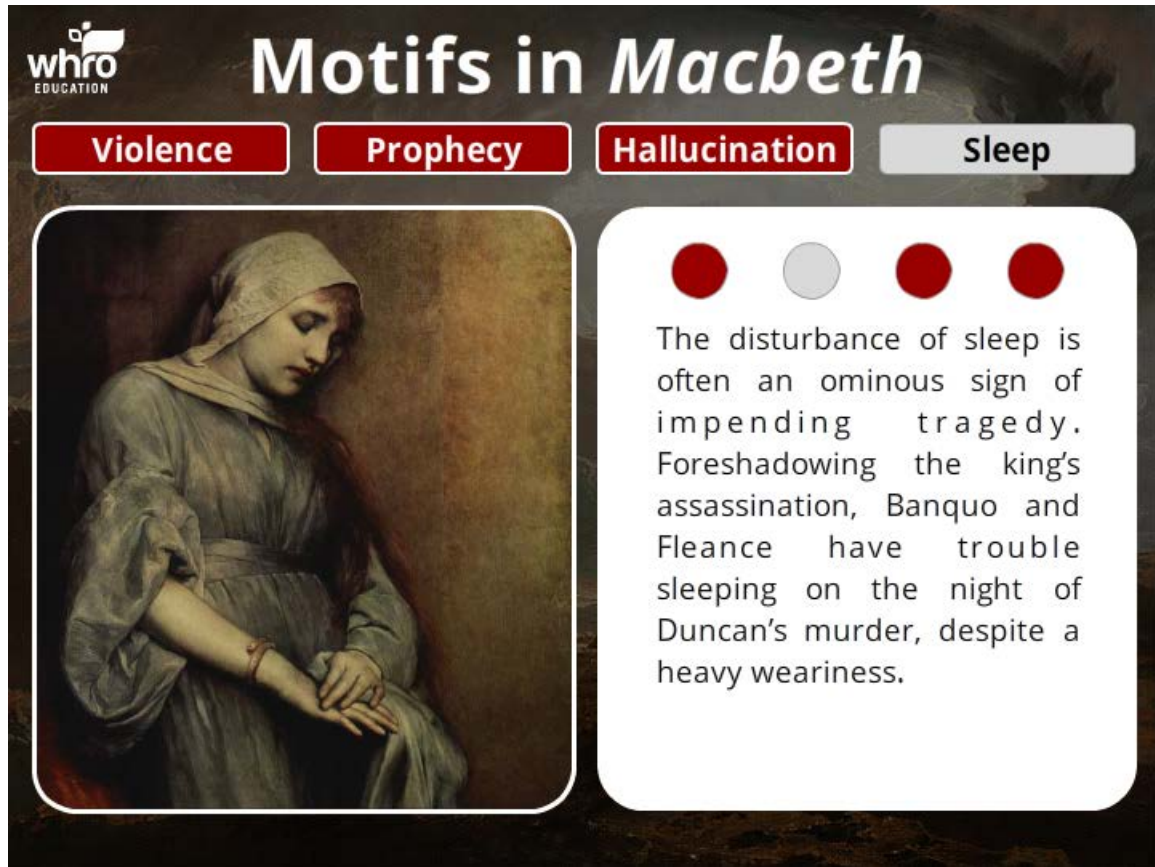
● ● ● ●

In the play, characters who are moral and righteous are able to sleep soundly. For example, Duncan, the rightful king, sleeps restfully during the night of his murder. But even after his death, Macbeth remarks with envy that Duncan “sleeps well” in his grave, free of the ills of life.

