

SHORT ANSWER STUDY GUIDE QUESTIONS - *Macbeth*

Act One

1. What is the point of the first scene literally and in reference to the whole play?
2. What does Duncan call Macbeth when he hears Macbeth has defeated Macdonwald?
3. Who is sentenced to death?
4. What do the witches predict in I.iii for Macbeth? For Banquo?
5. What news does Ross bring Macbeth?
6. Banquo, like Macbeth, is surprised that the witches have predicted Macbeth's new title. He is, however, leery. What does he say about the motives of the "instruments of darkness"?
7. Malcolm describes Cawdor's last moments before execution. What is Duncan's reply?
8. Macbeth says, "Stars, hide your fires, Let not light see my black and deep desires." What are Macbeth's desires?
9. After Lady Macbeth reads the letter, what does she tell us is her opinion of Macbeth, and how does she plan to help him?
10. What is Lady Macbeth's "prayer" to the spirits after she learns Duncan is coming?
11. What advice does Lady Macbeth give Macbeth when he arrives home?
12. What are Macbeth's arguments to himself against killing Duncan?
13. What arguments does Lady Macbeth use to convince Macbeth to commit the murder?
14. What is Lady Macbeth's plan?

Act II

1. What is Macbeth's lie to Banquo about the witches' predictions?
2. What is the signal Lady Macbeth is to give Macbeth to let him know that she has taken care of the guards (grooms)?
3. What excuse does Lady Macbeth give for not killing Duncan herself?
4. After Macbeth kills Duncan, he goes to Lady Macbeth and is concerned about not being able to say "Amen." What is her advice to him?
5. Then, Macbeth is worried about hearing a voice saying, "Macbeth does murder sleep." What does Lady Macbeth then tell him to do?
6. Why won't Macbeth take the daggers back to the scene of the crime?
7. Who was knocking?
8. What three things does drinking provoke?
9. How does Lennox describe the night, and what is Macbeth's response?
10. What did Macduff discover?
11. Macduff says, "Oh, gentle lady, 'Tis not for you to hear what I can speak. The repetition, in a woman's ear, Would murder as it fell." What is ironic about this?
12. What excuse or explanation did Macbeth give for killing the guards (grooms)? What is his real reason?
13. Why do Malcolm and Donalbain leave?
14. Why does Ross not believe Malcolm and Donalbain were responsible for Duncan's murder?