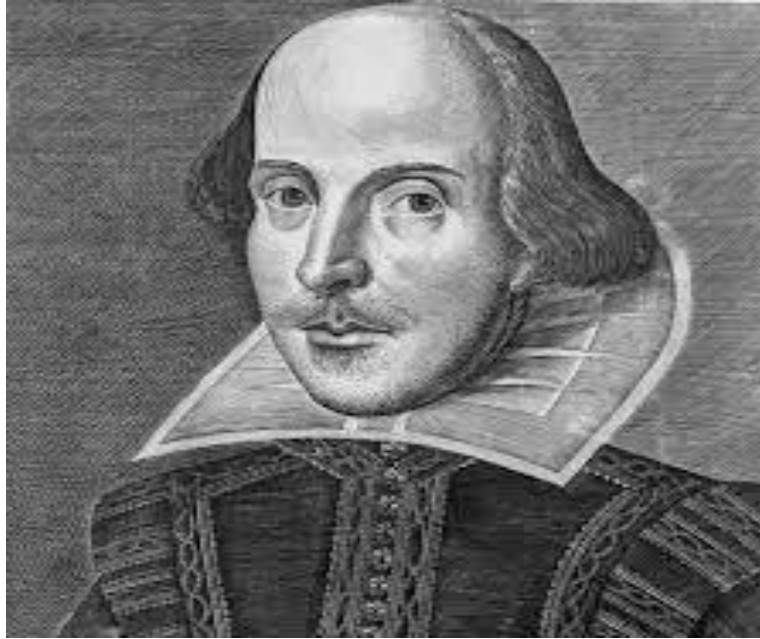


STUDENTS BOOKLET FOR MSCE



WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S MACBETH

ENGLISH LITERATURE COMPREHENSIVE STUDY NOTES

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ABOUT MACBETH

MACBETH is one of Shakespeare's greatest plays and is the shortest tragedy. It is believed to have been written between 1603-1606 in the reign of King James - known today for the King James version of The Bible. MACBETH has been adapted for opera, film, books, and for the stage. Drawn loosely from the historical account of the real King Macbeth of Scotland, many superstitions surround this play and have left it labeled as "cursed." Many actors will not mention the name aloud especially in a theatre and will only call it, "The Scottish Play."

The tale of MACBETH begins in Scotland where three witches plot against the warrior Macbeth, who has just won a great battle for his king, Duncan. The witches meet Macbeth and his friend, Banquo, and predict that Macbeth will become the Thane of Cawdor and "king hereafter" as well as that Banquo will be the father of kings. Excited by this prophecy, Macbeth writes a letter to his wife with the news and upon his return home, he becomes the Thane of Cawdor. Together, they plan to murder King Duncan when he next visits their castle in order to fulfill the next part of the prophecy.

After Macbeth kills Duncan, the King's son flees, and Macbeth becomes king. Despite the success of fulfilling the prophecies, he is plagued with nightmares and fears that Banquo will somehow take his throne. Spurred on by the witches, he has Banquo killed and further sends murderers to kill the family of another popular Thane, Macduff. The guilt affects Lady Macbeth as well until the point that she kills herself. Meanwhile, in England, the King's son, Malcolm, has raised an army to reclaim Scotland. Macduff proves the only one able to defeat Macbeth and he kills him in combat. Malcolm is crowned king and the nation sets to right itself after such horrific events and poor leadership.

MACBETH PLOT SUMMARY

On the outskirts of a battlefield, three witches meet and plot to encounter Macbeth “after the deed is done,” then disappear. Duncan, King of Scotland, along with his sons, Malcolm and Donalbain, hears reports of Macbeth’s valor in battle and news that the rebel, Macdonwald, is slain and Norway driven back. In return for his bravery, Duncan sends a messenger to grant Macbeth the title Thane of Cawdor. Macbeth and his friend and fellow soldier Banquo make their way home after the victory and encounter the three witches. Taken aback by their unearthly appearance, Macbeth and Banquo listen amazed as the witches call Macbeth Thane of Glamis, then Thane of Cawdor and future King of Scotland. The witches go on to prophesy that Banquo, though never a king himself, will beget kings. Macbeth demands to know where the witches came by this information, but the witches disappear. Macbeth and Banquo agree never to speak about the witches’ words.

Reeling from this seemingly supernatural occurrence, Macbeth and Banquo are further amazed when messengers from King Duncan, lords Ross and Angus, deliver the news that Macbeth has been granted the title Thane of Cawdor. Macbeth contemplates the witches’ predictions and wonders if he should assist fate by doing away with King Duncan himself. Suppressing these murderous thoughts, Macbeth accompanies Ross, Angus and Banquo to see the king. Duncan honors Macbeth and Banquo for their deeds in battle and then declares his son, Malcolm, Prince of Cumberland, the official heir to the throne. The entire party departs to Inverness, Macbeth’s home: Macbeth hurries ahead to prepare for their coming.

Having sent word home to his wife about the predictions of the three witches, Macbeth arrives to find her already plotting the king’s murder. Macbeth, at first horrified by his wife’s plans, agrees to kill the king. That night, Lady Macbeth drugs the wine of the king’s guards, which lulls them to sleep. On the way to murder Duncan, Macbeth sees a dagger floating in the air before him, leading him to the king’s chamber.

Macbeth kills Duncan with the guards’ daggers; consumed by guilt, he

flees with the daggers and describes the murders to Lady Macbeth. Confronted by the reality of his actions, Macbeth is afraid to return to the king's chamber with the guards' daggers; Lady Macbeth replaces them herself, setting the scene for the guards to be blamed for the king's murder.

Early in the morning, Macduff and Lennox arrive to meet the king and discover his bloody body. Macbeth rushes into the chamber and kills the two sleeping guards with their daggers. In the ensuing confusion, Malcolm and Donalbain, the king's sons, flee to England and Ireland, respectively. The princes' flight

arouses suspicion of their guilt, and Macbeth is crowned King of Scotland.

Having achieved the throne, Macbeth begins to fear.

Banquo, who witnessed the witches' prophesy and who—according to them—will beget a long line of kings. Macbeth plans a great feast to which he invites

Banquo, then arranges to have him and his son, Fleance, murdered. Banquo is killed, but Fleance escapes. At the feast Macbeth sees the ghost of Banquo sitting at the table. The vision intensifies Macbeth's already erratic behavior and Lady Macbeth sends the lords away. Tormented by guilt and fearing for his future as king, Macbeth decides to visit the witches again.

Some of the Scottish lords have begun to suspect Macbeth's involvement in the murders. Macduff travels to England to meet with Malcolm, who has been taken in by King Edward (Edward the Confessor, 1042-66), in hopes that Edward will support Malcolm by sending an army headed by Siward, Earl of Northumberland. Upon learning of his flight, Macbeth sends murderers to surprise Macduff's castle in his absence and kill his wife and children. Ross delivers this devastating news to Macduff in England. Macduff vows to avenge his family in battle with Macbeth and return the throne to Malcolm, the rightful heir.

Macbeth returns to the witches who summon a series of apparitions with three warnings: first to beware Macduff, second that “none of

woman born shall harm Macbeth” and third that Macbeth will never be defeated until Birnam Wood comes to Dunsinane (the location of Macbeth’s castle.) Feeling confident that the woods will never uproot and move themselves to his home, Macbeth returns to prepare for Malcolm’s attack. Back at the castle, Lady Macbeth is walking and talking in her sleep. Her nurse summons a doctor and together they watch as Lady Macbeth, sleepwalking, relives the night of Duncan’s murder. As Macbeth prepares for war, Lady Macbeth ends her life. Malcolm rallies the English forces and travels to Birnam Wood, where they are met by Scottish lords who have abandoned “the tyrant” Macbeth. To hide their number as they approach the castle, Malcolm instructs the army to cut branches from the forest and ride with them in front. Macbeth is horrified when a messenger tells him that Birnam Wood appears to be marching towards them. He dons his armor and prepares to fight, still convinced that none of woman born can hurt him. Macbeth meets Macduff on the battlefield and confesses this seeming infallibility, but Macduff tells him he was “from his mother’s womb untimely ripped.” Macduff defeats Macbeth, and Malcolm is restored to the throne.



ACT1 SCENE 1

The play opens on a bleak and lonely stretch of land in Scotland. Three Witches report that the battle Macbeth is fighting will be over by sunset; they plan to meet with Macbeth on the barren battlefield, or “heath,” at that time. The witches agree to meet Macbeth. Macbeth and Banquo are coming from the battle against Duncan’s enemies and have won it. Witches plan to meet the two soldiers and make prophecies to them. The Witches seem to know where Macbeth will be. They can see the future. The setting is enhanced by an approaching thunder storm and three Witches foretelling of the evil they foresee for the future: “Fair is foul, and foul is fair,” what is good will be bad and what is bad will be good.

ACT1 SCENE 2

At a camp near Forres, Duncan, King of Scotland, greets his sons, Malcolm and Donalbain, along with Lennox, a Scottish thane, or lord. The three men bring in a bleeding captain who has news of the war with Norway. The captain tells the king that Macbeth was fighting honorably against the Norwegian invaders last he saw. But the captain does not know the outcome of the battle. After the king sends the captain away to have his wounds tended, Ross and Angus, two other Scottish thanes, come in with the news of victory over Norway. King Duncan of Scotland asks a wounded captain for news about the Scots’ battle with the Irish invaders, who are led by the rebel Macdonald. Lennox and Ross report to Duncan how the Thane of Cawdor betrayed him (Duncan) by assisting the enemy forces but still produces no success on Macdonwald. The Captain informs Duncan that Macbeth has defeated Macdonwald, the Norwegian army, the Thane of Cawdor. Macbeth is reported to be brave and fearless. The Captain states the conflict was resolved by Macbeth. The sergeant reports that “doubtful it stood”- the battle could have gone either way. Macdonwald, a Norwegian soldier, was merciless. Macbeth “unseamed him from nave to chops and fixed his heads upon the battlement” (cut him in half and beheaded him). Macbeth is a pretty incredible soldier. The

Sergeant reports of how the battle went back and forth, but the Sergeant can't finish his report because of his wounds. Lennox and Ross finish the report for him. They tell of the Thane of Cawdor and how he assisted the Norwegians fight against Scotland, but in the end Scotland won the war. Out of anger Duncan strips off his title (Thane of Cawdor). Duncan praises Macbeth's effort in the war. The King orders that the thane of Cawdor be put to death and names Macbeth as the new Thane of Cawdor. Duncan gives his title, money and land to Macbeth as a reward (but Macbeth doesn't know it yet). Macbeth is already the Thane of Glamis. Out and hastily sends Ross and Angus to greet Macbeth on the way with this new title on the battle field. Ross leaves to deliver the news to Macbeth.

ACT 1 SCENE 3

On the heath near the battlefield, thunder rolls and the three witches(three weird sisters) appear. The Witches are on the battlefield discussing the evil and disruptive deeds they have been doing (they are planning to confront Macbeth). The First Witch had a disagreement with a sailor's wife because the wife would not give her any of the chestnuts she was eating. This anger the Witches and they decide to torture the woman's husband by creating a windstorm that will blow his ship to all points on the compass. The storm will be so intense he will not be able to rest. They curse him not to sleep for 81 weeks. To top it off they curse him to sail in a ship tossed by storms that they won't allow to sink. They won't let him die, because torture is more evil. They are pretty bitter, cruel and angry.

The first Witch says, "I'll drain him dry as hay." She then brags about the "pilot's thumb," or small bone, she has as a charm. Suddenly a drum beats, the Witches hear a drum and the approach of Macbeth and the third witch cries that Macbeth is coming. Macbeth and Banquo, on their way to the king's court at Forres, come upon the witches and shrink in horror at the sight of the old women.

Macbeth and Banquo enter and are unaware of the Witches at first. Macbeth's first line in the play, "So foul and fair a day I have not seen,"(This idea means that good is bad and bad is good) alludes to

the initial prophecy of the Three Witches. Banquo then spies the Witches, but he is unable to determine if they are men or women. He also wonders whether they are really women, since they seem to have beards like men. Banquo asks whether they are mortal, noting that they don't seem to be "inhabitants o' the' earth" (I.iii.39). "You should be women, and yet your beards forbid me to interpret that you are so." Said Banquo.

The witches make three predictions. They give two to Macbeth.

1. He will become the **Thane** of Cawdor (we know that this will come true, because King Duncan has ordered the execution of the current Thane of Cawdor, but Macbeth doesn't know this yet). The Witches then greet Macbeth with his current title, Thane of Glamis, and two titles he is yet to have, Thane of Cawdor and King. The witches hail Macbeth as thane of Glamis (his original title) and as thane of Cawdor. Macbeth is baffled by this second title, as he has not yet heard of King Duncan's decision.
2. The witches also declare that Macbeth will be king one day. Macbeth will be king (But remember Malcolm and Donalbain are in line for the throne before him). Macbeth is perplexed by their greeting because he knows that both the Thane of Cawdor and King are still alive. Stunned and intrigued, Macbeth presses the witches for more information. But they have turned their attention to Banquo. Banquo, hearing such a good fortune for this friend, inquires as to his own fate. Banquo asks the witches for a prediction too. They speak in **paradoxes**. "Lesser than Macbeth and greater", "Not so happy, yet much happier".
3. They tell him that he will not be king, but his sons will be kings. He is told that he will be lesser and greater than Macbeth; even though he will never be king, his sons will.

The Witches then dissolve into the air, leaving Banquo to wonder if they were real or just an hallucination. Macbeth implores the witches to explain what they meant by calling him thane of Cawdor, but they vanish into thin air.

In disbelief, Macbeth and Banquo discuss the strange encounter. Macbeth fixates on the details of the prophecy. “Your children shall be kings,” he says to his friend, to which Banquo responds: “You shall be king” (I.iii.84).

Banquo and Macbeth are surprised and contemplate the evil nature of the Witches. Macbeth is eager for power; however, Banquo warns him of the evil nature of the Witches and that the outcome of his actions could be disastrous to him. Their conversation is interrupted by the arrival of Ross and Angus, who have come to convey them to the king. Ross and Angus greet them with the news that Macbeth has been named Thane of Cawdor and told and tell Macbeth and Banquo the news of the execution of the Thane of Cawdor by Duncan for treason.

Macbeth, amazed that the witches’ prophecy has come true, asks Banquo if he hopes his children will be kings. Banquo replies that devils often tell half-truths in order to “win us to our harm” (I.iii.121). Banquo warns Macbeth that the witches may have bad intentions. Macbeth ignores his companions and speaks to himself, ruminating upon the possibility that he might one day be king. He wonders whether the reign will simply fall to him or whether he will have to perform a dark deed in order to gain the crown. This means that Macbeth thinks about killing his way to the crown, but he doesn’t want to. The thought of murdering scares him- it is different from killing in war. He decides to let fate take over- he will wait and see what happens. He decides not to kill anyone. At last he shakes himself from his reverie and the group departs for Forres. As they leave, Macbeth whispers to Banquo that, at a later time, he would like to speak to him privately about what has transpired.

ACT 1 SCENE 3 - REVIEW QUESTION

1. How is the language of the witches similar to Act 1 scene 1?
2. What do we learn about the witches power in this scene?
3. What 3 prophecies do the witches give Macbeth?
4. Why does each prophecy make Macbeth feel secure?
5. How does Banquo react to the prophecies?

ACT 1 Scene 4

Duncan inquires if the Thane of Cawdor has been executed and expresses regret as to giving the order to have him killed. Malcolm reports that he confessed to being a traitor- then died. Duncan said “He was a gentleman on whom I built an absolute trust.” Duncan trusts Macbeth as well. Macbeth says he loves the king and lives to serve him. Duncan names his own son, Malcolm to succeed him as king, the “crown prince”. This creates a conflict for Macbeth as Malcolm is another obstacle to overcome toward his goal. In an **aside** Macbeth says that he has two choices 1.) give up and forget about being king or 2.) kill to be king. Macbeth has murder on his mind.

Duncan, Macbeth, Malcolm, Donalbain and all the thanes plan to go to Macbeth’s castle at Inverness to celebrate their recent victory. The scene ends with Macbeth leaving to prepare for Duncan’s visit.

Act 1 Scene 5

Lady Macbeth is reading a letter Macbeth has written her about the witches prediction that he will be king and the prediction that he would gain the title of “Thane of Cawdor” coming true. Lady Macbeth says that Macbeth will be king, but that she thinks he is too nice to kill to get the title. Macbeth is ambitious, but she doesn’t think he has the evil qualities to go with it. She wants Macbeth to come home so she can tell him what to do. Lady Macbeth discloses her ambitious nature and vows to help Macbeth succeed in his ambition to be crowned King. Lady Macbeth “wears the pants in the relationship”. She is in charge. She receives word that King Duncan will be arriving soon and is perplexed because Macbeth has not informed her himself. When Duncan comes to the castle tonight she is going to make sure he dies. She calls on the help of “spirits” to make her evil, strong and powerful (this reminds us of the witches). She wants the strength of a man. She wants to be able to kill without remorse.

