

## **Act 5**

If you haven't done so already, you'll need to start by re-reading this act (hopefully on the back of re-reading the previous four too!). I would re-read scene-by-scene if I were you...

Act 5, start here: [https://www.sparknotes.com/nofear/shakespeare/macbeth/page\\_178/](https://www.sparknotes.com/nofear/shakespeare/macbeth/page_178/)

Work through the following questions.

*More challenging options are added in italics to stretch your thinking.*

### **Scene 1**

1. What has the gentlewoman watched Lady Macbeth do every night since "his Majesty went into the field"? *Why would she be experiencing such "a great perturbation in nature"? What does it mean to be "perturb[ed]"?*
2. Read after "Observe her, stand close". Line 18. What do they observe about her?
3. Why would she be in the habit of continually washing her hands? *How does this link in to what she said after Macbeth returned from murdering Duncan with bloody hands in Act 2 Scene 2? Include quotations.*
4. What might she have used to sweeten her hands from the smell of blood? Why wouldn't this work? *Can you link this to Act 2 Scene 2 again?*
5. When the Doctor says "more needs she the divine than the physician", what do you think he means? Look up "divine" and "physician" if you need to. *Why would he say this?*

### **Scene 2**

1. Go through the scene and collate all the words/phrases with bad/negative ideas/connotations e.g. "revenges".
2. Why would Malcolm be leading an army set on revenge?
3. How do Menteith, Caithness and Angus describe Macbeth from "What does the tyrant?" to "...a dwarfish thief"?
4. *Angus says "Now does he feel his title hang loose about him, like a giant's robe upon a dwarfish thief". How can you connect this to your reading of Jekyll and Hyde? What other connections can you make between this play and that book?! Get thinking!*
5. Lennox says "drown the weeds". If Macbeth is the 'weed' that needs drowning, how does this metaphor work? How is Macbeth like a weed in the garden (instead of a flower)? *Can you remember when Lady Macbeth suggested looking like a flower to Macbeth?*

### **Scene 3**

1. Read Macbeth's opening speech:

Bring me no more reports. Let them fly all.

Till Birnam Wood remove to Dunsinane  
I cannot taint with fear. What's the boy Malcolm?  
Was he not born of woman? The spirits that know  
All mortal consequences have pronounced me thus:  
"Fear not, Macbeth. No man that's born of woman  
Shall e'er have power upon thee." Then fly, false thanes,  
And mingle with the English epicures.  
The mind I sway by and the heart I bear  
Shall never sag with doubt nor shake with fear.

2. Highlight the interesting words and phrases and annotate them too – thoughts, questions, writer's methods etc.

3. Answer this mini-question: How does Shakespeare use language to describe Macbeth's thoughts and feelings in this scene? Use this framework to help you...

#### Point:

Shakespeare uses language to describe Macbeth as thinking...

Shakespeare uses language to describe Macbeth as feeling...

#### Evidence

For example, it says.../ This is illustrated when it says...

#### Explaining meaning – try to use a couple

This means/shows that... because...

It also suggests/implies... because...

#### Zoom

The word/phrase "....." makes me feel/imagine/think... because...

*4. Collate quotes from this scene (after the initial scene above) which illustrate Macbeth's grim, intransigent\* and defiant mood. Write a note to explain what you think after each quote. Aim for at least 3.*

*\*Look it up!*

#### Scene 4

1. Quotes match-up: find the quote(s) from Act 4 Scene 1 that match up with Act 5 Scene 4 about Birnam wood.

2. What does the word “tyrant” mean? *Why does Shakespeare repeatedly make his characters refer to Macbeth using this epithet\*?*

*\*Again, look it up!*

**Scene 5 – don’t forget to be re-reading! I have been re-reading each scene as I’ve been writing these questions so you need to re-read to answer!!!**

1. Macbeth says that “[He has] supped full with horrors” and that he has “slaughterous thoughts”. Use your knowledge from the rest of the play to explain what he is referring to. Clue: what “horr[ible] things has he done? Who has he “slaughter[ed] or had slaughter[ed]? What does slaughter actually mean? *In what way(s) has Dr Jekyll also “supped full with horrors”?*

2. Watch this: From Orson Welles to Michael Fassbender: A Study of Macbeth's Soliloquy

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i3p2HnNicug>

Which do you think is the best portrayal and why? How do you think this monologue should be acted?

*Try watching Sir Ian McKellen’s analysis here:*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zGbZCgHQ9m8>

*Here is one of the foremost living Shakespearean actors so his take on the scene has got to be worth a listen! He talks specifically about writer’s methods and has some ideas which might help with Q4 on this section about nihilism.*

*3. How is life like a “brief candle”? Explain what you take this metaphor to mean.*

4. Macbeth describes life as “a tale...[which] signif[ies] nothing? Do you agree with this? Does life mean “nothing”? *Look up what ‘nihilism’ means and make some notes – is Macbeth nihilistic? What he always a nihilist or have his experiences turned him into one?*

5. What does the messenger inform Macbeth about when he says “As I did stand my watch upon the hill...”? How does Macbeth react and why?

## **Scene 6**

1. Which compliments does Malcolm use about his uncle and Macduff? (Line 2 and 4)

2. Which compliments were used in reference to Macbeth in Act One Scene 2? (Line 16, 24 and 68)

3. How has he changed? Why has he changed? Whose fault is it that he has changed?

*4. Go back and read Act One Scene 2 and compile all of the insults reported about Macdonwald, starting with “merciless” on line 9. What do you notice about these words and the person Macbeth has become by Act 5 Scene 6? What happened to Macdonwald because*

*of his disloyalty? What is the 'moral code' of this play? What has to happen to Macbeth because of his behaviour? How is Shakespeare linking up the start and end of the play?*

### **Scene 7**

1. What words do Young Siward and Macduff use to refer to Macbeth?

*2. Young Siward says "The devil himself could not pronounce a title more hateful to mine ear" and, in Jekyll and Hyde, it says that "Satan's signature" was writ upon Hyde's face, and that he was a "devil" who needed to be "caged" but then "came out roaring".*

*Miss Lambert says "It is so obvious that Robert Louis Stevenson was very familiar with the play Macbeth and was probably a big fan of Shakespeare's work". To what extent do you agree? Refer to the similarities between Macbeth and both Jekyll and Hyde in your response.*

- *Are both Jekyll and Macbeth 'double-dealers'?*
- *Are both Hyde and Macbeth savagely violent?*
- *Etc.*

### **Scene 8**

1. What does Macduff think about Macbeth? Prove it with quotes.

2. What is Macbeth's attitude like at this late stage? Prove it with quotes again.

### **Scene 9**

1. What is a "usurper"?

2. Why is this the right word to describe Macbeth?

3. Macbeth is a "dead butcher" – what does this mean? Why is this a reasonable thing for Malcolm to say? What else is he?

4. Lady Macbeth is a "fiend-like queen" – what does this mean? Is Malcolm accurate with that label? What else is she? What good qualities does she have? Any?!