

Year 8 Richard III Knowledge Organiser

Key Terms

Hamartia	A fatal flaw leading to the downfall of a tragic hero or heroine.
Duplicitous	Being deceitful and dishonest.
Machiavellian	Being cunning and scheming, especially in politics.
Kingship	The state or position of being a king.
Tyrannical	Exercising power in a cruel way.
Usurped	Take (a position of power or importance) illegally or by force... <i>"Richard usurped the throne"</i>
Prophecy	A prediction of what will happen in the future.
Treason	The crime of betraying one's country, especially by attempting to kill or overthrow the sovereign or government.
Power	The capacity or ability to direct or influence the behaviour of others or the course of events.
Soliloquy	An act of speaking a character's thoughts aloud for the audience to hear.
Motif	A repeated image or symbolism.
Hubris	Excessive pride or self-confidence.
Foreshadowing	An indication of what will happen later in the plot.
Zoomorphism	Giving animalistic features to a human or object.
Deceit	Concealing or misrepresenting the truth.

Big Questions:

Power **Morality** **Conflict** **Tragedy**

1. How does Shakespeare explore relationships within the play?
2. What type of love is explored within the play?
3. How is conflict shown?
4. Why did Shakespeare write the play?
5. How is character presented effectively?
6. What was the War of the Roses?
7. Who is Richard III?
8. What is tyranny?
9. Why is the play relevant?

The War of the Roses

The wars between the House of York and the House of Lancaster were called the Wars of the Roses, because each county has a rose as its symbol. Yorkshire is still represented by a white rose, and Lancashire by a red rose, today. The two counties still have a rivalry, even though the last battle between them was five hundred years ago, when this play ends.

Context



Historical Play

Richard III belongs to the genre of Shakespeare's plays known as the histories. The play chronicles the bloody deeds and atrocities perpetrated by its central figure—the murderous and tyrannical King Richard III. Richard invites an eerie fascination, and generations of readers have found themselves seduced by his brilliance with words and his persuasive emotional manipulations even as they are repelled by his evil.

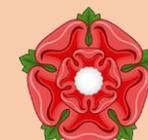
Key Characters

House of York

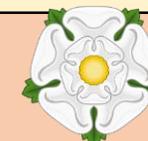
Edward IV
Richard, Duke of Gloucester
Clarence
Edward, Prince of Wales
Richard, Duke of York

House of Lancaster

Queen Margaret
King Henry VI
Lady Anne



Lancaster



York

The Divine Right of the Kings

This was a belief held in the early modern period that kings were appointed by god and therefore should be viewed as divine beings.

Plot

ACT ONE	Richard III follows the events portrayed in Henry VI Part 3. Richard of Gloucester, the brother of King Edward IV, is determined to gain the crown of England for himself, no matter what. His plot begins as he romantically pursues Lady Anne, a widow. He woos her as she accompanies the funeral procession of her father-in-law, King Henry VI (whom Richard murdered). Anne is unable to resist Richard's advances and becomes Duchess of Gloucester. Richard engineers the imprisonment of his elder brother, Clarence, in the Tower of London. Clarence tells his jailer a dream he had of drowning. Shortly afterwards, Richard's hired assassins kill him and place the body in a cask of wine.
ACT TWO	King Edward IV is ill, and Richard is appointed to govern in his place, aided by Lord Hastings and the Duke of Buckingham. Three women mourn their state: Margaret, former queen of Henry VI; Queen Elizabeth, Edward's wife; and the widowed Duchess of York, Richard's mother. Margaret curses Richard and the kingdom.
ACT THREE and FOUR	To counter any claims to the crown, Richard confines his nephews, the young Prince of Wales and his brother, in the Tower of London. Buckingham assists Richard's rise to power by helping persuade the Lord Mayor and the people of London to support their faction. When disease kills Edward, his brother is proclaimed King Richard III. Richard has Lord Hastings, the Lord Chamberlain, executed for attempting to thwart him. Richard also sends an assassin to smother the princes in the tower in their sleep. Buckingham suspects Richard's role in the death of the young princes. Then when he is denied an earldom, Buckingham seeks to raise an army against Richard. Richard captures and executes him. Meanwhile, Richard wants Elizabeth of York, Edward IV's daughter, as a new wife to secure his position as King. He has his current wife, Anne, murdered.
ACT FIVE	Henry Tudor, Earl of Richmond, is the heir to the Lancastrian claim to the throne, and he gathers an army in France to oppose Richard's tyrannical reign. Their armies meet at Bosworth in Leicestershire. The night before the battle, the ghosts of his victims haunt and curse Richard, while appearing to Richmond and blessing him for the battle. Richmond kills Richard III on Bosworth Field and is proclaimed Henry VII of England. He plans to end the 'Wars of the Roses' by marrying Elizabeth of York and becoming the link between the white rose of York to the red rose of Lancaster.