

Macbeth. 1 : Essential Knowledge					
Feudal Era	Macbeth is set in the feudal era. A feudal society was based upon loyalty to the king. Kings and Thanes ruled and peasants worked for them. The world was warlike, religious and many believed in magic.	Scotland	The play is set in Scotland. Scotland was not part of the UK during the feudal era, and had its own king.	Ross and Lennox	These are also areas of Scotland. The Thanes of Ross and Lennox feature in the play.
Thane	A thane is a senior Scottish Lord near the top of the feudal system. They were expected to fight for the king, and were rewarded for their loyalty.	Prince of Cumberland	The Prince of Cumberland is the title given to the man who will be the next king. It did not <i>have</i> to be the son of the king. Macbeth is surprised that he is not named the Prince of Cumberland.	Glamis	Glamis is an area of Scotland. Macbeth is the Thane of Glamis.
Thanes and Ladies	The wife of a thane is called a Lady. Lady Macbeth and Lady MacDuff are important ladies.	Cawdor	Cawdor is an area of Scotland. The Thane of Cawdor is the most important Lord in Scotland.	Dunsinane	Dunsinane is the name of Macbeth's castle at Glamis.
False Thanes	At the end of the play, many thanes swap sides and fight against Macbeth. Macbeth calls them "false thanes".	Fife	Fife is an area of Scotland. MacDuff is the Thane of Fife.	Birnam Wood	Birnam Wood is a wild forest that grows beside Macbeth's castle of Dunsinane.
<b>The English</b>		<b>The Forces of Darkness</b>		<b>Servants</b>	
England	England was a more powerful country than Scotland. At the end of the play, the English army invades Scotland to help Malcolm and Macduff defeat Macbeth.	Wyrd Sisters	Groups of witches were called wyrd sisters. Wyrd means unnatural or strange. They were called sisters even though they might not be related.	Grooms	Grooms were servants who looked after important thanes - they also served as guards.
Siward	Siward is the Earl of Northumberland. He is the English leader that is helping Malcolm.	Hecate	Hecate is a goddess of mischief and hell. She is viewed as the queen of witches.	Porter	The porter is a servant who opens the door to the castle when people knock.
Young Siward	Young Siward is Siward's son. He is fighting with his father and is killed by Macbeth.	Heath	A heath is an empty and wild area of the countryside - Scotland has many heaths.	Physician	Macbeth's physician is a doctor who is also his servant. In the play, he is trying to cure Lady Macbeth's madness.
		Supernatural Soliciting	Supernatural means magical, and soliciting means to make an offer. Witches were able to look into the future using magic and then they would offer to tell people their fortune.		
The seed of Banquo, kings?	When Macbeth says this, he mean's Banquo's descendants. Banquo was a real man, and his descendants (Fleance's great great-grandchildren) would eventually become the kings of Scotland. Shakespeare knew this.				