When Macbeth returns, they concur that by any means he should be crowned King. She tells him of her plans and that she will take care of everything. Macbeth doesn’t want to hear of it and doesn’t want to do it. Lady Macbeth ignores him and tells him to leave everything to

her. Lady Macbeth tells him he should be a gracious host and they will speak on the matter later that evening.

ACT 1 Scene 6

Duncan, the Scottish lords, and their attendants arrive outside Macbeth's castle. Duncan and the thanes meet with Lady Macbeth. Lady Macbeth welcomes him upon his arrival. When Duncan arrives at Inverness his gentle and loving nature is reinforced. Duncan praises the castle's pleasant environment, and he thanks Lady Macbeth, who has emerged to greet him, for her hospitality. She replies that it is her duty to be hospitable since she and her husband owe so much to their king. Duncan then asks to be taken inside to Macbeth, whom he professes to love dearly. Duncan is eager to meet with Macbeth as he and Lady Macbeth exchange greetings. Duncan is respectful and nice to her. Lady Macbeth is a good faker. She puts on a false face and is polite and nice to Duncan, but we know she is planning his murder as they speak. He is again seen as a caring King interested in his subjects. This creates empathy for the innocent Duncan, and the image of Macbeth as a loyal trustworthy friend to Duncan begins to change.

Macbeth is torn between his loyalty to his king and family and his ambition. He wants to be king, and Lady Macbeth wants to be queen, but he is frazzled and distressed at the thought of murdering for the crown. He is struggling to determine what to do. When Duncan arrives at Inverness his gentle and loving nature is reinforced. He is worried about what might happen if he murders Duncan. He worries about his own death and karma. He knows murdering Duncan is wrong. Macbeth reveals that he has a conscience as he questions his motives for killing Duncan.

Macbeth is torn between his ambition and his conscience. He gives several reasons why he should not kill Duncan: 1) Duncan is his cousin; 2) He is a loyal subject to the King; 3) Duncan is his friend; 4) Duncan has never abused his royal power; and 5) Duncan is a guest in his home. Based on these reasons, Macbeth decides not to follow through with the murder of Duncan.

In other words, Macbeth notes that these circumstances offer him nothing that he can use to motivate himself. He faces the fact that there is no reason to kill the king other than his own ambition, which he realizes is an unreliable guide.

However, Lady Macbeth questions his manhood, calls him a coward, and coaxes Macbeth to follow through with the plan. She knows Macbeth's weak points and uses them to bolster his conviction. Her desire for Macbeth to be king overcomes her basic human compassion and greed seduces her morality. Macbeth becomes victim to his selfish desire for power.

ACT 1 Scene 7

Within the castle Macbeth gives a dinner for Duncan and his guests that evening. Duncan eats and Macbeth leaves dinner to be off on his own. Macbeth is rethinking the plot to kill Duncan. He struggles with his conscience and the fear of eternal damnation if he murders Duncan. This internal conflict is reinforced because Macbeth is Duncan's cousin, he is a beloved king, and Duncan is a guest in his home. He struggles with his conscience and the fear of eternal damnation if he murders Duncan. This internal conflict is reinforced because Macbeth is Duncan's cousin, he is a beloved king, and Duncan is a guest in his home.

When he was rethinking the plot to kill Duncan, Lady Macbeth comes in. She asks her husband why he has left the dinner. Lady Macbeth calls Macbeth a coward if he doesn't go through with the plan to kill Duncan while he sleeps, framing drugged guards outside the king's bedroom. She implies that he is less than a man for faltering in his plan to murder Duncan. Her resolute desire and quest for power sway Macbeth to agree with her and he decides to go through with the plan. The plan:

1. she'll give guards a potion and get them drunk (to make them sleep on duty)
2. he'll go in and murder the king with the guard's knives (framing them)
3. king will be found and murder will be placed on guards

Lady Macbeth got the guards drunk and drugged their wine. She is calm. Lady Macbeth is alone while Macbeth is killing Duncan. If Duncan hadn't looked

like her father she says she would have killed him herself. Lady Macbeth is clearly the one in charge. Macbeth enters and is frantic. His hands are covered in blood. He is full of regret for the murder. He is convinced the guards (or Malcolm and Donalbain) woke up and were talking while he was murdering. His guilt is weighing on him. Macbeth forgot to leave the daggers on the guards. Lady Macbeth chastises him and takes them back and smears the blood on the guards to incriminate them. She calls the sleeping and the dead "pictures". Macbeth is left alone. Knocking is heard at the castle door. Macbeth says he wishes the knocking could wake Duncan. His ways a whole ocean couldn't wash the blood from his hands. His emotional state isn't good. Lady Macbeth talks about how easy it was to kill Duncan and says "a little water clears us of this deed". They wash up and put on their nightgowns. Macbeth has taken the "female" role, and Lady Macbeth the "male".

Duncan is dead. Malcolm and Donalbain ran away. They look guilty of their father's murder. They separated. One went to England, one went to Ireland. Macbeth freaked out and killed the guards. This made him look suspicious and guilty to Duncan's sons, Macduff and Banquo.

ACT I QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What atmosphere is established in Scene 1?
2. How does Banquo describe the Witches when he first sees them upon the heath?
3. Macbeth is reported to be a valiant soldier in Act I. The line, "Till he unseamed him from the nave to th'chops And fixed his head upon our battlements", paints a different Macbeth. What can you infer from that line?
4. In Scene 1 the Witches say, "Foul is fair and fair is foul." Which characters do you consider fair or foul?

5. Why do you think Shakespeare opened Scene 3 with the Witches discussing an evil deed they have committed?
6. What prophecies do the Witches make for Macbeth and Banquo?
7. What does Lady Macbeth mean when she says of Macbeth, “Yet do I fear thy nature. It is too full o’ the milk of human kindness To catch the nearest way”?
8. Macbeth is having second thoughts about killing Duncan. What are the reasons he gives? Based on these reasons what does he decide?
9. What does Lady Macbeth mean when she says, “Was hope drunk Wherein you dressed yourself? Hath it slept since? And wakes it now to look so green and pale”?
10. What decision does Macbeth make at the end of Act I? What has Lady Macbeth said to influence his decision?

ANSWERS

1. The scene is filled with Witches, thunder and lightning, which creates a dark and sinister atmosphere.
2. He calls them “withered” and “wild” in their attire; “That they look not like the inhabitants o’ the’ earth;” and that they “should be women...yet [their] beards forbid [him] to interpret that [they] are so.”
3. Macbeth is a cold-blooded killer on the battlefield.
4. The Witches are foul because they are evil. Macbeth and Banquo seem to be fair because of their loyalty and bravery. However, Macbeth reveals his plan to murder Duncan and his character is viewed differently. Lady Macbeth is foul. Macdonwald is foul because he is a traitor. The Captain and Duncan are fair because the Captain fought bravely and the King supports him and is compassionate regarding the Captain’s injury.
5. The Witches are capable of creating situations that are evil and destructive. However, their powers are limited as they cannot destroy, but they have the power to create an atmosphere where destruction can easily occur.
6. The Witches state that Macbeth will be Thane of Cawdor and King. They go on to tell Banquo that his son’s will be kings.

7. Lady Macbeth feels that Macbeth is kind and he may not be able to overcome his fears to kill Duncan. She fears his conscience will override his ambition to be King.
8. Macbeth is torn between his ambition and his conscience. He gives several reasons why he should not kill Duncan: 1) Duncan is his cousin; 2) He is a loyal subject to the King; 3) Duncan is his friend; 4) Duncan has never abused his royal power; and 5) Duncan is a guest in his home. Based on these reasons, Macbeth decides not to follow through with the murder of Duncan.
9. Lady Macbeth is questioning Macbeth why he has changed his mind about killing Duncan. She is asking him what has happened to his ambition.
10. Lady Macbeth persuades Macbeth to follow through with the plan to murder Duncan. She calls him a coward and less than a man, prodding Macbeth to follow her plan. Macbeth agrees to murder Duncan that night.

Act 11 Scene 1

Banguo meets his son, Fleance, in the court of the castle in the middle of the night because he can't sleep. There is something in the air that disturbs Banquo and Fleance and they cannot sleep. As they discuss the reasons for their inability to sleep, Macbeth joins them. Banquo is surprised that Macbeth is still awake because Duncan is already in bed. Banquo tells Macbeth that he dreamed of the witches. Macbeth says that he wants to talk with Banquo sometime about the witches' prophecies. Macbeth responds by saying, "I think not of them." Both agree to discuss the matter at a later date. Macbeth sends the reluctant Banquo off to bed then. Banquo and Fleance retire to their chambers to sleep.

When Banquo and Fleance are gone to bed, Macbeth tells a servant to tell Lady Macbeth to prepare his drink which is the signal for drugging the soldiers outside Duncan's door.

As Macbeth waits for the signal from his wife, he imagines that he sees a dagger hovering in front of him seeming to point the way towards Duncan's murder. It also seems to him that the handle is pointed

toward his hand as if it beckons him to clutch it and complete Duncan's murder. However, he concludes that it must just be only hallucination, a manifestation of his feelings of guilt in his plans to kill Duncan. He sees the evilness of what is planned but when the bell signals him to murder Duncan, Macbeth goes to complete the treachery against the king.

Act 2 Scene 2

Lady Macbeth is filled with anticipation for Macbeth's safe return and the completion of Duncan's murder.

Her fears surface when she is startled by a noise that turns out to be nothing more than an owl screeching. She is concerned that the plot may not be completed and that Macbeth will be discovered before Duncan is murdered.

Lady Macbeth reveals in a soliloquy that when she placed the daggers in Duncan's chamber she considered killing Duncan herself. She remarks that if Duncan hadn't looked so much like her own father, she might have murdered him herself. Duncan looked too much like her father and she could not commit the act herself. Macbeth emerges from Duncan's chambers, covered in blood. Macbeth enters still carrying the bloody daggers with which he used to kill Duncan. When Macbeth returns he is distraught and regrets the murder he has committed. Clearly shaken by what he has done, Macbeth rambles on about how he has murdered sleep and how disturbed he was that he could not say "amen" to the guards' prayers. Macbeth heard the body guards praying and could not say "Amen" when they finished their prayers. He feels haunted and cursed. Macbeth reports to Lady Macbeth that as he stepped past Duncan's guards, he heard a voice cry "Sleep no more! Macbeth hath murdered sleep." Macbeth shall sleep no more. In his tormented state, Macbeth leaves the murder scene carrying the bloody daggers. Lady Macbeth urges him to return the daggers and place them by the slain Duncan, but Macbeth refuses to return to the chamber. Lady Macbeth takes the daggers from him and returns the daggers and stains her hands with Duncan's blood. While she is gone, Macbeth hears a knocking and imagines that he

sees hands plucking at his eyes. He is guilt-stricken and mourns. “Will all great Neptune’s ocean wash this blood/clean from my hand?”. When Lady Macbeth hears his words upon reentering, she states that her hands are of the same colour but her heart remains shamelessly unstained. She remarks how easily water will wash away their crimes. Meanwhile, a knocking sound can be heard throughout the castle. They hear a knock and retire to their sleeping quarters before the Porter arrives at the door. At the end of this scene, Macbeth states, “wake Duncan with thy knocking, I would thou couldst”. Here, he essentially says that he wishes the knocking would wake Duncan up, showing that he does indeed feel regret for what he has done.

Act 11 Scene 3

Macduff and Lennox have arrived at Macbeth’s castle at Inverness at daybreak. A porter stumbles through the hallway to answer the knocking, grumbling comically about the noise and mocking whoever is on the other side of the door. He compares himself to a porter at the gates (gatekeeper) of hell and asks, —Who’s there, i’ th’ name of Beelzebub?‖ (2.3.3). In other words, the Porter hears knocking at the gate and imagines that he is the Porter at the door to Hell. He imagines admitting a farmer who has committed suicide after a bad harvest, an “equivocator” who has committed a sin by swearing to half-truths, and an English tailor who stole cloth to make fashionable clothes and visited brothels. Since it is too “cold for hell” at the gate, he opens the door instead of continuing with a longer catalogue of sinners. Outside stand Macduff and Lennox who scold him for taking so long to respond to their knocking. In other words, Macduff and Lennox enter, and Macduff complains about the porter’s slow response to his knock. The porter says that he was up late carousing (he was tired after drinking until late) and rambles on humorously about the effects of alcohol, which he says provokes red noses, sleepiness, and urination. He adds that drink also —provokes and unprovokes‖ lechery—it inclines one to be lustful but takes away the ability to have sex (2.3.27). The Porter jokes and carries on with Macduff about his

drinking and lack of success with women the night before as Macbeth joins them.

Macbeth enters the scene, and Macduff asks him if the king is awake, saying that Duncan asked to see him early that morning. In short, clipped sentences, Macbeth says that Duncan is still asleep. He offers to take Macduff to the king. Macduff leaves or goes off to see the king while Lennox and Macbeth discuss the violent storm they had the night before. Lennox remarks on the fierce storm that raged the night before. Lennox describes the storms that raged the previous night, asserting that he cannot remember anything like it in all his years. With a cry of —O horror, horror, horror! (Lennox tells Macbeth that the weather by night, the earth shook, and ghostly voices were heard prophesying ominously).

Macduff comes running back from the room, shouting that the king has been murdered. This means that Macduff rushes back to the courtyard with the news that the king had been murdered. Macbeth and Lennox rush to the chamber and Macduff sounds the alarm. Macbeth laments the king's death, proclaiming that he wishes he were dead instead of the king.

Lady Macbeth appears at the scene, expressing her horror that such a deed could be done under her roof. General chaos ensues as the other nobles and their servants come streaming in. The guards covered in blood and clueless about the previous night's events are immediately blamed for the murder. Macbeth confesses when he saw the slain Duncan he was filled with rage and murdered Duncan's guards. He felt they were the murderers because they were smeared with blood and had the daggers in their hands.

Malcolm and Donalbain arrive sometime later on the scene. Lennox blames the regicide on the guards by pointing to the incriminating bloody evidence. Macbeth states that he has already killed the bodyguards in a grief-stricken rage. Malcolm and Donalbain are told that their father has been killed, most likely by his chamberlains (guards), who were found with bloody daggers. They discuss the murderer wondering if their own lives are in danger. Malcolm and

Donalbain whisper to each other that they are not safe, since whoever killed their father will probably try to kill them next. They agree that for their own safety, they should free the scene.

Macduff seems suspicious of these new deaths, which Macbeth explains by saying that his fury at Duncan's death was so powerful that he could not restrain himself. Confusion and feigns shock ensues and Lady Macbeth faints. Both Macduff and Banquo call for someone to attend to her. Lady Macbeth is taken away to be helped off-stage, while Banquo and Macbeth rally the lords to meet and discuss the murder.

Donalbain and Malcolm fear foul play has been committed by someone close to them. "Where we are, / There's daggers in men's smiles; the nea'er in blood, / The nearer bloody." Duncan's sons resolve to flee the court. Donalbain says he will go to Ireland, while Malcolm agrees to go to England. They flee the castle in fear of their own lives while Macduff, Macbeth, and the others agree to meet to discuss the catastrophe.

Act 11 Scene 4

The following day, Ross, a thane, walks outside the castle with an old man. They discuss the strange event/storm of the night that has taken place. Ross says that Duncan's horses became enraged, broke out of their stalls, and ate each other (Duncan's horses have gone mad and eaten each other). Other unnatural events are going on with the birds and the weather. They fear all of this has to do with Duncan's murder.

Macduff emerges from the castle and joins the discussion. He tells Ross that the thanes have decided Macbeth should be next king and that they are accompanying him to Scone to be crowned. It is also revealed that Duncan's body has been taken to the family plot at Colmekill. Macduff adds that the chamberlains seem the most likely murderers, and that they may have been paid off by someone to kill Duncan.

Meanwhile, blame has been placed on Malcolm and Donalbain for the murders since they have suspiciously disappeared from the scene.

This means suspicion has now fallen on the two princes, Malcolm and Donalbain, because they have fled the scene. It is supposed they paid the guards to kill Duncan. Macduff returns to his home at Fife, and Ross departs for Scone to see the new king's coronation

Macduff joins the discussion and it is revealed that Duncan's body has been taken to the family plot at Colmekill and Macbeth has been named to succeed Duncan as King. The coronation will take place at Scone. Ross plans to go to Scone and Macduff leaves for Fife, of which he is Thane. Macduff fears the worst is yet to come.

Act 2 Scenes - Review Question

Macbeth has reached the point where he must decide whether he will murder King Duncan or not. Remember Lady Macbeth's attempts to persuade him. What should he do? List the reasons for and against killing King Duncan below.

