

Macbeth Study Guide

Thoroughly answer these questions with direct quotations from the play to support your claim. Use proper citation for prose and verse in drama.

Act III Scene i

1. In his soliloquy, what suspicion and hope does Banquo reveal? (1 – 10)
2. What is the meaning of Macbeth's words in his soliloquy "To be thus is nothing..."?(52)
3. What is there in the situation with Banquo that particularly upsets Macbeth and makes him uneasy?
4. Based on what, is it Macbeth's desire to eliminate Banquo?
5. How does Macbeth convince the murderers to kill Banquo and Fleance?

Act III Scene ii

1. What is the meaning of Lady Macbeth's opening speech in this scene (6 – 14)?
2. In this scene, what is Macbeth's state of mind?
3. On the other hand, how do we learn that Macbeth's ambition have become stronger? What literary device/s contribute to this?
4. What is significant about Macbeth's instructions to Lady Macbeth about how to treat Banquo at the state dinner that night?

Act III Scene iii

1. What happens at the ambush?
2. Given that in the preceding scene, Banquo's death is planned, and in the following scene along with Macbeth the audience learns that Fleance has escaped, why does Shakespeare choose to dramatize this seemingly insignificant event? What is its relevance and how does it contribute to the action of the play?

Act III Scene iv

1. One characteristic of Shakespeare's style is his play on words. How is this demonstrated with the recurring motif of blood?
2. The dagger Macbeth envisioned in Act II, Scene I was a hallucination. Based on what, do we understand that Banquo's ghost in this scene is not a hallucination?
3. Why is it ironic that the audience sees the ghost at the banquet before Macbeth does?
4. What is the significance of the conversation Macbeth and Lady Macbeth have immediately following their guests' departures?
5. What does Macbeth reveal is his next plan of action?
6. What is Macbeth's frame of mind? Is deprivation of sleep a contributing factor?
7. At the banquet, how does Lady Macbeth once again save her husband from revealing the truth?

Act III Scene v

1. Who is Hecate, and why is she angry?
2. What is her plan for Macbeth?

Act III Scene vi

1. How can we interpret Lennox's speech?
2. What further exposition does Shakespeare offer through the Lord?