Macbeth – Act V

# *Scene I*

1. How does Shakespeare seek to create sympathy for Lady Macbeth in this scene?
2. Does this scene support the view that her feint in II, ii was genuine?
3. Describe the symptoms of Lady Macbeth’s disorder: what might a modern psychiatrist advise?
4. Of what importance in the scene are the Doctor and the Waiting-Gentlewoman?
5. Analyze the meaning of Lady Macbeth’s action of washing her hands.
6. Compare Lady Macbeth's first appearance in the play (I,v) with her last.

*Scene II*

1. In some productions Scene II is omitted. Give reasons for either including it or not including it in the play.
2. What do we learn of Macbeth in this scene?

*Scene III*

1. How does Macbeth reveal his basic insecurity in this scene?
2. Compare Macbeth’s state of mind in this scene with Lady Macbeth’s from Scene I.
3. List two specific examples of indirect stage directions that are included within the text lines of this scene.

*Scene IV*

1. How are optimism and restrain balanced in this scene?
2. Show how this scene provides a contrast with the previous scene.

*Scene V*

1. Compare Macbeth’s reception of the news of his wife’s death to the way Macduff reacted to Ross’s news about the death of Lady Macduff and the children.
2. With regard to Macbeth's speech in lines 17-28, state his theme and comment on the prevailing emotion.
3. Account for Macbeth’s change of plan as the scene ends.
4. How likely is it that Lady Macbeth committed suicide?

*Scene VI*

1. How does Malcolm show his qualities of leadership in this scene?

*Scene VII*

1. What purposes are served by the encounter between Macbeth and Young Siward?
2. What is the dramatic effect of the swift changes of setting and characters in the series of short scenes?

*Scene VIII*

1. Malcolm speaks of Macbeth as a 'butcher' and of Lady Macbeth as 'his fiend-like queen'. Agree/Disagree with this statement.
2. The play ends on a positive note (see Malcolm's final speech). Why is it positive?
3. Is the presentation of Macbeth’s head on a pole too grotesque an end for a once-valiant warrior?
4. To what extent is Macbeth entitled to our sympathy at the end? Is his death tragic?
5. English poet Alexander Pope once wrote:

Vice is a monster of so frightful mien(appearance),

As to be hated needs but to be seen

Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face,

We first endure, then pity, then embrace.

Apply these lines to the change in Macbeth's character by the end of the play.