Act 1 Analysis

The second act opens with Banquo and his son, Fleance, walking the halls at Inverness, unable to sleep. Banquo has been plagued by dreams of the Witches. As he walks with Fleance, he hands him the sword and dagger he is wearing. Shakespeare uses this scene to foreshadow Fleance's eventual assumption of his father's role. Symbolically, the torch is being passed from father to son.

Macbeth enters and is confronted by Banquo, who was unable to distinguish him in the dim light. Macbeth greets Banquo as "a friend." This is ironic because in the next act, Macbeth proves to be much less than a friend. They discuss the prophecies of the Witches, Banquo saying he has dreamed of them, while Macbeth says he has not thought at all about them. Yet, they are all Macbeth has thought about. Macbeth has planned the murder of the King because of the prophecies.

After Banquo and his son have departed, Macbeth sends his servant to tell his wife to strike the bell when his drink is ready. This is his signal to enter Duncan's chamber and kill him. As he waits, a vision of

a dagger appears floating before him. He reaches for it, but is unable to grasp it. He thinks the dagger is a product of his “heat-oppressed brain.” The dagger beckons Macbeth toward Duncan’s room and it becomes covered in blood as Macbeth approaches the chamber of the sleeping King. Macbeth’s conscience creates the vision of the dagger, either to halt his plans by revealing the horror of the act or, as Macbeth believes, to beckon him forward. But, if Macbeth’s will were about to falter, Lady Macbeth’s signal, the ringing of the bell, provides him with the courage to finish what he has started.

Lady Macbeth greatly anticipates the return of Macbeth from the murderous act. While she waits, she gathers strength from the knowledge that she has drugged the drinks of Duncan’s servants. “That which hath made them drunk hath made me bold;/ What hath quenched them hath given me fire!” Because the servants will be unable to stop Macbeth, Lady Macbeth knows that their plot to eliminate the king will be unimpeded. Yet, the act of murder and a guilty conscience cause her to jump at the screeching of an owl. She then refers to the “fatal bellman,” a man that rang a bell outside a condemned man’s cell encouraging him to confess his sins.

She is inferring that Duncan is a condemned man and should repent his sins. Also, she could be referring to Macbeth, as he will be a condemned man if he is caught committing the murder. Even if he is not caught, the murder of Duncan is a sin that condemns Macbeth’s soul.

Lady Macbeth asked to be “unsexed” in an earlier scene so that she may have the necessary strength to support Macbeth in his quest for the throne. However, when she placed the daggers by the sleeping Duncan, she was unable to kill him because he looked too much like her father. Her conscience surfaced and she deferred to Macbeth to complete the evil plan.

Having killed Duncan, Macbeth returns to his wife’s side in a dazed and confused state. He then tells his wife that as he approached Duncan, one of the servants cried out “Murder” in his sleep. This woke both the servants up. One then said “God bless us!” and the other

“Amen!” He is concerned that he could not say “amen” in return. He wanted to, but he found the words stuck in his throat. Macbeth is unable to receive the blessing he desires because of the sin he is about to commit.

After he has killed Duncan, his conscience begins to project voices that he thinks the entire castle can hear. “Still it cried ‘Sleep no more!’ to all the house;/ ‘Glamis hath murdered sleep, and therefore Cawdor/ Shall sleep no more; Macbeth shall sleep no more.’” Macbeth feels so guilty for the act that his mind projects voices that condemn him. He will no longer have the peace of mind that he had before the murder.

Lady Macbeth counsels her husband to ignore the voices that he thinks he has heard because dwelling upon them and the act he has just committed could drive him mad. She also tells him to return the bloody daggers to Duncan’s room. Macbeth is unable to face his crime again. So Lady Macbeth takes the daggers back. She returns with her hands now covered with blood like her husband. By having Lady Macbeth handle the daggers and get blood on her hands, Shakespeare is showing that even though she never commits an act of murder, her participation in planning makes her just as guilty.

When they hear the knock at the door, both adjourn to their sleeping quarters to establish an alibi if someone should come looking for them. Macbeth again expresses his regret at killing Duncan when he says, “Wake Duncan with thy knocking! I would thou/ couldst!”

In order to give the audience a moment to recuperate from the heavy drama of the last scene, scene 3 opens with the comic banter of the porter at the door. He talks with Macduff about the effects of drinking on the body. But besides a bit of comedy, the scene also serves to establish a diabolical atmosphere around Macbeth’s castle. The porter curses in the “name of Beelzebub.” He does not call to God, instead he calls forth the name of the devil. He then hypothesizes as to who is knocking at the door. He names three people who would knock at the gates of Hell; a farmer that hanged himself, an equivocator that commits treason, and a tailor who steals cloth. He even talks about

the people who walk the way to the “everlasting bonfire.” These references to Hell serve to show the audience that Macbeth is creating a Hell within Scotland.

Macbeth then enters and Macduff goes to wake the king. While he is gone, Lennox—who arrived with Macduff—tells Macbeth of the turbulent night. The woeful weather outside mimics the horrible events inside Macbeth’s castle. Macduff then returns with the news of the king’s murder. Macbeth, faking astonishment, rushes off with Lennox to see the body. He later claims to have slain the servants, whom he had implicated in the murder, in a fit of rage over their heinous deed. Lady Macbeth continues her charade by fainting at the news.

Duncan’s sons, Malcolm and Donalbain, fear that the real killers were not the servants, but someone closer to them. They fear that whoever is ambitious enough to kill the king will come after them as well. “This murderous shaft that’s shot/Hath not yet lighted, and our safest way/Is to avoid the aim.” Malcolm flees to England and Donalbain to Ireland. Once they have fled Scotland, they are considered guilty in their own father’s murder.

There is a time lapse between the last two scenes of the second act. The Old Man and Ross discuss the events that have transpired over the last few days. They talk of strange portents and how ambition is the ruin of men.

The audience can infer that Macbeth’s ambition will ruin him. This last scene also shows how Macbeth is still unable to look upon the body of Duncan. He goes to Scone to be crowned instead of Colmekill for the funeral.

ACT II QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Study Questions

1. What are Banquo’s concerns about the Witches prophecy? What is Macbeth’s response?
2. What does Macbeth see when Banquo and Fleance leave and what does he say about it?
3. What was Lady Macbeth unable to do in Duncan’s chamber? Why?

4. What was Macbeth's reaction when he returned from Duncan's chamber? What did he say?
5. Who was sleeping in the second chamber? Why did Shakespeare include that information in the play?
6. Macbeth is unable to return to Duncan's chamber with the bloody daggers. Why do you think he fears going back?
7. What does Lennox say to Macbeth about the previous night?
8. Who discovers that Duncan has been murdered?
9. Why does Macbeth say he has murdered the guards?
10. Why do Donalbain and Malcolm leave? Where do they say they are going?

ANSWERS

1. He has had bad dreams about the Witches and part of what they said has come true. Macbeth says he has not thought about them. Banquo would like to discuss the matter with Macbeth.
2. He sees a bloody dagger floating before him. He says that it is only a dream.
3. She was unable to kill Duncan because he looked like her father.
4. He was upset and feeling guilt. He said that "it was a sorry sight." He also stated that he had murdered sleep and he could not say amen when he needed to.
5. Donalbain was sleeping. This puts suspicion on him.
6. He cannot face the murder that he has committed. He feels too much guilt.
7. Lennox said that there was a bad storm and he has never seen one this fierce in his life.
8. Macduff discovers Duncan's slain body.
9. Macbeth says he murdered the guards because he felt they killed Duncan. He was so angry and grief stricken he could not control his rage.
10. Donalbain and Malcolm because they fear for their own lives. Donalbain goes to Ireland and Malcolm goes to England.

Act III Summary and Analysis

New Characters

Murderers: hired killers

Hecate: a Witch

ACT 3 Scene 1

Banquo is suspicious (based on witch's predictions) that MacBeth played a nasty role in getting crowned king. In the royal palace at Forres, Banquo paces and thinks about the coronation of Macbeth and the prophecies of the weird sisters. The witches foretold that Macbeth would be king and that Banquo's line would eventually sit on the throne. Banquo says that the prophecy has come true for Macbeth. He wants to wonder if his predictions will also come true, but denies that temptation (FOIL). He would like the prophecy the Witches made about his sons to come true also. Banquo feels that he must appear loyal to Macbeth, yet he does not trust him.

Macbeth enters, attired as king. He is followed by Lady Macbeth, now his queen, and the court. Macbeth and Lady Macbeth ask Banquo to attend the feast they will host that night (says to Banquo to be sure and join them at the banquet that evening). Banquo accepts their invitation and says that he and his son plans to go for a ride on his horse for the afternoon. Macbeth mentions that they should discuss the problem of Malcolm and Donalbain. The brothers have fled from Scotland and may be plotting against his crown.

Banquo departs, and Macbeth dismisses his court. When Banquo leaves, MacBeth gets bitter thinking about all he has risked to become king... only to have it for such a short while and then turn it all over to Banquo's sons forever more. He isn't pleased with that thought. And he is even more upset that Banquo could be 'on to him' since he knows of the witches to begin with.

He is left alone in the hall with a single servant, to whom he speaks about some men who have come to see him. Macbeth asks if the men are still waiting and orders that they be fetched. Once the servant has gone, Macbeth begins a soliloquy.

He muses on the subject of Banquo, reflecting that his old friend is the only man in Scotland whom he fears. He notes that if the witches' prophecy is true, his will be a —fruitless crown,|| by which he means

that he will not have an heir (3.1.62). This means that Macbeth is worried that the prophecy of Banquo's sons being kings will come true. His reign will be barren if his sons do not succeed him.

The servant reenters with Macbeth's two visitors. Macbeth reminds the two men, who are murderers he has hired, of a conversation he had with them the day before, in which he chronicled the wrongs Banquo had done them in the past. Macbeth has met with them before and told them how Banquo tricked people and isn't really a good man. Now he tells them that he is a cancer that must be killed for the good of Scotland. He would have him killed publically BUT (he doesn't dare allow Banquo to speak the truth) certain people are loyal to both he and Banquo and it would be difficult for him to be responsible for that. So doing it quietly is better. Oh – and kill Fleance too! He asks if they are angry and manly enough to take revenge on Banquo. They reply that they are, and Macbeth accepts their promise that they will murder his former friend Banquo. Macbeth reminds the murderers that Fleance must be killed along with his father and tells them to wait within the castle for his command.

ACT 3, Scene 2

Lady MacBeth is talking to herself and admitting that it just wasn't worth it. They invested everything they had to becoming king/queen – thinking that it would bring them happiness, but they are more miserable than ever. Her conscience is really bothering her.

Indeed in the castle, Lady Macbeth expresses despair and sends a servant to fetch her husband. Macbeth enters and Lady Macbeth questions Macbeth as to his plans, but he does not inform her of the plan to kill Banquo and Fleance. She encourages Macbeth not to think about Banquo or the events that have taken place. He tells his wife that he too is discontented, saying that his mind is –full of scorpions (3.2.37). He feels that the business that they began by killing Duncan is not yet complete because there are still threats to the throne that must be eliminated. He is toying with her. He keeps mentioning Banquo and hinting that he has a plan, but won't tell her. This shows how their relationship has changed from him telling her everything

and taking her counsel – to regretting listening to her (although he acted on his own) and not telling her his plans. He says sometimes it is better not to know. Later Macbeth tells his wife that he has planned—a deed of dreadful note—for Banquo and Fleance and urges her to be jovial and kind to Banquo during the evening's feast, in order to lure their next victim into a false sense of security.

ACT 3 Scene 3

It is dusk, a third murderer joins the two Macbeth had hired in the previous scene. They linger in a wooded park outside the palace. They wait along the path that Banquo and his son travel. Banquo and Fleance approach on their horses and dismount. They light a torch, and the murderers set upon them. The murderers kill Banquo, who dies urging his son to flee and to avenge his death. One of the murderers extinguishes the torch, and in the darkness Fleance escapes. The murderers leave with Banquo's body to find Macbeth and tell him what has happened.

ACT 3 Scene 4

Three murderers show up to ambush Banquo and Fleance. The third was also hired by MacBeth, but separately (supposedly to show that MacBeth isn't trusting anyone). They kill Banquo, but Fleance escapes. Murderers leave to tell King MacBeth.

Onstage stands a table heaped with a feast. Macbeth and Lady Macbeth enter as king and queen, followed by their court, whom they bid welcome. As Macbeth walks among the company, the first murderer appears at the doorway. Macbeth speaks to him for a moment, learning that Banquo is dead and that Fleance has escaped. The news of Fleance's escape angers Macbeth—if only Fleance had died, he muses, his throne would have been secure.

In other words, Macbeth learns that the murderers have not been entirely successful. They killed Banquo, but Fleance was able to escape. Macbeth takes joy in learning that Banquo is dead, because he cannot produce any more sons. He says he will deal with the matter of Fleance later.

Returning to his guests, Macbeth goes to sit at the head of the royal table but finds Banquo's ghost appears and sitting in his chair. Horror-struck, Macbeth speaks to the ghost, which is invisible to the rest of the company. Macbeth responds to the vision. No one but Macbeth can see the ghost. Lady Macbeth makes excuses for her husband, saying that he occasionally has such —visions‖ and that the guests should simply ignore his behavior. Lady Macbeth assures her guests that Macbeth has had these attacks since he was a child and it will soon pass. Then the ghost disappears and MacBeth is 'normal'. He explains to her that he is seeing a ghost and it appeared so REAL. Then she speaks to Macbeth, questioning his manhood. She urges Macbeth to resume his role as host disappears. She reminds him of the guests all staring at him – and he apologizes. As quickly as he offers his apology to his guest, the ghost appears again. Macbeth loses control .He is looking more crazy than ever. Lady MacBeth is really mad and said he spoiled everyone's mood... He gets mad at her that he is the one suffering for everything and she just isn't even trying to understand what he is going through. Ross asks if he can help, what sights did he see... and Lady MacBeth is worried her husband will spill the beans. Lady Macbeth fears he will confess to the murder of Duncan. She asks her guest to leave quickly. The ghost disappears. Macbeth mutters that —blood will have blood‖ and tells Lady Macbeth that he has heard from a servant-spy that Macduff intends to keep away from court, behavior that verges on treason . He says that he will visit the witches again tomorrow in the hopes of learning more about the future and about who may be plotting against him. He resolves to do whatever is necessary to keep his throne, declaring: —I am in blood / Stepped in so far that, should I wade no more, / Returning were as tedious as go o'er‖ (3.4.135–137). Both he and his wife realize he is losing his mind because of lack of sleep. Lady Macbeth says that he needs sleep, and they retire to their bed.

Act 4 Scene 5

Upon the stormy heath, the witches meet with Hecate, the goddess of witchcraft. Hecate is another Witch that Shakespeare introduces to

the audience. Hecate is upset because the other Witches did not consult her before they spoke to Macbeth but declares that she will take over as supervisor of the mischief. Hecate assures them she will conjure a spell that will lead Macbeth to a disastrous fate. She says that when Macbeth comes the next day, as they know he will, they must summon visions and spirits whose messages will fill him with a false sense of security and —draw him on to his confusion. She sends them to cast the spell and prepare the charm, as Macbeth plans to visit them soon. Hecate vanishes, and the witches go to prepare their charms.

ACT 3 Scene 6

That night, somewhere in Scotland, Lennox walks with another lord, discussing what has happened to the kingdom. Banquo's murder has been officially blamed on Fleance, who has fled. Nevertheless, both men suspect Macbeth, whom they call a —tyrant, in the murders of Duncan and Banquo. Lennox and the other guy are suspicious of MacBeth. They are not buying that Duncan's sons had him killed. Or that Fleance killed his father. People are going hungry in Scotland now and fighting constantly. The lord tells Lennox that Macduff has gone to England, where he will join Malcolm in pleading with England's King Edward for aid. Macduff has been called a traitor, but it is known that he went to England to find the rightful king, Malcolm. Someone told the king (MacBeth)...

The men are praying for Macduff's safety and for Malcolm's return. And hoping the tyrannical reign will end soon. News of these plots has prompted Macbeth to prepare for war.

In other words, Lennox and the lord express their hope that Malcolm and Macduff will be successful and that their actions can save Scotland from Macbeth. Lennox says to a Lord that he feels it is a pity that Banquo was killed. He goes on to imply that Macbeth is responsible for both Duncan's and Banquo's deaths; even though the general consensus is that Fleance killed his own father, as did Malcolm and Donalbain. Lennox does not believe either had anything to do with the deaths of their fathers. Macbeth has stolen Malcolm's

birthright to be king and Malcolm is in England trying to secure an army to gain his birthright back. Macduff has gone to join in his effort. Lennox and the Lord hope that Malcolm will be successful in restoring peace to Scotland.

ACT 3 ANALYSIS

Banquo says Macbeth has attained all the Witches said he would and at great cost to everyone; he feels his own prophecy should come true as well. The friendship between Banquo and Macbeth has been dissolved.

