

MACBETH Homework Questions

ACT 1

Scene 1

- 1) Describe two ways in which the scene sets the theme and mood of the play.
- 2) What is happening in Scotland at this time?

Scene 2

- 1) Which two generals were victorious in the battle with Norway?
- 2) Which thane was a traitor?
- 3) What new information do we learn about Macbeth?
- 4) To which animals are Macbeth and Banquo compared?
- 5) What reward is Duncan giving Macbeth?

Scene 3

- 1) Describe two characteristics of the witches that are revealed in the opening of scene 3.
- 2) How does Macbeth's first line link him with the witches?
- 3) List the three predictions of the witches.
- 4) What do we learn from Macbeth's reaction to the witches "all hail"?
- 5) What is Banquo's warning about the truth of the witches' predictions?
- 6) What news does Ross bring to Macbeth.
- 7) What do we learn about Macbeth in lines 133-143. What has he already considered? How does he react to these thoughts?

Scene 4

- 1) In Duncan's lines beginning "There's no art ...", what characteristics of Duncan's personality are revealed?
- 2) What words does Duncan use to describe Macbeth?

- 3) Who is the heir to Duncan's throne?
- 4) What is Macbeth's reaction to finding out that Malcolm will be the next king?

Scene 5

- 1) According to Lady Macbeth, what is Macbeth's weakness?
- 2) What unnatural demand does Lady Macbeth make on the "spirits that tend on mortal thoughts?"
- 3) How are Lady Macbeth's words and actions contrary to the chain of being.
- 4) Why does Lady Macbeth ask, "Come thick night ...?"
- 5) Which theme is referred to in "Look like the innocent flower but be the serpent under it."?

Scene 6

- 1) What does Banquo's and Duncan's description of Macbeth's castle tell us about their characters? What theme is being referred to here?
- 2) Explain why Duncan's description of Macbeth's castle is an example of dramatic irony?

Scene 7

- 1) What reasons does Macbeth list for not killing Duncan?
- 2) What is the one reason he offers in favour of killing Duncan?
- 3) What is Lady Macbeth's attitude toward Macbeth's dithering? Give examples from the text.
- 4) What is Lady Macbeth's plan for the murder of Duncan?
- 5) Find the reference to *fair is foul* in this scene.
- 6) Based upon what you know about the characters of Lady Macbeth and Macbeth, speculate on what you think might happen before, during and after the murder of Duncan.

ACT 2

Scene 1

- 1) How does Banquo describe the night sky? Why is this description important?
- 2) What gift has Duncan given to Lady Macbeth?
- 3) What does Macbeth see before he goes to murder Duncan?
- 4) What does Macbeth mean when he says, "Words to the heat of deed to cold breath gives."?

Scene 2

- 1) Why didn't Lady Macbeth kill Duncan herself?
- 2) What word could Macbeth not say to the sleeping men?
- 3) What does Lady Macbeth say will happen if they think too much about what they have done?
- 4) What curse does Macbeth think he has heard after murdering Duncan?
- 5) Why does Macbeth refuse to return to Duncan's room?
- 6) Compare the reactions of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth to the blood on their hands?

Scene 3

- 1) Explain two purposes for the porter's scene?
- 2) Lines 56 to 65 refer to which theme in the play?
- 3) What has happened to Duncan's guards?
- 4) Why do Donalbain and Malcolm decide to run away? Where do they go?

Scene 4

- 1) How has nature reacted to Duncan's death?
- 2) What is going to happen at Scone?
- 3) Which thane is not going to the coronation?

ACT 3

Scene 1

- 1) What does Banquo suspect about how Macbeth became king?

- 2) Why does Macbeth fear Banquo and what does he propose to do?
- 3) How has Macbeth convinced the murders to kill Banquo? Whom else are they order to kill?

Scene 2

- 1) What change do you notice in the relationship between Macbeth and Lady Macbeth?
- 2) What problem is spoiling their happiness now that Macbeth is king?

Scene 3

- 1) What happens to Banquo and Fleance?

Scene 4

- 1) What is ironic about Macbeth's lines 41-42?
- 2) To what incident does Lady Macbeth compare Macbeth's seeing of the ghost?
- 3) What has Macbeth noticed about Macduff? How does Macbeth get his information?
- 4) Whom is Macbeth going to see and why?
- 5) What is significant about Lady Macbeth's comment, "You lack the season of all natures, sleep."
- 6) What does Macbeth mean when he says, "We are yet but young in deed?"

Scene 6

- 1) How has Macduff annoyed Macbeth?
- 2) Who is Macbeth described by Lennox and the Lord? How does this contrast with the way Macbeth was described earlier in the play?

ACT 4

Scene 1

- 1) How does the second witch describe Macbeth?
- 2) How has Macbeth become more like the witches?
- 3) What are the three declarations of the three apparitions?

- 4) What is ironic about Macbeth's statement: "And damned all those that trust them?"
- 5) What is Macbeth's reaction to Lennox's news?
- 6) What change does Macbeth decide to make to his character?

Scene 2

- 1) Why is Lady Macduff angry at Macduff? Do you think she is justified?

Scene 3

- 1) What is ironic about Macduff's line, "Each new morn/New widows howl ..."?
- 2) Why does Malcolm pretend that he has so many terrible faults and that he would be a very bad king?
- 3) What news does Ross bring to Macduff? Note Macduff's reaction as it will be compared to Macbeth's reaction in a similar situation later in the play.

ACT 5

Scene 1

- 1) What is ironic about Lady Macbeth's actions in this scene? Refer to Act 2 Scene 2.
- 2) To what theme do the doctor's lines refer: "Unnatural deeds/Do breed unnatural troubles"?

Scene 2

- 1) Where are Malcolm and the armies assembling?
- 2) What theme is referred to in Angus' lines: "Now does he feel his title/Hang loose about him, like a giant's robe/Upon a dwarfish thief"?

Scene 3

- 1) How does Macbeth feel about his life now?
- 2) What part of this scene reminds us of Macbeth as he was before the murder?
- 3) Macbeth wants a cure for Scotland's disease. What does he think the disease is? What does Malcolm think it is?

Scene 4

- 1) What is Malcolm's battle plan?

Scene 5

- 1) How does Macbeth behave in front of his soldiers?
- 2) Why is Macbeth no longer afraid of strange noises in the night?
- 3) Compare Macbeth's reaction to hearing of the death of his wife to Macduff's.

Scene 8

- 1) To what final hope is Macbeth clinging when he is forced to fight Macduff?
- 2) Initially, why does Macbeth not want to fight Macduff?
- 3) What does Macduff say to eliminate Macbeth's hope?
- 4) How does Malcolm plan to get the country back to order?