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Module 4: Examining Love, Friendship, and Power
Topic 5 Content: Motifs in *Macbeth*


Sleep That Foreshadows



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Motifs in *Macbeth*

Violence Prophecy Hallucination Sleep

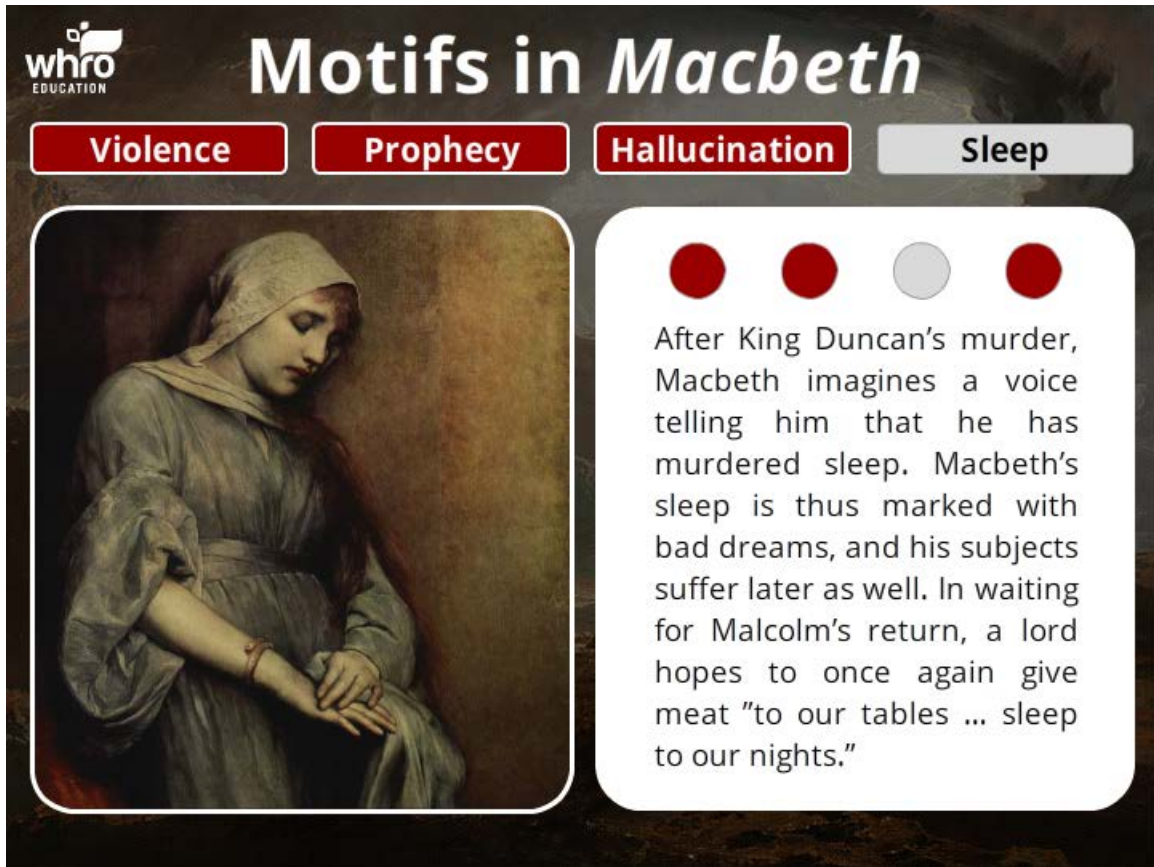


The disturbance of sleep is often an ominous sign of impending tragedy. Foreshadowing the king's assassination, Banquo and Fleance have trouble sleeping on the night of Duncan's murder, despite a heavy weariness.

