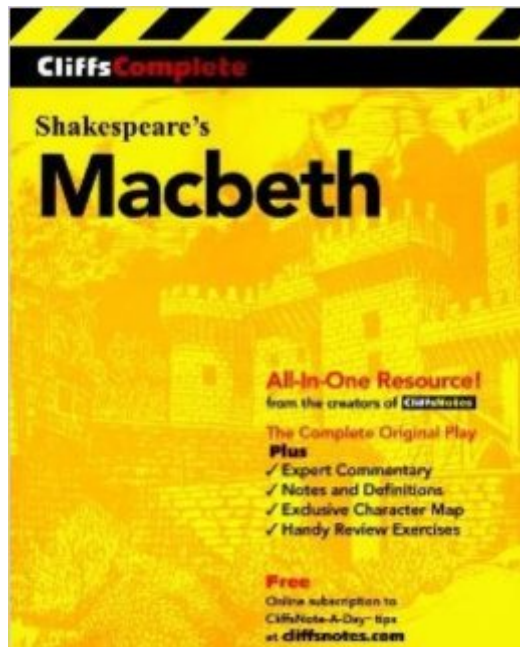


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CliffsComplete Macbeth



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Customer Reviews

I am taking a Shakespeare course at my high school and I bought this to help me in my study of Macbeth. I didn't want a book that "translated" Shakespearean verse into modern English, because that actually hurts more than it helps. You may "understand what's going on" if you read something

like that, but Shakespeare chose the words he did for a reason: he rhymed, made allusions, used alliteration, metaphors, similes, backspeak, poetic compression, and all the rest, for a reason. And you can't find that complexity when you use the modern English versions. So I really loved the Cliffs Complete version. It has the original (or as close as you can come to it) text on one page, and helpful definitions of outdated words on the adjacent page, as well as interpretations of certain references and allusions. I like that the book starts out by talking about Will's life and times. It helps put things into historical context. Readers need to know that King James VI of Scotland and I of England had just ascended the throne, and that Shakespeare would be performing this with his fellow actors in front of him. They need to know that attempts to take the King's life using "black magic" were made, and tales of witches and sorcery abounded. It also talks a bit about the play's themes/motifs, and the writing style/language used. At the beginning of each scene is a brief summary, and at the end a very thorough one. Commentary is easy to understand, and helpful for the more complex bits. My only beef is the lack of interpretation of certain lines of verse - most things can't be taken at face value, and have multiple interpretations that need to be unearthed and mulled over. The margins are good for taking notes, and it's not that tan, grainy book paper that doesn't take lead well. There's also note pages.

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