

Student Name _____ Per _____

STUDY GUIDE QUESTIONS - Macbeth

Act One

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 and cautious about the witches' predictions. What does he say?
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 his desires?
9. After Lady Macbeth reads the letter, what 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 Duncan is coming?
11. What advice does Lady Macbeth give Macbeth when he arrives home?
12. What are Macbeth's arguments to himself against killing Duncan?
13. What arguments does Lady Macbeth use to convince Macbeth to commit the murder?
14. 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 tell him the guards (grooms) are taken care of?
3. What excuse does Lady Macbeth give for not killing Duncan herself?
4. After Macbeth kills Duncan, he goes to Lady Macbeth unable to say "Amen." What is her advice to him?
5. Macbeth is worried about hearing, "Macbeth does murder sleep." What is Lady Macbeth's advice?
6. Why won't Macbeth take the daggers back to the scene of the crime?
7. Who was knocking?
8. What three things does drinking provoke?
9. How does Lennox describe the night, and what is Macbeth's response?
10. What did Macduff discover?
11. Macduff: "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 the irony?
12. What excuse or explanation did Macbeth give for killing the guards (grooms)? What is his real reason?

13. Why do Malcolm and Donalbain leave?

14. 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: "The worm that's fled Hath nature that in time will venom breed, No teeth for the present." Meaning?
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: "I am in blood Stepped in so far that should I wade no more, Returning were as tedious as go 'er." What is the meaning?
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: "Infected be the air whereon they ride, And damned all those that trust them!" Meaning?
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." Meaning?
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." Meaning?
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?