

Name \_\_\_\_\_

English Literature  
*Macbeth* Review Questions

***Act I***

1. What atmosphere is created by the witches in the first scene? What are their plans?
  
2. What is the nature of the war in which Scotland is involved? From the reports of the Sergeant and Ross, what are the reader's first impressions of Macbeth? What reward is Macbeth to be given for his role in the battle?
  
3. What predictions do the witches make for Macbeth? What predictions do they make for Banquo?
  
4. When Ross and Angus arrive, what do they tell Macbeth? How are Macbeth and Banquo reacting differently to the predictions?
  
5. What is a foil? Who is the foil for Macbeth?
  
6. How does Duncan feel about Macbeth and Banquo? What is Macbeth's attitude toward Duncan?
  
7. When Lady Macbeth receives a letter telling her of the witches' predictions, what are her thoughts?

8.What is ironic about the speeches that Duncan and Banquo make as they approach Macbeth's castle?

9.In his first major soliloquy (pg. 192), what reasons does Macbeth give for not wanting to kill Duncan?

10.How does Lady Macbeth convince him to go ahead with their initial plan?

11.Specifically, what is their plan?

12.What major theme has appeared and reappeared in Act I?

13.Do you think the witches control Macbeth's fate, or does he control his own future? Explain.

14.Compare and contrast the personalities of Lady Macbeth and her husband. Which is the more powerful character? Why?

15.What does the device of the aside used by Macbeth convey to the audience about his character?

16.What is blank verse?

## ***Act II***

1.As Macbeth and Banquo discuss the King's visit and their encounter with the weird sisters, what does the reader detect about Banquo's thoughts?

2.What vision does Macbeth see shortly before he kills Duncan?

3.What slight improvement does Lady Macbeth make in the plan for the murder?

4.What goes wrong while Macbeth is murdering Duncan? What stupid thing does Macbeth do?

5.The porter humorously comments on the types of people who wind up at the gates of hell. Why is the content of his soliloquy an apt extension of the previous scene? What is the purpose of this brief speech?

6.When Macduff and Lennox come for Duncan, what do they say about the night?

7.While everyone is lamenting the death of Duncan, what act does Macbeth admit to committing? What is his explanation?

8.Who are Malcolm and Donalbain? What do Malcolm and Donalbain decide to do? Why?

9.What events described by the Old Man and Ross show that supernatural forces are influencing events in Scotland?

10.Who is blamed for killing the king? Why?

11.Who will now be king?

12.What is going to happen in Scone? Why doesn't Macduff go to Scone?

13.How has Macbeth changed as a result of the events in this act? Cite lines that illustrate these changes.

14.How is Macbeth's claim that he will "sleep no more" foreshadowed by the witches in Act I.iii?

15.What might Lady Macbeth's words "These deeds must not be thought after these ways. So, it will make us mad" (II.ii.33-34) foreshadow?

### ***Act III***

1.What are Banquo's thoughts as he reflects on Macbeth's becoming King?

2.What state occasion has Macbeth planned for the evening?

3.Who is Fleance? Why does Macbeth want to murder Banquo and Fleance?

4.How does he persuade the murderers?

5.How do Macbeth and Lady Macbeth now feel about what has happened? Explain.

6.Why doesn't Macbeth tell his wife about his plans for killing Banquo and Fleance?

7.Who might the third murderer Macbeth enlists be?

8.What happens during the murder?

9.What happens at the banquet that scares Macbeth?

10.How does Lady Macbeth cover for her husband's odd behavior?

11.What is the source of Macbeth's anger toward Macduff?

12.Why is Hecate angry with her witches? What plans does she have for Macbeth?

13.In a way, the guarded conversation between Lennox and the Lord represent the thinking of many people in Scotland. What views of the people are they expressing?

14.Where is Macduff? Why?

15.What is your impression of Macbeth's state of mind at this point in the play?

16.Compare and contrast the murders of Banquo and Duncan. How does the murder of Banquo illustrate the changes that Macbeth has undergone?

17.How does the relationship between Macbeth and his wife change after the death of Duncan. Explain using details from Act III.

#### ***Act IV***

1. Why has Macbeth gone to see the witches? What had Hecate previously promised that they would do?
2. What is the first apparition Macbeth sees? What does it say to him?
3. What is the second apparition Macbeth sees? What does it say to him?
4. What is the third apparition Macbeth sees? What does it say to him?
5. What else does Macbeth demand to know? What answer does he receive?
6. What news about Macduff does Lennox bring? As a result, What does Macbeth resolve to do?
7. How does Lady Macduff feel about her husband's absence? What are the reader's impressions of her and her son's relationship?
8. What does the reader "see" of the Macduff family murder?
9. What are Malcolm's initial feelings toward Macduff? Why?
10. Of what sins does Malcolm accuse himself? Why does he do this?
11. What does Malcolm say about King Edward?
12. What sad news does Ross bring from Scotland?

13.How does Malcolm attempt to console Macduff?

14.What do Malcolm and Macduff vow to do?

15.At this point in the play, do you have any sympathy left for Macbeth? Why or why not?

16.Which character is the most admirable one in the play so far? Explain.

17.Mood describes the dominant feeling that a literary work creates for a reader. What mood is Shakespeare creating in this act? How does he achieve it? What purpose does the created mood serve?

### ***Act V***

1.What is the cause of Lady Macbeth's sleepwalking? Of what are the Doctor and Gentlewoman so afraid?

2.How do the Scottish noblemen feel about the approaching battle?

3.What is Macbeth's mental state as he awaits the approaching enemy?

4.What is Malcolm's plan for hiding the approaching army?

5.What ultimately happens to Lady Macbeth? What is her husband's reaction?

6.What startling information about Birnam Wood does Macbeth learn from the messenger? How is the news associated with the witches' prophecy?

7. Who is Young Siward? What happens to him?

8. According to Old Siward and Malcolm, why was the battle against Macbeth so easily won?

9. Why is it appropriate that Macduff and Macbeth should meet in hand-to-hand combat?

10. Considering the prophecy of the witches, how is it that Macduff is able to kill Macbeth?

11. What trophy does Macduff present to Malcolm?

12. What reward does Malcolm give to the thanes that fought at this side?

13. Consider the leadership abilities and character of Duncan, Banquo, Macduff, Malcolm, and Macbeth. Who would have made the best king? Explain.

14. Is Macbeth's downfall a result of fate or his own actions? Explain.

15. Compare and contrast the final days of Lady Macbeth and Macbeth. How are both characters affected by the knowledge of their evil deeds? With whom do you sympathize more?

16. What positive and negative effects of ambition does the play illustrate?

17. Can *Macbeth* offer any lessons to today's leaders?