Banquo no longer trusts his friend and must be cautious in his presence. Macbeth knows that all the Witches have said has come true and fears Banquo's prophecy will also come true.

Macbeth feels his own sons should succeed him, not Banquo's. Macbeth states his fears and concerns, yet, he does not inform Lady Macbeth of what he has planned. Macbeth feels he must resolve this conflict and he hires murderers to kill Banquo and his son. He feels this will guarantee that his heirs will succeed him.

Macbeth does not express remorse or concern over the planning of Banquo and Fleance's murder, as he did with Duncan's murder. By now, he is so blinded with ambition and power and will stop at nothing to secure his powerful position.

Lady Macbeth and Macbeth discuss the problems they are having even though they have achieved what they wanted. Macbeth feels he has the Banquo situation in hand and assures Lady Macbeth not to worry about it.

They both agree that they must continue to hide their true feelings at the banquet. Macbeth says that evil deeds are made stronger through additional evil deeds.

The murderers leave open the possibility of the prophecy being fulfilled because they are unsuccessful with the ambush on Banquo and his son. Banquo is killed, but his son Fleance escapes. Macbeth must still face the fact that Fleance is alive, yet he is delighted that the source has been killed. He does not have to worry about additional sons, only Fleance himself.

This scene also introduces a third murderer. He says he was sent by Macbeth, yet there is no other mention of him in the play. There is much speculation as to the identity of the third murderer. When Macbeth is performed on stage, the third murderer is sometimes hooded so that his features cannot be seen.

At the feast, Macbeth's fears and guilt overpower him and he loses control over his inner thoughts. He sees Banquo's ghost. The vision is horrible and he speaks openly to the ghost. Lady Macbeth is unable to control

Macbeth, yet she urges him to reign in his fears and remember his guests. Her attempts are futile and she fears he will confess to the murder of Duncan to all the guests. This is the first time Macbeth gives way to a public expression of his inner conflicts; which marks a turning point in the drama. Macbeth continues to manifest his guilt through the vision of the ghost he can only see, and Lady Macbeth asks the guests to leave quickly as Macbeth seems to be getting worse. She has completely lost control of Macbeth.

Almost as quickly as the guests leave, Macbeth's fears surface concerning Macduff's not attending the banquet. Macbeth is fearful that, "Blood, they say: blood will have blood." He is paranoid about everyone and what their behavior means. He must control the situation even if that means killing someone to secure his position and remain in power. Macbeth feels his only recourse is to consult with the Witches as to his fate as they seem to see into the future.

Hecate, the Mistress of the Witches, is agitated that she was not informed as to the events concerning

Macbeth. She plans to contribute to his fate by creating a situation that will enable Macbeth to create his own demise. This creates drama and reinforces the power the Witches have in the play.

Act III Questions and Answers

Study Questions

1. As Act III begins Banquo is reflecting on what has happened to Macbeth. What three events does he state and what does he hope for himself?
2. What reason does Macbeth give the Murderers for wanting Banquo killed? What reason does he give for not doing it himself?
3. Why do you think Macbeth does not tell Lady Macbeth about his plan to murder Banquo and Fleance?
4. When Banquo's ghost enters the banquet what is Macbeth's reaction?
5. What does Lady Macbeth say to the guest is the reason for his behavior?
6. Does Macbeth recognize the ghost? How do you know he does?
7. What does Hecate say she is going to do to Macbeth? Why does she think he will respond to her?
8. What does Lennox say about Malcolm, Donalbain, and Fleance?
9. Where has Macduff gone and why?
10. What does Lennox hope for?

Answers

1. Banquo says that Macbeth was made King, Thane of Cawdor and Thane of Glamis. He hopes his sons will be Kings.
2. Macbeth fears for his own life if Banquo lives. Macbeth says that he and Banquo have the same friends and Macbeth would not be able to remain friends with them if he killed Banquo himself.
3. Macbeth either feels that Lady Macbeth may try to talk him out the plot, or he wants to have full control and exclude her from this matter.
4. Macbeth questions who has brought Banquo to the feast and he is very upset.
5. Lady Macbeth tells them that he has suffered from this affliction his entire life and to ignore his behavior.
6. Macbeth recognizes Banquo and says to the ghost that he should not blame him for the murder, "Thou canst not say I did it: never shake Thy gory locks at me."

7. Hecate is going to create a situation that will allow Macbeth to ruin himself. The Witches will make a magic potion that will guide Macbeth's fate by telling him the future. Hecate says mortal men cannot resist knowing the future.
8. Lennox says they have been unjustly accused of murder.
9. Macduff has gone to England to join Malcolm's forces to overthrow Macbeth.
10. Lennox hopes that Scotland will be peaceful again.

Act IV Summary and Analysis

New Characters

Apparitions : visions created by the Witches

Lady Macduff : Macduff's distraught wife

Son : Macduff's child

Act 4, Scene 1

The witches circle a cauldron, mixing a variety of grotesque ingredients while chanting "double, double toil and trouble; / Fire burn, and cauldron bubble" (10-11). The Witches are preparing a magic potion and casting a spell. They chant incantations three times to make sure the charm's power will be strong.

Hecate appears, they sing all together, and Hecate leaves. Macbeth enters and greets the witches. He demands that they give him information about the future. The witches complete their magic spells and summons fourth series of apparitions. The Witches call upon Apparitions to inform Macbeth of his future. These apparitions include:

The first is an armoured head that warns Macbeth to beware of the Thane of Fife (Macduff). This gives Macbeth a warning that suggests a war must be headed his way. This reveals a part of the conflict that suggests the throne may be taken away from Macbeth.

The second is a bloody child which tells him that no man born of woman will harm Macbeth. This news bolsters Macbeth's spirits. This gives Macbeth false hope because we learn that Macduff was born from a caesarian surgery. This false hope causes Macbeth to become even more cocky and arrogant.

The third is a crowned child holding a tree in its hand. The crowned child gives Macbeth a warning from Malcolm, who is a true heir to the throne of Scotland. This Apparition says, "Macbeth shall never vanquished be until Great Birnam Wood to high Dunsinane Hill shall come against him." This cheers Macbeth even more; since he knows that nothing can move a forest. This adds conflict to the play because Malcolm poses a threat to Macbeth.

Macbeth proceeds to ask his last question: will Banquo's children ever rule Scotland? Here Macbeth urges the Witches to give him additional information about the future.

The Witches show him a procession of kings and the last holding a mirror with the reflection of Banquo. This suggests the future line of kings may descend from Banquo's line. This causes internal conflict for Macbeth because he lives with the guilt of all the murders. As Banquo points at this line of kings, Macbeth realizes that they are indeed his family line. After the Witches dance and disappear, Lennox enters the room; Macbeth asks Lennox if he saw the Witches as he entered the room. Lennox said he did not. Lennox then informs Macbeth that Macduff has fled to England. Macbeth resolves that he will henceforth act immediately on his ambitions: the first step will be to seize Fife and kill Macduff's family (wife and children).

Act 4, Scene 2

Ross shows up at Fife to warn Lady Macduff that her husband may be in trouble with the king. Ross talks about how the best intended are seen as traitors now, the world is topsy-turvy since MacBeth took over. He warns her that she could be in danger and isn't sure if Macduff left out of fear or wisdom (to get help).

Lady Macduff is frightened for her own safety now that her husband has fled. Macduff has left for England without telling her. Lady Macduff feels completely betrayed by her husband's abandonment of her family. She does not know what they are to do now. Ross tries to console her, but she feels her husband is a traitor and a coward. Macduff's son questions his mother about the father's disappearance. She tells him his father is dead; he does not believe her.

A messenger arrives interrupting them with a warning that her life is in danger and she must free the house immediately. She has no means to leave, and obviously no time. But before Lady Macduff can escape, the Murderers arrive. They ask after her husband and she defends him to them. They attack the house and everyone including Lady Macduff and her son.

Act 4, Scene 3

MacDuff heads to England to try to get help to get MacBeth off the throne. Macduff arrives at the English court and meets with Malcolm (prince of Cumberland, rightful king). Malcolm and Macduff are in England. Malcolm questions Macduff's motives and wants to make sure that he has not been sent by Macbeth. Malcolm isn't sure he can trust MacDuff – maybe MacDuff is there to bait him so MacBeth can kill him like he killed his father.

Malcolm remembering his father's misplaced trust in Macbeth decides to test Macduff; he confesses that he is greedy, lustful and sinful man who makes Macbeth look like an angel in comparison. He decides to lie to MacDuff about his qualities to see if he takes the bait. Malcolm goes on to confess that he has many vices that may make him a far worse King than Macbeth. He tells MacDuff that Scotland is better off with MacBeth as the ruler. Malcolm says he is greedy and will take all the land, gold, homes, valuables, jewels etc that belong to everyone in the country.... The more he has the more he would want.

MacDuff tells of all the hardships in Scotland since Macbeth took over (no food, etc.). MacDuff says only younger men are so lusty and the greed makes sense, but Scotland is wealthy enough to have plenty to keep him happy – and just at the castle, so no taking from others will be necessary. MacDuff has been hoping for the best, but this is just too much to bear. He says Malcolm isn't fit to live let alone to rule... He is ashamed that such a horrible man came from such a great king and honorable queen... and he weeps for Scotland because it seems to be a lost cause now. Macduff despairs and says that he will leave Scotland forever if this is the case since there seems to be no man fit to rule it. Macduff's response is that Malcolm is the rightful heir to the

throne and Macbeth must be unseated at all cost. Malcolm is convinced that Macduff is sincere and says that the things he said about himself were not true. Malcolm says he is sincere and pure and seeks only good for Scotland.

Upon hearing this, Malcolm is convinced of Macduff's goodness and reveals that he was merely testing him; he has none of these faults to which he has just confessed. In fact, he claims the first lie he has ever told was this false confession to Macduff. He then announces that Siward has assembled an army of 10,000 men and is prepared to march on Scotland. It turns out, Malcolm has been at work (already) to overthrow Macbeth and take back Scotland. King Edward (England) has given Siward (general) and 10,000 men to use for the battle. Macduff is thrilled that the plans are already underway...

A messenger appears and tells the men that the king of England is approaching attended by a crowd of sick and despairing people who wish the king to cure them. The king according to Malcolm has a gift for healing people simply by laying his hands on them.

Ross arrives from Scotland and informs Malcolm and Macduff that Scotland is in a terrible condition. When Macduff asks how his wife and children are faring, Ross at first hesitates, but then informs Macduff that his family has been brutally murdered. Macduff is overcome with guilt and sorrow from murders that occurred while he was absent. Macduff is shocked and vows to revenge the murder of his family. Malcolm tells him to take it out in the battle – revenge. Macduff agrees, but can't take revenge since Macbeth doesn't have any children he can kill. He will fight it like a man and grieve it like a man...

Act 4 Analysis

Hecate knows that Macbeth will not question information given to him but will act upon it. Macbeth is given information that he feels will give him immortality. He is ready to believe only what he feels will benefit him, but he is unable to distinguish the "good" from the "bad". The "Fair is foul and the foul is fair" statement made by the Witches and by Macbeth in this drama has been reinforced in this Act.

Macbeth is no longer capable of making rational judgments or distinguishing good from evil. Obsessed with this knowledge, Macbeth feels he must take quick action to preserve his future. Macbeth feels he must seek Macduff and kill him and his family to insure that the blood line is stopped.

Macbeth is out of control and reacts without thought to his actions. He feels he must spill blood to remain in control and powerful. Once again Macbeth has innocent blood on his hands, and again, he feels no remorse.

He is driven by his lust to control the situation and flex his power. The fact that Shakespeare allows the act of the murder to be witnessed as it occurs, rather than have it reported, gives the audience a first-hand impression of the evil nature of Macbeth. The senseless murder of Lady Macduff and her son contribute to Macbeth's demise and reinforces the flaws in his character.

Malcolm confesses to Macduff that his own character is far worse than Macbeth. He says he has committed crimes worse than Macbeth. Macduff states that he feels Malcolm has the birthright to be the king of Scotland and he knows that he is worthy. Malcolm says that he was only testing Macduff's sincerity. Shakespeare uses this ploy to show that Malcolm is a good man and should be the king. The audience supports Malcolm's efforts to restore Scotland.

The murder of Macduff's family is unnecessary and the act of a tyrant. When Macduff learns that his family has been murdered, he is even more determined to seek revenge on Macbeth. Macbeth is seen as a barbaric killer and Malcolm's cause is reinforced by Macbeth's actions. The murder is the last event that Malcolm and Macduff can allow; they vow to overthrow Macbeth and reclaim Scotland for the people.

Act IV Questions and Answers

Study Questions

1. What are the Witches doing at the beginning of Act IV?
2. What are the three statements made by the Apparitions?
3. What is the significance of the Witches having the Apparitions give the information to Macbeth?

4. What does Macbeth decide to do with the information the Witches have given him?
5. What does Lady Macduff say is the reason for her husband leaving?
6. What does Lady Macduff tell her son about his father? How does he respond to her?
7. What happens to Lady Macduff and her son?
8. Why does Malcolm question Macduff?
9. What is Malcolm's reaction to the news?
10. What do Malcolm and Macduff plan to do?

Answers

1. The Witches are standing over a cauldron preparing a spell for Macbeth.
2. The Apparitions say: 1) That Macbeth should beware of Macduff, 2) That no man born of a woman can harm Macbeth, and 3) Macbeth will not be harmed unless Great Birnam Wood comes to high Dunsinane.
3. The Apparitions are dressed in such a way to give insight to Macbeth. He is blinded by his quest for power and does not recognize the significance of the appearance.
4. He plans on going to England to kill Macduff.
5. Lady Macduff feels her husband is scared and is a traitor.
6. Lady Macduff tells her son his father is dead. Her son does not believe her.
7. Lady Macduff and her son are murdered.
8. Malcolm wants to know if Macduff is sincere and that he has not been sent by Macbeth.
9. Malcolm is enraged by the news of Lady Macduff's death. Macduff is in shock at first then he vows to seek revenge against Macbeth.
10. Malcolm and Macduff plan on killing Macbeth and restoring the peace in Scotland.

Act V Summary and Analysis

New Characters:

- | | |
|-------------|----------------------------------|
| Gentlewoman | : a woman attending Lady Macbeth |
| Doctor | : the physician in the castle |

Carthness and Menteith: nobleman of Scotland in Malcolm's English Army

Seyton : an Officer in Macbeth's army

Siward : general in the English army fighting with Malcolm

Young Siward : Siward's son in the English army with Malcolm

Act 5, Scene 1

At night in the king's palace at Dunsinane, the maid went to get a doctor's help with Lady MacBeth. The doctor and a gentlewoman discuss Lady Macbeth's strange habit of sleepwalking. The Gentlewoman says that Lady Macbeth gets out of bed, puts on a nightgown, unlocks her closet, writes on a piece of paper, seals the letter and returns to bed. Suddenly Macbeth enters in a trance with a candle in her hand bemoaning the murders of Lady Macduff and Banquo. She seems to see blood on her hands and claims that nothing will ever wash it off. In other words, she is reliving the murder of the king – and all the while talking freely of the old man's blood, mocking her husband's reluctance to kill him, Macduff's wife (and family) and Banquo. She is giving WAY too much information about all these murders...

She leaves, and the doctor and gentlewoman marvel at her descent into madness.

Lady Macbeth says things that the Gentlewoman refuses to repeat because she fears she will be charged with treason. She urges the Doctor to hear them for himself. The doctor watches Lady Macbeth and concludes that he cannot treat her illness as she needs the assistance of God. He is very concerned about Lady Macbeth's safety and tells the Gentlewoman to watch her closely.

The doctor and maid agree to keep this information secret – even though they have heard rumors that this might be true. Who could they tell, the king (MacBeth)?? Nope.

Act 5, Scene 2

The Thanes (Menteith, Angus, Lennox and Caithness) are making plans to meet up with Malcolm/Macduff/English military at Birnam Wood. They are anxious to take over the castle, but it has to be planned carefully once they are all together and can arrange it. Menteith, Angus, Lennox and Caithness discuss the battle plans of Malcolm. The English army approaches, led by Malcolm, and the Scottish army will meet them near Birnam Wood, apparently to join forces with them. The “tyrant,” as Lennox and the other lords call Macbeth, has fortified Dunsinane Castle and is making his military preparations in a mad rage. Macbeth has secured Dunsinane, but his forces are not loyal subjects. Each vow to fight to the death to regain control of Scotland and overthrow Macbeth.

