

Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

Macbeth- Act 1



Directions: *Answer the following questions based on Act 1 of Macbeth in complete detailed sentences.*

Scene 1

1. What mood is conveyed with the first scene? Name three details that help set the play's tone.

2. The line "Fair is foul, and foul is fair" is one of the most memorable of the play. It is also an example of a *paradox*, which is the connection of ideas that are seemingly contradictory to one another, but that hold a greater meaning when placed together. What greater meaning might this line suggest?

Scene 2

5. What does the "bloody man" reveal to King Duncan and his entourage about Macdonwald?

6. What has the Thane of Cawdor done, and what will happen to him?

7. What does Duncan mean when he says of the Thane of Cawdor, "What he hath lost, noble Macbeth hath won"?

8. What characteristics are assigned to Macbeth in this scene?

Scene 3

9. What have the witches been doing since they last appeared?

10. What in the witches' conversation suggests they are not all-powerful?

11. Describe what the witches look like, according to Banquo.

12. What do the witches tell Macbeth will happen to him?

13. The witches inform Banquo that while he will not be king, he will father kings. They also say he is "lesser than Macbeth, and greater," and "not so happy, yet much happier." What might these lines mean? What literary device is an example of?

14. Why is Macbeth shaken by the news that the Thane of Cawdor has been condemned?

15. Describe Macbeth's thoughts about the witches' prophecies. What conclusion does he ultimately reach?

16. The audience knows about Macbeth's elevation to Thane of Cawdor before Macbeth knows. Why is this significant? What literary device is this?

Scene 4

17. What regrets does Duncan have about the executed Thane of Cawdor? How does Duncan feel about Macbeth?

18. Macbeth says in an aside, "Stars, hide your fires, / Let not light see my black and deep desires." What does this mean? What can we infer from this passage?

Scene 5

19. Macbeth misquotes the witches' prophecy, telling his wife in a letter that they said, "Hail, King that shalt be!" and not "All hail, Macbeth, that shalt be King hereafter!" What does this misquote reveal about where Macbeth stands on the subject of the prophecies?

20. Contrast Lady Macbeth's response to the prophecy with her husband's.

21. What is Lady Macbeth's view of her husband's nature?

22. In her famous speech, why does Lady Macbeth ask spirits to "unsex me here"? What does her sex have to do with her plans?

23. Why is Lady Macbeth pleased that the king is spending the night?

24. Explain what Lady Macbeth means when she tells her husband, "Your face, my thane, is as a book, where men / May read strange matters."

Scene 6 & 7

25. What impressions do Duncan and Banquo have of the Macbeths' castle?

26. Describe Lady Macbeth's behavior toward Duncan. What does her behavior reveal about her?

27. In his soliloquy, why does Macbeth question killing Duncan?

28. How does Lady Macbeth manipulate her husband to go through with the plan?

29. How do Macbeth and Lady Macbeth plan to get away with killing Duncan?

30. Act One ends with Macbeth's declaration, "False face must hide what the false heart doth know." What does he mean, and what can be inferred about his feelings toward the impending murder?

31. Describe the balance of power between Macbeth and Lady Macbeth in Act One's final scene.