

Macbeth

Act Three

Comprehension Check

Directions: To give you a comprehensive understanding of all aspects of the play, answer the following questions using complete sentences on a separate sheet of paper. Be sure to use your Scene Guide to help you.

Scene One

1. What suspicion about Macbeth does Banquo reveal in his soliloquy?
2. What is Banquo hoping for?
3. What does Macbeth say the “bloody cousins” (Malcolm and Donalbain) are up to?
4. For what reasons does Macbeth want Banquo murdered?
5. What reason does Macbeth give for not killing Banquo himself?
6. When does Macbeth want Banquo and Fleance killed?
7. How are Macbeth’s fears justified in this scene?

Scene Two

1. What lines reveal how Lady Macbeth is feeling about being queen?
2. What is Lady Macbeth’s problem with Macbeth?
3. What does Macbeth mean by “Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest chuck / Till thou applaud the deed”?

Scene Three

1. What does the second murderer mean when he says “We have lost / Best half of our affair”?
2. Some scholars believe that the third murderer might be Macbeth himself. Draw an argument as to whether Macbeth would participate in the murder or not. Give reasons for your position.

Scene Four

1. How does Macbeth react to the news that Fleance escaped?
2. Macbeth’s sightings have gotten worse, as he insists he sees Banquo’s ghost. How might this progression be a reflection of Macbeth’s mental state?
3. What explanation does Lady Macbeth give for Macbeth’s behavior?
4. How does Lady Macbeth try to calm Macbeth down?

Name _____ Period _____

5. What is your explanation for the appearance of Banquo's ghost at the table? Why do you think Macbeth is the only one who can see him?
6. Besides Banquo, who was conspicuously absent from the banquet?
7. Many scholars consider scene four to be the climax of the play. Find one or two lines from this scene that could be the indicator that the climax of the play has been reached, and explain your reason for this choice.

Scene Five

1. Scholars believe that scene five was not written by Shakespeare, but was added later. Why do you think this scene was added at this point? (Consider what has just happened in the play.)
2. Why is Hecate angry?
3. What does Hecate say will soon be coming?
4. What do you think Hecate means when she says "And you all know security / Is mortals' chiefest enemy"? Do you agree? Why or why not?
5. Some producers/directors often omit this scene from their productions. Do you think removing this scene would change the play? Why or why not?

Scene Six

1. What things does Lennox say have been "strangely borne"?
2. What have Malcolm and Macduff been up to?