Act 5, Scene 3

Macbeth strides into the hall of Dunsinane with the doctor and his attendants, boasting proudly that he has nothing to fear from the English army for from Malcolm since “none of woman born” can harm him and since he will rule securely until Birnam Wood remove to Dunsinane. He knows trouble is brewing, but instead of doing something, Macbeth feels he is secure in his castle at Dunsinane. He feels confident because the Witches told him that he cannot be harmed unless the prophecies come to pass. He believes the Witches and has no fear. His servant Seyton tells him that there are ten thousand soldiers gathering to fight against him. He knows they are from England, that Macduff was successful there and they are going to attack. MacBeth realizes that it is too late to set a goal to have friends, respect, etc... and that if he is to live, great. But he is ready to die as well. Macbeth is not afraid, but gets ready for battle. He says he has lived long enough. He knows that his way of life will not lead to old age, that it is a way of life that comes with an early death without honor. He is determined to fight until his flesh is hacked from his bones. Macbeth dresses for battle as the Doctor reveals Lady Macbeth’s condition to him. The doctor said she is ‘troubled’ and lacking sleep – it isn’t an illness, per se . The doctor tells Macbeth that Lady Macbeth is not well and her illness is mental, not physical.

Macbeth's only reaction is to tell the doctor to "cure her". He asks the Doctor to find a cure for his wife. Macbeth leaves for the battle.

Act 5, Scene 4

Malcolm, Menteith, and Siward are near Birnam Wood. Malcolm and Macduff meet in front of Birnam Wood. Malcolm tells them they should each cut a branch from a tree from Birnam Wood and use it as camouflage or disguise their numbers. They prepare to march on to Dunsinane. They make a plan for the English army to conceal their numbers by cutting branches from the trees and carrying them as they march to Macbeth's castle at Dunsinane. This will make the witches third prediction/warning come true. We know Macbeth will die.

Act 5, Scene 5

Lady Macbeth, succumbing at last to madness, has committed suicide, the stain of sin having eaten away at her mind. In a sleepwalking episode, she has effectively confessed to her and her husband's crime. She who had been his strength and prod to seek his evil ambition is gone. Macbeth now is almost completely alone, isolated from all manner of support. He is facing a rebellion, brought on by his own tyranny. Lady Macbeth's Death Macbeth says (line 9) "I have almost forgot the taste of fears".

Macbeth at this point is also still clinging to the additional prophecies of the three witches: that none born of woman shall harm him, and that he shall not be conquered until "Great Birnam Wood to high Dunsinane Hill shall come against him." Neither is likely to happen, thinks Macbeth, so he is confident of victory despite the overwhelming odds. Macbeth feels confident that he will overthrow Malcolm in battle.

Macbeth hears a cry and discovers that Lady Macbeth is dead. Seyton tells him that Lady Macbeth is dead (she committed suicide). Macbeth responds by saying that life is very short. Macbeth says (lines 17-28) "She should have died hereafter," is all he says about his wife,

completely emotionless. But with her death, he feels the full weight of the world that he has brought upon himself. The passage of time drags, one day after the other until the end. His past victories and successes have done little but “light the way of fools to dusty death.” He wishes life to be over and makes the allusion that it is a mere fiction, a play, with a lot of noise and emotion, but without eternal meaning

Macbeth does not react strongly to her death. He is very calm. He compares life to a “walking shadow” , a “brief candle”, a “poor player” (actor), and a “tale” (story). Candle= short; Shadow= dark, empty; Actor= not real/fake; Tale= fake. Macbeth feels that life is meaningless.

A messenger arrives to inform Macbeth that the wood of Birnam seems to be moving toward Dunsinane. Macbeth hears that Birnam Wood is coming to Dunsinane and he knows he will be defeated. Macbeth sounds the alarm and prepares to fight

Act 5 Scene 6

Malcolm, Macduff and the English Army are about to launch their attack on Macbeth’s castle. The first group will be Young Siward, the second will be Macduff and Malcolm. Malcolm, Siward, and Macduff arrive at Dunsinane and enter Macbeth’s castle. Outside the castle, the battle commences. Malcolm orders the English soldiers to throw down their boughs (branches of trees) and draw their swords. They don’t know Macbeth is fighting alone.

Act 5 Scene 7: Battle Scene

Macbeth fights Young Siward and kills him. Macbeth remarks “Thou wast born of woman”. Macbeth still feels slightly invincible. Macduff enters the castle vowing revenge for his slain family. Macduff comes face to face with Macbeth.

Act 5 Scene 8: Macbeth Vs. Macduff

Macbeth contemplates suicide, but decides to kill more before he dies. Macbeth does not want to fight Macduff because he has killed too many of his family members already. Macbeth urges Macduff to leave, as Macbeth feels he has enough of Macduff’s blood on his hands.

Macbeth tells Macduff that he cannot be harmed and cannot be killed by any man born from a woman. Macduff informs Macbeth that he was not born of woman, but was “untimely ripped” from his mother’s womb. Macbeth says that what the Witches said had a double meaning and he did not realize in time the meaning of their prophecy. Macduff calls Macbeth a coward and coerces Macbeth into fighting him. The two exit and continue their sword fight.

Macduff returns with the severed head of Macbeth and proclaims Malcolm as the rightful heir to the throne. Malcolm assures the people that Scotland will be restored to a peaceful place when he is King. Malcolm vows to honor the Thanes and kinsmen that helped in the fight against Macbeth with the title of Earl. The drama ends with Malcolm inviting the victors to his coronation at Scone.

Analysis

Lady Macbeth’s behavior has been very peculiar, according to the Gentlewoman, and the Doctor is summoned to witness the behavior for himself. Lady Macbeth is responding to her guilty feelings. She is trying to rid herself of her guilt, which takes the form of the blood she is unable to wash from her hands. She confesses to encouraging Macbeth to kill Duncan and refers to Banquo’s death as well. She is obsessed with the blood on her hands and she is unable to wash it off. She exclaims, “Out damn spot” as she unsuccessfully tries to remove the blood from her hands. This shows the demise of Lady Macbeth. Her actions and the actions of Macbeth have caused her to lose her mind. The guilt she feels can no longer be controlled; she has lost control of herself.

Macbeth feels confident that he will be safe in battle because of the Witches’ prophecy. Macbeth is so self-absorbed with the impending battle that when the Doctor informs him that he cannot help Lady Macbeth, Macbeth simply becomes angry and insists that the Doctor find a cure for her. He then dismisses the doctor and dresses for battle. Macbeth is detached from reality and unaware of the severe condition of his wife. He is so consumed with rage and lust for power that his own wife is no longer important to him. The Witches are the

only other source besides himself that Macbeth can trust. He must remain in control at all costs; even if he must spill more blood.

Malcolm and his men ready themselves for battle by using branches from Birnam Wood to shield themselves while approaching Dunsinane. In this way, the Witches' prophecy is fulfilled. Macbeth is informed that Lady Macbeth is dead; he does not even ask how she died. He is only concerned about himself and guarding his power. When the Messenger informs Macbeth that trees seem to be moving toward the castle, Macbeth is angered with him. However, he soon realizes that the Witches' prophecy is coming to pass. His response is to face the battle even if it means his death.

Macbeth has false hopes in his battle with Young Siward because he feels he cannot be harmed by any woman born of man. After Macbeth kills Young Siward, he feels even more confident that he is immortal. He feels he cannot be harmed and will remain in power because of his prophecy.

Macduff faces Macbeth filled with rage and vengeance. When he tells Macbeth that he was "untimely ripped" from his mother's womb, Macbeth realizes that the Witches gave him information that had a double meaning. Macbeth at that moment realizes that his fate has been sealed and he is not immortal.

Macbeth and Macduff fight. They disappear offstage, then return still fighting. Macbeth is then slain and Macduff carries his body offstage. By having the fight momentarily disappear offstage, the drama builds as the audience anticipates the outcome. Since Shakespeare did not have the benefits of modern moviemaking, Macbeth's body had to be taken offstage in order for Macduff to return with the severed head.

The play concludes with Malcolm being restored to his rightful place on the throne.

Macbeth is a tragic hero because he has the potential for greatness, but it is undercut by his greed and lust for power. The prophecies of the Witches provide the spark by which Macbeth's soul is set on fire. Once he is presented with the chance to further his own ambition, he lets nothing and no one get in his way. Loyalty becomes treachery and

friends become enemies. Even Lady Macbeth's death is naught but a nuisance.

Macbeth tells Seyton that she should have waited until tomorrow to die because then he could have spent time mourning for her.

Shakespeare knew how to interpret the complex forces which drive men. On one level, Macbeth is about the fight between good and evil. Yet, it is told from the perspective of one man, Macbeth. Even within his own mind, Macbeth is torn between what is right (supporting Duncan) and what is wrong (following his own ambition). Macbeth is not a one dimensional character. He is not wholly evil, there are patches of goodness and regret within him. It is this intricate portrait of Macbeth's personality which adds realism to a play with such supernatural overtones.

Macbeth's road to ruin is twisted and branching. He is offered chances to reverse his course and save himself, but he sticks to the path of personal ambition. Each murderous act leads to another, more horrific than the last.

The Witches are often blamed for Macbeth's downfall because he would not have killed the King if he had not heard tales of the future. But, Macbeth does not begin to plan the murder of Duncan until after Malcolm has been named successor. Until that point, Macbeth would have been proclaimed King had Duncan died according to Scottish law. Duncan's announcement usurps that law and Macbeth begins his bloody quest.

In the end, the play has come full circle. At the beginning, Macbeth defends the King against those who would overthrow the crown. In the end Macbeth, who has taken the crown by blood and deceit, is overthrown and rightful rule is restored.

Act V Questions and Answers

Study Questions

1. What does the Doctor say to Macbeth about Lady Macbeth's condition? What is Macbeth's reaction?
2. What is the Doctor referring to when he says, "Therein the patient Must minister to himself?"

3. What does the Messenger tell Macbeth he sees coming toward Dunsinane? How does Macbeth respond?
4. What does Macduff vow to do to Macbeth and why? Cite an example from Act V.
5. What difference can you cite between Macbeth's army and Malcolm's army?
6. Whom does Macbeth kill in Act V? Do you feel that is important? State your reasons.
7. What does Macbeth say to Macduff about his mortality? What is Macduff's response? How does Macbeth react?
8. What does Ross tell Siward about Siward's son?
9. What does Malcolm say about Macbeth and Lady Macbeth?
10. What title has never been used before in Scotland that Malcolm plans to use on his Thanes and kinsman?

ANSWERS

1. The Doctor says Lady Macbeth is very ill and he cannot cure her himself. Macbeth is angry and does not want to be bothered with this information.
2. The Doctor is saying that Macbeth is trying to tell the doctor how to cure his patient, Lady Macbeth. When in fact Macbeth is the patient himself.
3. The Messenger tells Macbeth that trees are moving toward the castle. Macbeth does not believe him at first; then, sounds the alarm for battle.
4. Macduff vows to have revenge on Macbeth because of the death of his family.
5. Malcolm's army is committed to the cause of saving Scotland. Macbeth's army is fighting for him out of fear they will be killed themselves.
6. Macbeth kills Young Siward. Answers may vary on the response to the second part of the question. The importance of the murder is seen in Macbeth's response after the murder. He states he cannot be killed by a man born of woman. He feels he cannot be harmed.

7. Macbeth tells Macduff that he cannot be harmed by man born of woman. Macduff tells Macbeth that he was ripped from his mother's womb. Macbeth realizes that the Witches have tricked him.
8. Ross tells Siward that his son was killed in battle.
9. Malcolm says that Macbeth is a "butcher" and Lady Macbeth was a "fiend-like queen". He also says that Lady Macbeth took her own life.
10. Malcolm plans to make the Thanes and kinsman Earls.

MEMORABLE QUOTES EXPLAINED

Raven

The raven himself is hoarse

That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan

Under my battlements. Come, you spirits

That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here,

And fill me from the crown to the toe top-full

Of direst cruelty. Make thick my blood,

Stop up th'access and passage to remorse,

That no compunctious visitings of nature

Shake my fell purpose, nor keep peace between

Th' effect and it. Come to my woman's breasts,

And take my milk for gall, you murd'ring ministers,

Wherever in your sightless substances

You wait on nature's mischief. Come, thick night,

And pall thee in the dunnest smoke of hell,

That my keen knife see not the wound it makes,

Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark,

To cry 'Hold, hold!'

Lady Macbeth speaks these words in Act I, scene v, lines 36–52, as she awaits the arrival of King Duncan at her castle. We have previously seen Macbeth's uncertainty about whether he should take the crown by killing Duncan. In this speech, there is no such confusion, as Lady Macbeth is clearly willing to do whatever is necessary to seize the throne. Her strength of purpose is contrasted with her husband's tendency to waver. This speech shows the

audience that Lady Macbeth is the real steel behind Macbeth and that her ambition will be strong enough to drive her husband forward. At the same time, the language of this speech touches on the theme of masculinity— “unsex me here / . . . / . . . Come to my woman’s breasts, / And take my milk for gall,” Lady Macbeth says as she prepares herself to commit murder. The language suggests that her womanhood, represented by breasts and milk, usually symbols of nurture, impedes her from performing acts of violence and cruelty, which she associates with manliness. Later, this sense of the relationship between masculinity and violence will be deepened when Macbeth is unwilling to go through with the murders and his wife tells him, in effect, that he needs to “be a man” and get on with it.

If it were done when ’tis done

If it were done when ’tis done, then ’twere well

It were done quickly. If th’assassination

Could trammel up the consequence, and catch

With his surcease success: that but this blow

Might be the be-all and the end-all, here,

But here upon this bank and shoal of time,

We’d jump the life to come. But in these cases

We still have judgement here, that we but teach

Bloody instructions which, being taught, return

To plague th’inventor. This even-handed justice

Commends th’ingredience of our poisoned chalice

To our own lips. He’s here in double trust:

First, as I am his kinsman and his subject,

Strong both against the deed; then, as his host,

Who should against his murderer shut the door,

Not bear the knife myself. Besides, this Duncan

Hath borne his faculties so meek, hath been

So clear in his great office, that his virtues

Will plead like angels, trumpet-tongued against

The deep damnation of his taking-off,

And pity, like a naked new-born babe,

***Striding the blast, or heaven's cherubin, horsed
Upon the sightless couriers of the air,
Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye
That tears shall drown the wind. I have no spur
To prick the sides of my intent, but only
Vaulting ambition which o'erleaps itself
And falls on th'other.***

In this soliloquy, which is found in Act I, scene vii, lines 1–28, Macbeth debates whether he should kill Duncan. When he lists Duncan's noble qualities (he "[h]ath borne his faculties so meek") and the loyalty that he feels toward his king ("I am his kinsman and his subject"), we are reminded of just how grave an outrage it is for the couple to slaughter their ruler while he is a guest in their house. At the same time, Macbeth's fear that "[w]e still have judgement here, that we but teach / Bloody instructions which, being taught, return / To plague th'inventor," foreshadows the way that his deeds will eventually come

Whence is that knocking?

Whence is that knocking?— How is't with me, when every noise appals me?

***What hands are here! Ha, they pluck out mine eyes. Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood . Clean from my hand?
No, this my hand will rather***

The multitudinous seas incarnadine, Making the green one red.

Explanation

Macbeth says this in Act II, scene ii, lines 55–61. He has just murdered Duncan, and the crime was accompanied by supernatural portents. Now he hears a mysterious knocking on his gate, which seems to promise doom. (In fact, the person knocking is Macduff, who will indeed eventually destroy

Macbeth.) The enormity of Macbeth's crime has awakened in him a powerful sense of guilt that will hound him throughout the play. Blood, specifically Duncan's blood, serves as the symbol of that guilt, and Macbeth's sense that "all great Neptune's ocean" cannot cleanse

him—that there is enough blood on his hands to turn the entire sea red—will stay with him until his death. Lady Macbeth’s response to this speech will be her prosaic remark, “A little water clears us of this deed” (II.ii.65). By the end of the play, however, she will share Macbeth’s sense that Duncan’s murder has irreparably stained them with blood.

Fun With Spot

Out, damned spot; out, I say. One, two,—why, then ’tis time to do’t. Hell is murky. Fie, my lord, fie, a soldier and afeard? What need we fear who knows it when none can call our power to account? Yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him?

Explanation

These words are spoken by Lady Macbeth in Act V, scene i, lines 30–34, as she sleepwalks through Macbeth’s castle on the eve of his battle against Macduff and Malcolm. Earlier in the play, she possessed a stronger resolve and sense of purpose than her husband and was the driving force behind their plot to kill Duncan. When Macbeth believed his hand was irreversibly bloodstained earlier in the play, Lady Macbeth had told him, “A little water clears us of this deed” (II.ii.65). Now, however, she too sees blood. She is completely undone by guilt and descends into madness. It may be a reflection of her mental and emotional state that she is not speaking in verse; this is one of the few moments in the play when a major character—save for the witches, who speak in four-foot couplets—strays from iambic pentameter. Her inability to sleep was foreshadowed in the voice that her husband thought he heard

She should have died hereafter.

She should have died hereafter.

There would have been a time for such a word.

Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow

Creeps in this petty pace from day to day

To the last syllable of recorded time.

