

Section A: Shakespeare

Macbeth

Read the following extract from Act 4 scene 3 of 'Macbeth' and then answer the question that follows.

At this point in the play Macbeth's orders for the death of Macduff's family have been carried out. Malcolm and Macduff have already formed an alliance and have been planning how to overthrow Macbeth.

ROSS

Your castle is surprised, your wife and babes
Savagely slaughtered. To relate the manner,
Were, on the quarry of these murdered deer
To add the death of you.

MALCOLM

Merciful heaven!
What, man! Ne'er pull your hat upon your brows.
Give sorrow words. The grief that does not speak
Whispers the o'erfraught heart and bids it break.

MACDUFF

My children too?

ROSS

Wife, children, servants, all that could be found.

MACDUFF

And I must be from thence!
My wife killed too?

ROSS

I have said.

MALCOLM

Be comforted.
Let's make us med'cines of our great revenge,
To cure this deadly grief.

MACDUFF

He has no children. All my pretty ones?
Did you say all? O hell-kite! All?
What, all my pretty chickens and their dam
At one fell swoop?

MALCOLM

Dispute it like a man.

MACDUFF

shall do so,
But I must also feel it as a man.
I cannot but remember such things were
That were most precious to me. Did heaven look on,
And would not take their part? Sinful Macduff,
They were all struck for thee! Naught that I am,
Not for their own demerits, but for mine,
Fell slaughter on their souls. Heaven rest them now.

Starting with this speech, explain how Shakespeare contrasts the characters of Macbeth and Macduff in the play.

Write about:

- how Shakespeare presents Macduff in this extract
- how Shakespeare presents Macduff and Macbeth in the play as a whole.

[30 marks]