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Module 4: Examining Love, Friendship, and Power
Topic 5 Content: Motifs in *Macbeth*

The "Murder" and Loss of Sleep



Motifs in *Macbeth*

Violence Prophecy Hallucination **Sleep**

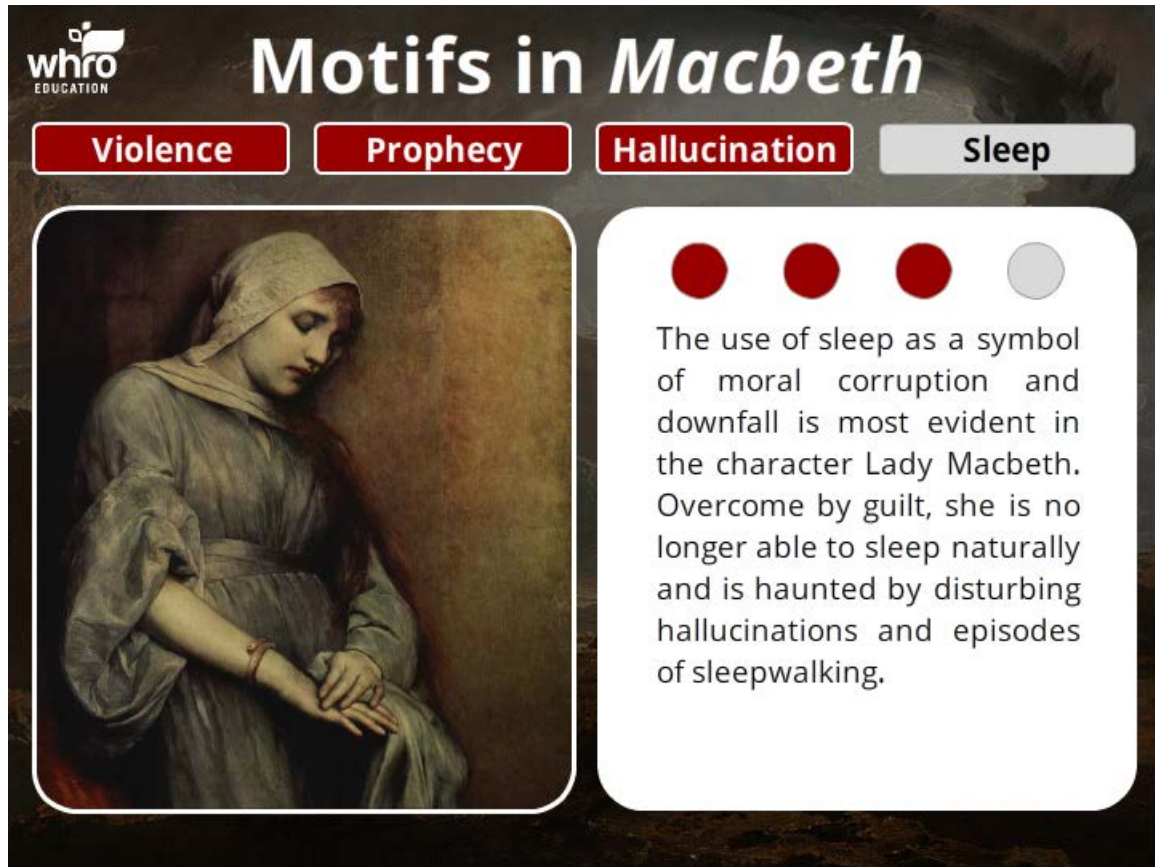


After King Duncan's murder, Macbeth imagines a voice telling him that he has murdered sleep. Macbeth's sleep is thus marked with bad dreams, and his subjects suffer later as well. In waiting for Malcolm's return, a lord hopes to once again give meat "to our tables ... sleep to our nights."

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Module 4: Examining Love, Friendship, and Power
Topic 5 Content: Motifs in *Macbeth*


Sleep as a Sign of Guilt



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Motifs in *Macbeth*

Violence **Prophecy** **Hallucination** **Sleep**



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The use of sleep as a symbol of moral corruption and downfall is most evident in the character Lady Macbeth. Overcome by guilt, she is no longer able to sleep naturally and is haunted by disturbing hallucinations and episodes of sleepwalking.

The use of sleep as a symbol of moral corruption and downfall is most evident in the character Lady Macbeth. Overcome by guilt, she is no longer able to sleep naturally and is haunted by disturbing hallucinations and episodes of sleepwalking.