And all our yesterdays have lighted fools

***The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle.
Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
And then is heard no more. It is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.***

Explanation

These words are uttered by Macbeth after he hears of Lady Macbeth's death, in Act V, scene v, lines 16– 27. Given the great love between them, his response is oddly muted, but it segues quickly into a speech of such pessimism and despair—one of the most famous speeches in all of Shakespeare—that the audience realizes how completely his wife's passing and the ruin of his power have undone Macbeth. His speech insists that there is no meaning or purpose in life. Rather, life “is a tale / Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, / Signifying nothing.” One can easily understand how, with his wife dead and armies marching against him, Macbeth succumbs to such pessimism. Yet, there is also a defensive and selfjustifying quality to his words. If everything is meaningless, then Macbeth's awful crimes are somehow made less awful, because, like everything else, they too “signify nothing.” Macbeth's statement that “[l]ife's but a poor player / That struts and frets his hour upon the stage” can be read as Shakespeare's somewhat deflating reminder of the illusionary nature of the theater. After all,

Macbeth is only a “player” himself, strutting on an Elizabethan stage. In any play, there is a conspiracy of sorts between the audience and the actors, as both pretend to accept the play's reality. Macbeth's comment calls attention to this conspiracy and partially explodes it—his nihilism embraces not only his own life but the entire play. If we take his words to heart, the play, too, can be seen as an event “full of sound and fury, / Signifying nothing.”

THEMES IN MACBETH

This resource is designed as a reference guide for teachers. We have listed the major themes and motifs within <i>Macbeth</i> and provided
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examples of scenes where you can study them.

Themes

- Ambition
- Kingship
- Fate and free will
- Appearance and reality

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Themes

- Ambition
- Kingship
- Fate and free will
- Appearance and reality

Motifs

Recurring elements and patterns of imagery in *Macbeth* which support the play's themes. These include

- Nature / The natural world
- Light and darkness
- Children
- Blood
- Sleep
- Visions

Themes

1. Ambition and the devastation which follows when ambition oversteps moral boundaries.

Some related scenes:

- Act 1 Scene 5: Lady Macbeth receives Macbeth's letter, analyses his character, and invokes the forces of evil.
- Act 1 Scene 7: Macbeth reflects on what is needed to achieve his ambition and Lady Macbeth taunts him to 'screw your courage to the sticking place.'
- Act 3 Scene 1: Macbeth determines to kill Banquo in order to prevent his children succeeding to Scotland's throne.

2. Kingship and the difference between appropriate use of power and tyranny.

Some related scenes:

- Act 1 Scene 7: Macbeth reflects on Duncan's qualities as king.
- Act 3 Scene 6: Lennox and another lord discuss life under Macbeth's rule.
- Act 4 Scene 3: Malcolm and Macduff compare tyranny to honourable kingship.

3. Fate and free will and the extent to which we control our own destinies.

Some related scenes:

- Act 1 Scene 3: Macbeth and Banquo encounter the witches on the heath. Macbeth reflects on their prophecies.
- Act 2 Scene 1: Macbeth talks with Banquo about their encounter with the witches, sees a visionary dagger and makes his decision to kill Duncan.
- Act 6 Scene 1: Macbeth visits the witches who offer him further prophecies.

4. Appearance and reality, and how people and events are often not as they seem.

Some related scenes:

- Act 1 Scenes 1 and 2: The witches invoke confusion ('Fair is foul, and foul is fair').
- Act 1 Scene 4: Duncan reflects on the traitorous Thane of Cawdor and ironically rewards Macbeth with this title, saying, 'I have begun to plant thee, and will labour/To make thee full of growing.'
- Act 1 Scene 6: Duncan remarks on the Macbeths' castle having 'a pleasant seat' as the Macbeths plot his murder.

Motifs**1. Nature /The natural world** and its disruption when the bounds of morality are broken.

For example:

- 'Against the use of nature' Act 1 Scene 3

- 'Tis unnatural,/ Even like the deed that's done.' Act 3 Scene 4
- 'And his gash'd stabs looked like a breach in nature' Act 3, Scene 1
- 'Boundless intemperance/ In nature is a tyranny.' Act 4, Scene 3

2. Light and darkness, representing innocence and evil.

For example:

- 'Stars, hid your fires; Let not light see my black and deep desires' Act 1 Scene 4
- 'That darkness does the face of earth entomb,/When living light should kiss it?' Act 4 Scene 2
- 'Come, seeling night,/ Scarf up the tender eye of pitiful day' Act 3 Scene 2

3. Children, representing the future and highlighting evil when they are abused.

For example:

- 'Your children shall be kings.' Act 1 Scene 3
- 'And pity, like a naked new-born babe,' Act 1 Scene 7
- 'I have given suck, and know / How tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me' Act 1 Scene 7
- 'He has no children. All my pretty ones?' Act 4 Scene 3

4. Blood, representing evil plans and consequences of overreaching ambition.

For example:

- 'Make thick my blood' Act 1 Scene 5
- 'And on thy blood and dungeon gouts of blood/Which was not so before. There's no such thing:/It is the bloody business which informs thus to mine eyes.' Act 2 Scene 1
- 'Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood clean from my hand?' Act 2 Scene 1
- 'Here's the smell of blood still.' Act 5 Scene 1

5. Sleep, a natural process and its disruption as caused by the fracture of the moral order.

For example:

- 'Nature seems dead, and wicked dreams abuse / The curtain'd

sleep' Act 2 Scene 1

- 'There's one did laugh in's sleep, and one cried 'Murder!' Act 2 Scene 2
- 'Methought I heard a voice cry 'Sleep no more! / Macbeth does murder sleep' Act 2 Scene 2
- 'we may again / Give to our tables meat, sleep to our nights' Act 3 Scene 6
- 'A great perturbation in nature, to receive at once the benefit of sleep and do the effects of watching!' Act 5 Scene 1

6. Visions, representing the extensions of a guilty conscience.

For example:

- 'Art thou not, fatal vision, sensible / To feeling as to sight? Act 2 Scene 1
- 'Hence, horrible shadow! Unreal mockery, hence!' Act 3 Scene 4
- 'Wash your hands; put on your nightgown; look not so pale! I tell you yet again, Banquo's buried.' Act 5 Scene 1
- 'My wife and children's ghosts will haunt me still' Act 5 Scene 7

THEMES EXPLORED IN BOOK OF MACBETH

Betrayal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duncan trusts the wrong men with disastrous consequences. Macbeth trusts the witches, and ultimately they destroy him. • The Thane of cawdor betrays the king Duncan and the people of Scotland when he joins the enemy side fighting against Duncan's army in the battle. • It is shown by Macduff. He goes to England without informing his wife. Lady Macduff says her husband is a traitor. While Macduff was in England his wife, Lady Macduff and his son were murdered by Macbeth.
Superstition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is portrayed by Macbeth's belief in the supernatural power. When he meets the Witches who make predictions to him that he will be a Thane of cawdor and king thereafter, Macbeth

	<p>has taken to heart what the witches have prophesied. He becomes unsettled or deeply disturbed by the prophecy. The confirmation that he is Thane of cawdor makes him think that the other prophecy will be fulfilled (that he will become king). “It cannot be ill cannot be good- if ill, why has it given me earnest of success” (Act 1scene3 lines31-32)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He had trust in whatever the witches told him. He decided to meet the witches to decide his destiny. While meeting the witches, Macbeth was told to beware of Macduff. This shows that he is superstitious. • When the people are gathered in the state hall for the banquet, only Macbeth sees Banquo’s ghost and starts behaving in a strange way. Finally, Lady Macbeth tells the Thanes to leave for their home that marks the end of the banquet. • It is also shown by belief in unnatural events. Ross and an old man talk about unnatural happenings such as Duncan’s horses going wild refusing to obey and start eating each other
Ambition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This theme is portrayed by Macbeth who does not show any sign of appreciation. He is given important positions such as Thane of Glamis and Thane of cawdor but are tempted by the idea that Macbeth will become king. Macbeth is not sure what to do but his wife is ruthless in getting what she wants -she views her husband as a coward and appears ready to do anything. Ambition leads to evil-it makes Macbeth stronger and more determined and he kills king Duncan so that he can be king of Scotland.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Later on this destroys his wife -she goes mad. And ambition eventually kills him as well, because he becomes a tyrant and so loses the support of his friends.
Guilt	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The idea of guilt first appears in Act 1 Scene 3, when Banquo shows his surprise at Macbeth's reaction to the witches' promises: "Why do you start and seem to fear, / Things that do sound so fair?" The word 'start', meaning to jump with shock, is always associated with a guilty reaction. Later, Macbeth's guilt takes visual form when he hallucinates that a blood-covered dagger is leading him to murder Duncan.• Macbeth shows his guilt. He is unsure before the murder and regrets it immediately after. Macbeth is terrified by his own sense of sin, as he could not say 'Amen' when he heard someone praying. He imagines his guilty conscience will never let him sleep peacefully again: "Me thought I heard a voice cry "Sleep no more"".• Lady Macbeth says, "You lack the season of all natures, sleep". Even when he does sleep he will be tormented by his guilt in the "terrible dreams that shake us nightly".• One of most striking images in the play equates guilt with the idea of blood-stained hands. Macbeth refers to his own hands as "hangman's hands", which would be covered in blood from disembowelling victims of execution. When Lady Macbeth urges him to wash the blood off, he realises the impossibility of washing away his guilt. His crime is so wicked that the blood will "the multitudinous seas incarnadine, / Making the green one red".

- During the murder scene, Lady Macbeth reassures him: "A little water clears us of the deed". The audience will realise the irony of this during her sleepwalking scene later in the play, when she obsessively washes imaginary blood from her hands.
- After arranging Banquo's murder, Macbeth is tortured by guilt even more. Again this takes visual form, as he imagines the ghost of Banquo returned to accuse him: "Thou canst not say I did it. Never shake thy gory locks at me"!
- In Act 5, we see Lady Macbeth destroyed by the strain as her guilt becomes revealed for all to see. The metaphor of a guilty conscience being represented by the image of sleeplessness is shown in her sleepwalking. She is also seen constantly washing her hands, as her guilt has made the stains seem indelible to her: "Out damned spot!...'All the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand". Her rambling words reveal her complicity in Macbeth's crimes: "Who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him? ... The Thane of Fife had a wife; where is she now?" Her reassurance to Macbeth in Act 3 "What's done is done" is twisted into a despairing admission of guilt: "What's done cannot be undone".
- When he meets his nemesis, Macduff, Macbeth finally faces his guilt. Believing in the witches' prophecy that "none of woman born shall harm Macbeth", he warns Macduff to stay away from him, admitting "My soul is too much charged with blood of thine already", a reference to the brutal killing of Macduff's wife children. When

	<p>Macduff reveals he was "from his mother's womb untimely ripped", Macbeth knows he is about to pay for his crimes.</p>
Supernatural	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Another major theme is the supernatural-the idea that there are mysterious forces controlling what is happening in our lives. The very first characters we meet are the three witches, and their prophecies are what drive the story forward.• Macbeth takes prophecies made by witches seriously. He is unable to say 'Amen', he has visions, and he is disturbed and even thinks no-one can kill him.• The final battle scene also contains many elements of the supernatural. Macbeth believes he is invincible because many of the witches' prophecies appear impossible to fulfil -and yet just as the witches predicted Birnam Wood does indeed move to Dunsinane, and Macbeth is killed by Macduff because he is not 'of woman born'.
Loyalty	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Duncan clearly values loyalty -he has the first Thane of Cawdor executed and rewards Macbeth by making him the new Thane. Duncan is in the middle of talking about 'absolute trust' when Macbeth walks in. He has already thought about killing Duncan, but for the moment he talks about 'the loyalty I owe' and his 'duties' to Duncan.• Loyalty is also very important to Banquo -he will not desert Duncan. Macbeth, however, has an odd idea of loyalty -he knows he is doing the wrong thing, but he still goes ahead. Early on in the play perhaps it is his wife who is

	<p>manipulating him, but later on it is Macbeth who makes the decisions. And later on he also starts to show he hates disloyalty, threatening his messengers and servants.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is portrayed by Macduff who is loyal to Malcolm. Having seen that Macduff is loyal to him, Malcolm develops confidence in him and the two talk about revenge against Macbeth.
<p>Reality & Appearance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The contrast between what is real and how things appear is important in the play. • The classic dagger scene, when Macbeth is not sure if he can trust his eyes, is only one of many references to this theme. For instance, he sees Banquo's ghost at the banquet and Lady Macbeth imagines blood on her hands. • The contrast between reality and appearance is also shown with all the references to thoughts, dreams and actions. Banquo talks about the 'cursed thoughts' he has had and his dreams of the witches. Macbeth talks of the world of thought and dreams and sometimes is stuck there. For instance, Lady Macbeth is critical of Macbeth's 'foolish thoughts' and talks of him being 'lost' because of this. • What characters wear and how they appear to others is also important theme in this play. There are several references to clothing and appearance in the play such as when Macbeth asks Ross and Anbgus, "Why do you dress me in borrow'd robes?" (Act one Scene three, line 109). There is always the sense that what appears fair is not so and vice versa. • Sleep is another theme associated with reality, because characters view it as vital to life, but

	<p>like death or being in another world. Macbeth is told he has murdered sleep and will 'sleep no more' whilst Lady Macbeth thinks of sleep as death, calling it the sternest 'goodnight'. It is portrayed by Banquo cannot go to sleep, Duncan is to be murdered in his sleep.</p>
The nature of the ideal king	<p>The first example is Duncan, who is a good man but not a perfect king. Macbeth pays tribute to his personal qualities when he considers in his soliloquy that Duncan has done nothing to deserve his fate: "so clear in his great office, hath born his faculties so meek....his virtues will plead like angels..." However, as a king, Duncan has the fatal flaw of being over trusting and gullible. After being taken in by the traitorous Thane of Cawdor, he transfers the title to Macbeth who will prove even more treacherous. Similarly, when Duncan comes to Macbeth's castle he misjudges the atmosphere and sees it as a "pleasant" place where the air smells "sweetly".</p> <p>Banquo would clearly have made a good king, and Macbeth is jealous of his "royalty of nature", acknowledging his courage and wisdom.</p> <p>By contrast, Macbeth is unfit to be a king. He is dishonest and unscrupulous, happy to blame others for Duncan's murder. He is even responsible for the killing of Macduff's wife and children. Macbeth becomes the worst sort of king, a tyrant, whose cruelty drains the life blood from his country: "each new morn, new widows howl, new orphans cry." He is contrasted with the king of England, the saintly and Christ-like Edward, who is described as treating his subjects with "healing benediction": "sundry blessings hang about his</p>

		<p>throne / that speak him full of grace". This religious imagery contrasts with the demonic imagery used to describe Macbeth: "this fiend of Scotland".</p> <p>Duncan's son Malcolm is depicted as the perfect king. In his testing of Macduff, he lists the "king-becoming graces", such as justice, verity, temperance, mercy, lowliness etc., showing his awareness of how a king should be. He has his father's noble character but without Duncan's fatal flaw of gullibility. He tells Macduff that he is aware Macbeth has tried to entice him back to Scotland to his death, and shrewdly tests Macduff for signs of being a dishonest flatterer. A metaphor describes Malcolm's healing role: he will be "the medicine" for his country. He restores order to Scotland after the disruption caused by Macbeth</p>
Order and disorder	and	<p>The play begins with disorder as a battle is raging between the Scots and the Norwegians, assisted by some traitors. The "thunder and lightning" of the stage direction symbolises this "hurly-burly", as the witches flippantly refer to the fighting. Order is restored by the "captains, Macbeth and Banquo" who are victorious. At this stage, Macbeth could be seen as a force for good. However, his bloodthirsty brutality in the battle contradicts this impression: in killing Macdonald, he "unseamed him from the nave to the chaps and fixed his head upon our battlements." The order restored is soon seen to be an illusion.</p> <p>The fact that Macbeth's opening words "So foul and fair a day I have not seen" echo the chant of the witches links Macbeth with the forces of disorder, as does his eagerness to communicate with them,</p>

	<p>"Tell me more!"</p> <p>The fact that both Macbeth and Lady Macbeth frequently invoke darkness, always linked to the forces of evil and disorder, prepares the audience for the disorder to come: "Stars, hide your fires"; "Come thick night" etc. Darkness allows evil to flourish.</p> <p>In seeking to make the witches' prophecies come true, Macbeth brings about disorder. By killing the king and taking his place, Macbeth was subverting this natural order. Disorder in nature reflects the disorder in human affairs. On the night Duncan is murdered, Lennox describes the 'unruly' storm, and even an earthquake: "chimneys were blown down...the earth was feverous and did shake."</p> <p>Order and disorder are clearly illustrated at Macbeth's banquet. When his guests arrive, he greets them with the words, "You know your own degrees, sit down". This is ironic, in that he has ignored his own 'degree' or station in life, and tried to take a higher place. With the appearance of the ghost and Macbeth's loss of control, the banquet breaks up in disorder, with Lady Macbeth confirming this with her words, 'Stand not upon the order of your going, but go at once'.</p> <p>Disorder is described in the reign of terror conducted by Macbeth, culminating in the second great battle between Macbeth and the forces of Macduff and Malcolm. With Malcolm's victory, order is truly restored.</p>
False appearance	<p>This important theme is introduced in the witches' chant of "Fair is foul and foul is fair". There are frequent verbal paradoxes in the play emphasising this duality, such as "when the battle's lost and</p>

won". This suggests that something may be good for some people, but bad for others. To Macbeth, the promises of the witches seem good, but this is deceptive: actually, they will destroy him. Duncan, too, makes errors, misjudging the appearance of his thanes. He has been betrayed by the first thane of Cawdor, noting ruefully, "there's no art to find the mind's construction in the face". This is echoed by Macbeth's resolve that "False face must hide what the false heart doth know".

When Duncan visits Macbeth's castle, he is deceived by the tranquil atmosphere "This castle hath a pleasant seat; the air nimbly and sweetly recommends itself". Banquo too is taken in by the deceptive calm and beauty of the place, sensing the presence of "heaven's breath". Lady Macbeth and Macbeth pretend to welcome Duncan affectionately while harbouring murderous thoughts.

As king and queen, both Macbeth and Lady Macbeth put on a false front. At the banquet, Macbeth says he will 'play' the humble host, which is appropriate, since he is not king by right, but just performing a role.

Lady Macbeth's demeanour of hard control is a pretence. When she encourages her husband to be "bright and jovial" among his guests, she had just expressed her own despair: "Nought's had, all's spent".

Perhaps the clearest examples of false appearance are in the promises made by the witches' apparitions: "None of woman born shall harm Macbeth"; "Fear not, till Birnam Wood do come to Dunsinane". These promises appear to say Macbeth is invincible, but this is an illusion.

	<p>Malcolm uses false appearance to test Macduff, first claiming he is thoroughly wicked to see if Macduff would support such a person. Malcolm reflects on the difficulty of deciding whether people are good or bad, and that this may lead good people to be misjudged: "angels are bright still, though the brightest fell."</p>
Bravery/courage	<p>Courage is a theme throughout the play. In the second scene, where the battle is described, Macbeth's courage is praised to the skies. He is "Bellona's bridegroom", a metaphor which compares him to Mars, the god of war. The Captain describes his bold exploits in battle, including the disembowelling and beheading of Macdonald and his routing of the Norwegians. He, along with Banquo, is compared to the kings of beasts and birds – to 'eagles' and 'lions', both brave noble creatures.</p> <p>The first time Macbeth shows fear in the play is when the witches speak to him: "Why do you start and seem to fear things that do sound so fair?" asks Banquo. Macbeth is afraid of his own nature, which has conjured up the "horrid image" of regicide.</p> <p>When he starts to reconsider killing the king, it is his courage which Lady Macbeth challenges, asking if will "live a coward?". She is scornful, saying that while he had the courage to do the murder, "then you were a man". Macbeth objects "I dare do all that may become a man – who dares do more is none". This implies that only a beast would murder Duncan. Lady Macbeth wins the argument, and so she uses the same tactic when Macbeth loses control during the banquet: "Are you a man?"</p>

	<p>Macbeth answers "Ay, and a brave one". However, this time, Lady Macbeth's taunts fail.</p> <p>Portrayed by Macbeth who encourages himself to fight in the battle when Seyton(an officer attending Macbeth) brings news to him that his wife has just died. Macbeth is still not bothered. This shows that Macbeth is courageous.</p> <p>The idea of manhood also crops up as Macduff shows his grief over the deaths of his wife and children.</p> <p>Malcolm tells him to "dispute it like a man", suggesting action will help repair his sorrow. Macduff answers, "But I must also feel it like a man", as he covers his face to hide his weeping. This suggests that it is still manly to feel emotion. A true man is not without tender feelings.</p> <p>Macbeth does come across as truly valiant, however. We cannot help but admire him for fighting to the last: "I'll fight till from my bones my flesh be hacked". His comparison of himself to a fighting bear; "bearlike I must fight the course" is also an image of dauntless courage. The bear is individually greater and nobler than the dogs which are set on it, but it always loses.</p>
Actions & their consequences	<p>The first Thane of Cawdor pays the penalty for his treachery; Macbeth repeats the pattern. Duncan is punished for his poor judgement. Macbeth wishes his action could be the "be-all and end-all" but he knows there will be consequences: he will have 'judgement' both on earth and in heaven. Lady Macbeth and Macbeth both have to suffer the consequences of their crimes.</p>

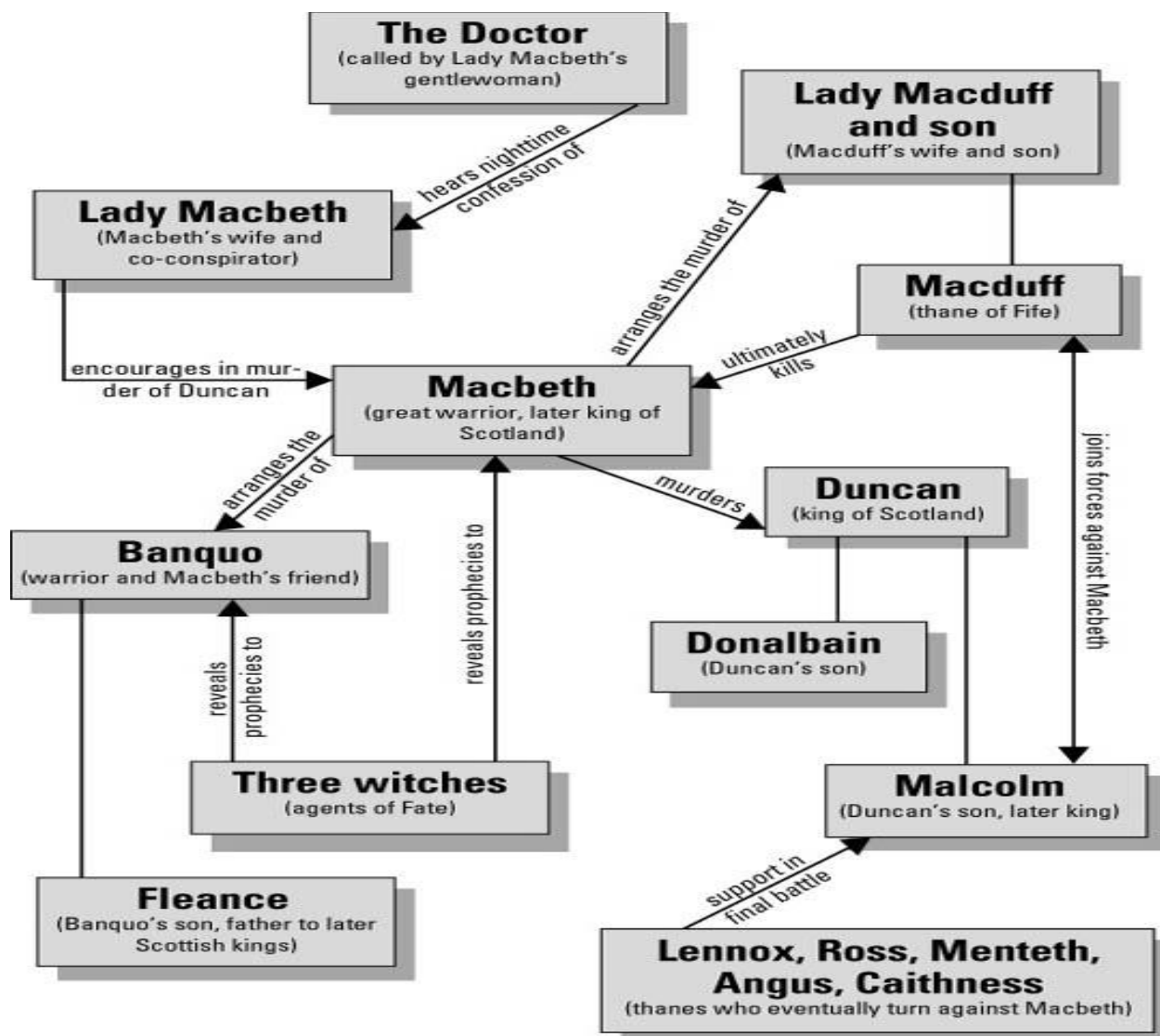
Patriotism	It shown by Macduff and Malcolm who two sacrifice their lives to fight and die for their country. They plan to fight against Macbeth.
Seeds of evil ambitions	It is portrayed by Witches who make predictions confusing, yet hope giving messages to Macbeth. Macbeth gets confused when coincidentally he is appointed Thane of cawdor by Duncan. The evil starts as now he thinks of becoming a king as predicted by Witches.
Coincidence	The Witches predictions that Macbeth will be Thane of cawdor which he is thinking of how this would come true, Ross and Angus sent by King Duncan, to tell him that he has been promoted to that title. This coincidence makes Macbeth develop total trust in the Witches.
Greed	<p>This theme is portrayed by Macbeth and old Thane of cawdor. Macbeth is not satisfied with what he has, he is given important positions such as Thane of Glamis, Thane of cawdor but he does not show any sign of appreciation. He needs to become king through evil means.</p> <p>The old Thane of cawdor also portrays this theme .He had a high position in Scotland, yet he went on to betray the king and his people.</p> <p>This theme is shown by Macbeth who is greedy for power. He plans to kill Banquo and his son, Fleance because of witches' predictions that Banquo's sons would be kings. For this reason, they are seen to be a threat to him</p>
Treason	This theme is evidenced by old Thane of cawdor who is charged of treason as he helps the enemy side against his own king and his people.
Deception	In several parts of the play, we see characters deceiving each other. For example, scene 4 when

	Duncan says he was deceived by cawdor's face, "There is no art to find the mind's construction in the face." In scene 5, Lady Macbeth tells her husband to look like the innocent flower but be serpent under it. In scene 6, Lady Macbeth behaves deceitfully to Duncan when he arrives at the castle. She welcomes him and states that she is at his service. Throughout this scene, she plays the hospitable hostess convincingly, but she has planned the most cruel murder.
Dramatic irony	This is where what is being said means a different thing to the audience from what the characters themselves suppose. For example, in scene 4 when Duncan remarked about the untrustworthiness of cawdor just as Macbeth entered the palace. We know that because of the prophecies Macbeth himself may now not be as trustworthy as the king thinks he is. In scene 6, some of the things that Duncan says mean different things to us because we already know the plan to murder Duncan. The "ignorant" Duncan comments about Macbeth's castle, "This castle has a pleasant seat" but we know the castle is the king's place of death.
Fear & conflict	When Macbeth plans to kill king Duncan, he starts feeling uneasy because Duncan is his guest and a good king. There is fear and conflict in him. Macbeth conscience (awareness of choice between right and wrong) starts bothering him.
Risky decision	The theme of risky decision is shown by Macbeth's and Lady Macbeth's acceptance to kill king Duncan. They started living in fear as a result of the consequences like being found out and feeling guilty. For example, Macbeth says that there is no enough water in the oceans to wash his

	hands from the blood of king Duncan in his hands. Hence, he regrets his actions.
Love	Portrayed by Lady Macbeth to her husband, Macbeth. She wanted to make sure that her husband became king. She came up with a plan so that the blame is on the servant and not Macbeth. She took the risk of the highest order for the sake of her husband Macbeth.
Evil secrets	Macbeth plans to kill Banquo without disclosing to his wife. When one of the murderers informs Macbeth about the death of Banquo during the state banquet, he doesn't inform his wife about the message delivered to him. When Banquo's ghost appears and haunts him, Macbeth shows strange behaviour. His wife tries to cover up, she tells the guests not to worry and that Macbeth is like this and they should just act normally. This is evil.
Hatred	This theme is portrayed by Macduff and English king. Macduff goes to England to join Malcolm and convince him to raise an army to get rid of Macbeth. The English king comes up with a decision of raising soldiers to fight against Macbeth. Hence, Macduff and the English king show their hatred towards Macbeth.
Revenge	It is shown by Malcolm and Macduff. These two talk about revenge. When Ross discloses to Macduff that his wife and his son are murdered, Macduff and Malcolm prepare for a revenge against Macbeth.
Sacrifice	This theme is portrayed by Malcolm and Macduff. These two sacrifice their lives to fight for their country, Scotland. Macduff and Malcolm sacrifice to fight and die for their country as they fight in the battle against Macbeth.

Unity/ solidarity	This is another theme in act 5. It is shown by malcolm, macduff and english king. These three get united in order to fight against macbeth.
Power and the abuse of power	Lust for power motivates Macbeth. However he discovers power without security is not worth having: "To be thus is nothing, but to be safely thus." Lady Macbeth, too, finds she cannot enjoy her new positions "without content". Macbeth realises that although he could commit crimes with "barefaced power" he still has to consider his public image. When that is damaged beyond repair, he abuses his power by becoming a tyrant.

ANALYSIS OF CHARACTERS OF MACBETH



Macbeth

- The eponymous antihero, Macbeth is introduced at the start as a noble and valiant general, who has led the Scottish army to victory.
- At the start of the play, Macbeth, the Thane of Glamis is a great soldier who is respected by everyone. He is rewarded by King Duncan with the Thane of Cawdor.
- However Macbeth is ambitious and he wants to become king. He will do whatever it takes even kill to get what he wants although at first he needs encouragement from his wife Lady Macbeth.
- In killing the king, he knows that he is committing

	<p>an evil act, but the temptation is too strong and his ambition to be king gets the better of him.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• He is respected by the king.• His ambition leads to his downfall. The witches and his wife play upon his weakness. We learn that it is Macbeth's choices that lead to his downfall, as he makes a deliberate choice to take the road to evil, leading him to killing his friend Banquo and many innocent people, including Lady Macduff and her children.• By the end of the play, Macbeth has become a 'butcher'.• Macbeth is a strong character and he is much more than just a horrible monster. We feel repelled by the evil in Macbeth but also feel sorry for the waste of the goodness in his character
Lady Macbeth	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• From the start, she is shown to be a very strong character, stronger than Macbeth.• She is viewed at the outset as his 'dearest partner of greatness' and by the end she is his 'fiend-like queen'.• She is shown to have a desire for power and wishes to help her husband to achieve his potential, even if this involves murder.• Lady Macbeth cannot cope with the evil she unleashes and goes insane.• She is often seen as a symbol of evil, but she eventually becomes a victim of evil.• She becomes increasingly more isolated as a character.
DUNCAN & MALCOLM	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Duncan is the King of Scotland and the first of Macbeth's victims. He is noble, well-respected and appreciative of loyalty. He is trusting and honourable, which represents a contrast to Macbeth.

	<p>He shows us the goodness that Macbeth destroys.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Malcolm is Duncan's elder son, named at the start of the play as his successor. He also values bravery and loyalty, but knows it is possible to be too trusting. Malcolm flees to England and becomes a shrewd leader. He is restored as the rightful king.
BANQUO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Banquo might best be described as a minor character in the tragedy of Macbeth. Nevertheless, he has an important function in the play and is considered by many to be an effective dramatic foil for Macbeth. It is through Banquo's interactions with Macbeth and his own motivations that the audience – through contrast – gain insights into Macbeth's nature also. Alike in many ways, Banquo and Macbeth are equals as the play begins: both are Scottish "captains" defending Duncan's realm against the marauding Norwegians led by Sweno. They fight honourably and are heroic warriors, risking their lives in defence of Duncan's kingdom. However, after the battle when they encounter the "weird sisters" on the "blasted heath", Banquo's dramatic function is to demonstrate to an audience that the temptations of the witches may be successfully resisted and that Macbeth therefore acts from free will. Banquo expresses unshakeable moral principles and warns his friend that the witches may well be "instruments of darkness" who "tell us truths" in order to "win us to our harm" and to "betray us in deepest consequence." Banquo's concern contrasts strikingly with Macbeth's own susceptibility to the witches. Banquo's resistance to the influence of evil serves to highlight Macbeth's failure to resist and foregrounds his tendency towards evil, stimulated by ambition -

	<p>the flaw that makes the tragedy possible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prompted by paranoid insecurity, when Macbeth decides to murder Banquo he acknowledges Banquo's endearing qualities: his "royalty of nature", his "wisdom" and his "dauntless" or fearless nature. This resentment of Banquo's natural superiority, together with jealousy of his destiny as a "father to a line of kings", motivates Macbeth to commit further wicked murders in the second half of the play, commencing with Banquo's and the attempted murder of his son and heir, Fleance. • Banquo's fate is determined by his virtue, just as Macbeth's is determined by his villainy.
MACDUFF & HIS FAMILY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Macduff suspects Macbeth early on. He is shrewd and honourable, as well as being patriotic. He is a caring husband and father, and it is the deaths of his family that motivate him to destroy Macbeth's reign. He is a key part of the Witches' prophecies and ultimately kills Macbeth. • The family appears only in one scene, but they are sympathetic characters. They link to the idea of Macbeth being a 'butcher' as they are shown to be truly innocent. They represent the deaths of many other children and women that are only briefly mentioned in the play.
THE WITCHES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are seen as the physical embodiment of evil in the play, representing temptation. Their language is full of spite, violence and references to destruction and mutilation. • The Witches never lie, but they speak in puzzling riddles (equivocation), and for Macbeth, he hears only what he wants to hear. • They represent uncertainty about the supernatural

	<p>world – we never know whether they have real power or if they are only persuading others to believe what they say.</p>
Malcolm	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Malcolm is one of King Duncan's sons, the other being Donalbain. Early in the play, Malcolm introduces to King Duncan the sergeant who saved Malcolm from capture. When the king's assassination is discovered, Malcolm agrees with his brother's suggestion to flee for their lives, and he goes to England, where he is later said to be living at the court of King Edward the Confessor, an English king noted for his holiness. The sudden departure of the king's sons casts some suspicion on their complicity in his murder.• In IV.iii, Macduff goes to England to seek Malcolm's help in restoring rightful rule in Scotland. He wonders whether Macduff is a paid agent of Macbeth, and he also questions why Macduff suddenly left his family unprotected to come to England. In order to test his suspicions about Macduff, Malcolm tells Macduff that he himself loves women, land and jewels, and discord among people. In sum, he accuses himself of lacking all kingly graces. When Macduff responds with a cry of hopelessness and despair for his country, Malcolm reveals that this is the first lie he has ever told. Later, Malcolm encourages Macduff to use the sudden news of his family's slaughter as a motive to fight Macbeth.• In the final scene of the play, Malcolm shows himself assuming the role of kingship with grace and dignity, expressing his concern for the soldiers who are not present, and urging Siward to take time to mourn for his son. In his final speech, he states his plans to inaugurate a new era in Scotland, rewarding the

	soldiers, calling home exiles, and serving by the grace of God.
Attendants	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The king is surrounded by attendants who can carry out such tasks as helping the bleeding sergeant to find surgeons. They travel with the king. His personal attendants are supposed to guard him in his sleep. Macbeth stabs them in the confused moments following the discovery of the murdered king. Macbeth has his own attendants. They help with Macbeth's banquet and are with him in the castle in the last act of the play.
Boy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Macduff's son is a young boy. When the murderers sent by Macbeth arrive at the Macduff residence, the child tries to defend his father's honor and calls the murderer a name. After he is stabbed, he tells his mother to run away
Cathness	Cathness is a Scottish nobleman who is another one of the rebels against Macbeth under Malcolm's leadership.
Donalbain	Donalbain is the king's son and brother to Malcolm. He is present but silent in the early scenes with the king. When the murder of his father is disclosed, he suggests that he and Malcolm flee the country, and he leaves for Ireland. For a time, he and his brother are under suspicion for the murder. He is not present at the battle at the end of the play.
Duncan	Duncan is said to be regarded as a good king and, on the battlefield; he appears to be a competent leader who confronts both a rebellion and an invasion. He announces his son Malcolm as the prince of Cumberland, the next in line to the Scottish throne. Duncan does not seem to be a particularly good judge of character, since he misjudged both the former thane of Cawdor and his designated replacement, Macbeth, who murders Duncan in his sleep.

English Doctor	The English doctor comments to Malcolm on the healing touch of the saintly Edward, the English king. Edward's healing stands in contrast to Macbeth's murderous touch.
Fleance	Fleance is Banquo's son. He and his father encounter Macbeth just before Macbeth murders Duncan. Prior to the banquet to which Macbeth has invited Fleance and Banquo, father and son are approached by murderers who have been ordered by Macbeth to kill both of them. Fleance escapes the attack.
Gentlemen	Unnamed gentlemen are addressed by Rosse at Macbeth's banquet.
Ghost of Banquo	Banquo's ghost appears at Macbeth's banquet scene and is only seen by Macbeth. It is commonly held that the ghost is a hallucination, conjured from Macbeth's guilt.
Hecate	Hecate is the goddess of witchcraft. She is described by the weird sisters as looking angry when she first appears on stage. She scolds them for their dealings with Macbeth, who loves the witches not for themselves but for his own purposes. She plans apparitions that will confuse and mislead Macbeth. Accompanied by three other witches, she appears briefly in the cauldron scene, commending the witches and instructing them to dance and sing.
Lennox	Lennox is a Scottish nobleman who appears with the king at his camp near the battlefield. He travels with the king to Macbeth's castle. The morning after Duncan's murder, Lennox arrives with Macduff, intending to awaken the king. Based on his initial survey of the evidence, Lennox speculates that the king's chamberlains were his killers. Lennox appears again in III.iv at Macbeth's banquet. During the hasty departure of the guests from the banquet, he wishes a

	better health to the king. In the final scene of Act III, he speaks of recent events in Scotland. In the first scene of Act IV, when he brings Macbeth word of Macduff's departure from England, he does not see the weird sisters vanish past him in the air. He is aligned with the Scottish noblemen rebelling against Macbeth in Act V.
Lords	Some unnamed lords attend Macbeth's banquet. One lord speaks to Lennox after the banquet about recent events in Scotland, the whereabouts of Malcolm and lately of Macduff, and the anger of Macbeth at Macduff's absence from the banquet. He prays for better times in Scotland.
Lady Macduff	Lady Macduff is Macduff's wife. When Macduff leaves for England, she is left unprotected with her son at her castle. She questions her husband's wisdom in leaving his family and later speaks gently yet seriously to her son of Macduff's absence, saying he is dead. They have a conversation about how they will live without Macduff. She and her son are murdered by those sent by Macbeth.
Menteith	Menteith is a Scottish nobleman who is one of the rebels against Macbeth serving under Malcolm. He seems confident that their cause will succeed and restore peace and order to Scotland.
Messengers	One messenger brings news to Lady Macbeth that the king is coming to stay at their castle. Another messenger tries to warn Lady Macduff that her family is in danger at Macduff's castle. In the last act, as Malcolm's army advances under cover of branches cut from trees, another messenger brings Macbeth word that the woods seem to be moving.
Murderers	The murderers are hired by Macbeth to kill Banquo and Fleance. He speaks to two of them, who say they are willing to perform as ordered. At the site of the murder,

	a third appears, apparently unknown to the other two, making the first two murderers think that Macbeth does not trust them. The first one goes with blood on his face to the door of Macbeth's banquet hall to tell him about the deed. Macbeth is happy about Banquo's death but shaken by the news that Fleance escaped. He plans to meet the murderers again. These may be the murderers who kill Lady Macduff also.
Officers	Non speaking parts. These would be appropriate to battle scenes, camp scenes, and Duncan's arrival at Macbeth's castle
Old Man	The anonymous old man represents experience and memory, and is at least 70 years old ("Threescore and ten I can remember well" he says in II.iv.1). He comments on the disturbances in nature on the night of Duncan's murder, unprecedented in his recollection. He is referred to by Rosse several times as father. He wishes a blessing on Rosse as he travels to Scone.
Porter	<p>He is the doorman at Macbeth's castle. He hears knocking but takes his time in answering the knocking, imagining that he is at hell's gate and letting in "some of all professions" into the "everlasting bonfire" (II.iii.18-19). After he opens the gate, admitting Lennox and Macduff, he reveals that he was up until the early hours of the morning, drinking and "carousing" (II.iii.24).</p> <p>In his drunken rambling, the porter speaks at length about welcoming "equivocators" to the castle. In Elizabethan England, the word equivocate meant much more than speaking with a double meaning.</p> <p>Shakespeare's audience would most likely have been familiar with the Doctrine of Equivocation, which gave Catholics permission to perjure themselves for morally acceptable reasons. In 1606, two Catholics were</p>

	<p>interrogated about their role in what became known as the Gunpowder Plot, which was a conspiracy to kill King James I and blow up Parliament in an effort place a Catholic on England's throne. Henry Garnet and Guy Fawkes invoked the Doctrine of Equivocation during their trial. Critics note that in the porter's speech about equivocation, Shakespeare associates the use of equivocation by Elizabethan Catholics like Garnet and Fawkes with the words of the weird sisters. Like Garnet and Fawkes, the witches words invariably carry double meanings. Perhaps the most notable instance of this is when the witches tell Macbeth that "none of woman born" (IV.i.80) can harm him. Macbeth finds out just before Macduff kills him the real truth behind the witches' words: that Macduff was taken from his mother's womb through cesarean section.</p>
Ross	<p>Rosse is a Scottish nobleman who reports to the king on the Macdonwald's rebellion and on the Norwegian king's desire to have a peace treaty. Rosse and Angus bring the news to Macbeth of his new title. He goes to Macbeth's castle with the king. Rosse comments on unusual things happening in nature after the king's assassination, such as the king's horses eating each other. He plans to travel to Scone to see Macbeth crowned.</p> <p>He attends Macbeth's banquet and notices that the king is unwell. Rosse's appearance at Macduff's castle is unclear in intent, but it seems to be only to check on Lady Macduff. He brings the news to Macduff of her death, but appears to have a difficult time stating clearly what happened, saying initially that Macduff's family is well and at peace. He appears with the rebelling Scottish noblemen in Act V, and he is present in the final scene bringing Siward news of his son's</p>

	death.
Scots Doctor	The Scots (or Scottish) doctor attends to Lady Macbeth. He has watched for several nights and not seen the sleepwalking. He questions the gentlewoman about Lady Macbeth's actions during the sleepwalking and advises that Lady Macbeth needs spiritual rather than physical healing. When he reports to Macbeth, he gives his opinion that she is not sick but troubled by her imagination. He says to himself that if he can get away from the castle, no desire for profit will make him come back.
Sergeant	This soldier, sometimes identified as a captain, is present only in the second scene in the play but introduces the image of the spreading bloodshed which stains the land. He begins reporting to Duncan on the battle and on Macbeth's bravery but is too weakened from his wounds to finish his speech.
Servant	In V.iii, a servant brings Macbeth news of the ten thousand English invaders approaching the castle.
Sewer	The sewer is a butler who waits on Macbeth and his guests at the castle. A supper goes on in the other room while Macbeth deliberates about Duncan's murder. This is not a speaking part.
Seyton	Seyton is Macbeth's only trusted subordinate at the end of the play. He brings Macbeth confirmation of battle reports. He also brings news of the death of Lady Macbeth. Although Macbeth calls for him impatiently, he does not scream at him the way he does at other messengers. It has often been noticed that his name resembles Satan.
Siward	Siward's help for the Scottish cause is sought by Malcolm and Macduff at the English court of Edward the Confessor. Siward is described by Malcolm as an experienced and accomplished soldier. Siward and

	<p>Malcolm enter Macbeth's castle together. Some of Macbeth's own people turn against him and join with the invaders.</p> <p>When Siward learns the news of his son's death in the final scene, he is satisfied that his son received his injuries on the front of his body, facing the battle rather than running away, and declares him now "God's soldier"</p>
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Review Questions

1. At the start of the play, Macbeth is a warm, friendly character with many good qualities.
 - a. At the start of the play, Macbeth is already a murderous and dark figure whom we dislike.
 - b. At the start of the play, Macbeth is shown to be capable of violence and cruelty but also to be much admired and respected.
 - c. The Witches poison Macbeth's character and mind with evil suggestions.
 - d. The Witches merely exploit Macbeth's own ambition and cruelty.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements. Explain with supporting examples.

2. Macbeth: Act 1 Scene 7, lines 12–16
 - a. What reasons does Macbeth give as to why Duncan should trust him?
 - b. List five reasons why Macbeth should be afraid of killing Duncan.
 - c. List the reasons why you think he has to go ahead with the murder.
3. When his wife enters, Macbeth tells her that he 'will proceed no further in this business' (line 31). Read through lines 35–59 in Act 1 Scene 7.
 - a. How does Lady Macbeth persuade her husband to go ahead with the murder?
 - b. What does she accuse him of? Why does she think this will make him change his mind?
4. How does Shakespeare present the character of Macbeth in act 1?
You should write about:

- a. How Shakespeare develops Macbeth's character in Act 1
- b. How the Witches' prophecies and Lady Macbeth influence Macbeth.
- c. Whether Shakespeare encourages any sympathy or admiration for Macbeth.

Act 1

- 1) What is the point of the first scene literally and in reference to the whole play?
- 2) What does Duncan call Macbeth when he hears Macbeth has defeated Macdonwald?
- 3) Who is sentenced to death?
- 4) What do the witches predict in I.iii for Macbeth? For Banquo?
- 5) What news does Ross bring Macbeth?
- 6) Banquo, like Macbeth, is surprised that the witches have predicted Macbeth's new title. He is, however, leery. What does he say about the motives of the "instruments of darkness"?
- 7) Malcolm describes Cawdor's last moments before execution. What is Duncan's reply?
- 8) Macbeth says, "Stars, hide your fires, Let not light see my black and deep desires." What are Macbeth's desires?
- 9) After Lady Macbeth reads the letter, what does she tell us is her opinion of Macbeth, and how does she plan to help him?
- 10) What is Lady Macbeth's "prayer" to the spirits after she learns
- 11) Duncan is coming"?
- 12) What advice does Lady Macbeth give Macbeth when he arrives home?
- 13) What are Macbeth's arguments to himself against killing Duncan?
- 14) What arguments does Lady Macbeth use to convince Macbeth to commit the murder?
- 15) What is Lady Macbeth's plan?

Act II

- 1) What is Macbeth's lie to Banquo about the witches' predictions?
- 2) What is the signal Lady Macbeth is to give Macbeth to let him know that she has taken care of the guards (grooms)?

- 3) What excuse does Lady Macbeth give for not killing Duncan herself?
- 4) After Macbeth kills Duncan, he goes to Lady Macbeth and is concerned about not being able to say "Amen." What is her advice to him?
- 5) Then, Macbeth is worried about hearing a voice saying, "Macbeth does murder sleep."
- 6) What does Lady Macbeth then tell him to do?
- 7) Why won't Macbeth take the daggers back to the scene of the crime?
- 8) Who was knocking?
- 9) What three things does drinking provoke?
- 10) How does Lennox describe the night, and what is Macbeth's response?
1. What did Macduff discover?
2. Macduff says, "Oh, gentle lady, 'Tis not for you to hear what I can speak. The repetition, in a woman's ear, would murder as it fell." What is ironic about this?
3. What excuse or explanation did Macbeth give for killing the guards (grooms)? What is his real reason?
4. Why do Malcolm and Donalbain leave?
5. Why does Ross not believe Malcolm and Donalbain were responsible for Duncan's murder?

Act III

1. Why does Macbeth want Banquo and Fleance dead?
2. What is Macbeth's plan for killing Banquo and Fleance? Does it work?
3. Macbeth says, "The worm that's fled Hath nature that in time will venom breed, No teeth for the present." What does that mean?
4. Who (what) did Macbeth see at the banquet table?
5. How does Lady Macbeth cover for Macbeth at the banquet? What excuses does she give for his wild talk?
6. Who else was missing from the banquet table (besides Banquo)?
7. Macbeth says, "I am in blood Stepped in so far that should I wade no more, Returning were as tedious as go o'er." What does he mean?

8. What does Hecate want the witches to do?
9. What does Lennox think about Macbeth, Fleance, and Duncan's sons?

Act IV

1. Witch 2 says, "By the pricking of my thumb, Something wicked this way comes." Who comes?
2. What is Macbeth's attitude towards the witches this time?
3. What four things did the witches show Macbeth? What does each show/say? What is Macbeth's reaction?
4. Macbeth says (about the witches), "Infected be the air whereon they ride, And damned all those that trust them!" What is Macbeth, in effect, saying about himself?
5. Where is Macduff?
6. Why does Macbeth have Macduff's family and servants killed?
7. Why does Lady Macduff's son say liars and swearers are fools?
8. Malcolm says, "Angels are bright still, though the brightest fell. Though all things foul would wear the brows of grace, Yet grace must still look so." What does that mean?
9. Macduff says, "Oh, Scotland, Scotland!" Why?
10. What news does Ross bring to Macduff?

Act V

1. What do the doctor and gentlewoman see Lady Macbeth doing? What do they decide to do about it?
2. What does Macbeth want the doctor to do for his wife?
3. What trick does Malcolm use to hide the number of men in his army?
4. Malcolm says, "And none serve with him but constrained things Whose hearts are absent, too." What does that mean?
5. What is Macbeth's reaction to Lady Macbeth's death?
6. What is Macbeth's reaction to the news that Birnam Wood is moving?
7. Who first fights Macbeth? What happens?
8. Macbeth says to Macduff, "But get thee back, my soul is too much charged with blood of thine already." To what is he referring?

HMC

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