



m a c b e t h



M a c b e t h a n d S h a k e s p e a r e ' s W o r l d

The decadence, whims and vulgarities of Shakespeare's theatre stand in contrast to the hierarchically ordered and rigid world of Elizabethan society.

The structure of Elizabethan society was based on an idea known as the *Universal Chain of Being*. The "chain" ordered the universe from the grandiose conception of God to the lowliest one-celled amoeba. Each link on the chain was itself sub-divided into categories or classes so that place & position – in angelic orders, human society and animal communities – was firmly rooted and impassable.

The *Universal Chain of Being* stratified the universe and human society very tightly and any "shaking or rattling" of the chain (ie. moving position or place) in the eyes and mind of an Elizabethan (mostly those who were rewarded by the hierarchy, like royalty and the gentry) would certainly cause chaotic repercussions to the natural & moral order of things. Rebellion was out of the question. Marrying above your 'station' was blasphemous. Breaking the chain was simply unacceptable. And Shakespeare found himself in the middle. He played the balancer of the common vulgarities of the masses and the gentle proprieties of the nobility.

A thoroughly deep and delicious understanding of Shakespeare requires the reader to have some awareness of this *duality* that shaped Shakespeare's life (and possibly his mind). Shakespeare was not a noble or blue-blooded royal. He was an actor and playwright and he mingled and played in the "common world" of artists, labourers and merchants. This was a world rich in colour and blessed (or cursed, depending on one's perspective) with sexual freedoms, vulgar language and robust humour. Shakespeare led an artists life (a privileged one), but this 'relaxed world' he created and played in was not always the world that he played for.

The Queen and the other noble strata of Elizabethan society often indulged in the theatre and Shakespeare's artistic lifestyle needed to be tamed (at least subtly masked) when his vision (and possible criticisms) were presented on stage in front of the 'commoner' and the royalty alike. Shakespeare may have been invited into the royal circle – on occasion – to entertain with wit and drama, but he was not part of the royal elite. He must have had to be careful how he insinuated his world onto the ordered world of royalty and nobility. Shakespeare, like any artist before, during and after, had a difficult role – engaging and enlightening two audiences, without subverting the royal order, and balancing his two selves: The Common Man and the Royal Entertainer.

Today's artist is less shackled by the requirement of strict adherence to social norms. An artist today that conformed wholly and willfully to 'elite society's' inequitable class, gender and sex distinctions would be considered a 'sellout'. Today's artist is the 'voice' of the "lower orders" and the spark of change. Shakespeare was not free to deal a crushing criticism of the Elizabethan World Order in the public realm of the Globe Theatre, nor was he allowed to obviously inspire the common person to emboldened rebellion. The social order – or natural order – in Elizabethan Society required people to know their places. The common person (who Shakespeare devotes some of his most colourful, eloquent and profound characters and lines to) inhabited a low level on Shakespeare's society.

A day in the life of a common person was not really structured (royal and noble society played out the strict roles with themselves) and there was a sense of freedom and playfulness so long as you recognized your role in life – to not disturb the peace and disrupt 'polite' society. Punishment was often harsh, brutal and heinous for a variety of crimes, but crimes that subverted the mandate of royalty were the most severe. The royal and noble orders held the status of governing power, and if the common class did not break the pact, then life on the streets, slums and theatre was pretty much left alone. If the natural order was disrupted, then life on the streets could become mighty freaky – and Shakespeare seemed to enjoy the outcome of a good disruption to the social order. It made excellent drama.

Macbeth is a play that explores the chaos that develops when a disruption in the fabric of the natural social order occurs. It is a play about the bloody consequences of subversion and disorder let free. Maybe Shakespeare recognized the fear of the ruling elite when the natural order is challenged and overthrown. This is a motif that is thread throughout *Macbeth* in the symbolism manifest in weather, weird and unusual occurrences, and supernatural characters (speaking to the devil) that guide the events. This is a play that highlights that intense confusion and fear of a society without order or structure. It is not a concept that died with Shakespeare; the idea of a society in flux is discomfoting.

Then again, Shakespeare may have realized that in order for change to occur, chaos must be endured.

The following activities and information will provide you with a glimpse of how Shakespearean society viewed the world. It will also provide you with insight needed to penetrate thoroughly and deeply into *Macbeth*.

C R I M E I N E L I Z A B E T H A N E N G L A N D

Attitudes towards crime in the Elizabethan and early Stuart period had two distinctive features: an almost paranoid concern for order in society, and a close association between crime and sin – potential sources of rebellion and social chaos.

The Reformation and the increased power of the Puritans changed perceptions of crime and justice both in government and in the popular mind. Religion and morality became matters of state law. Although sin and crime were usually dealt with by different courts (crime by the civil court, sin by the ecclesiastical court), they were in some ways almost indistinguishable. The belief that all crime was sinful is shown by the almost invariable repentance of criminals on the gallows, warning their fellows not to stray from the path of law and godliness.

O R D E R & A N X I E T Y

An atmosphere of uncertainty - at times amounting almost to panic - had been created by religious change, increasing public concern about godly behaviour and the threat of sin to society as a whole. Some believed that the apocalyptic Last Judgement was near at hand, or that all England would suffer divine wrath if sins went unpunished (perhaps in the same way that England was believed to have been punished for Henry IV's usurpation).

Fear of civil war remained strong long after the Wars of the Roses. There were also threats of religious strife, a Spanish invasion, and a growing number of unemployed poor. It is not surprising that Elizabethans were unusually concerned with preserving order in their society and that the concept of divine order should be much on their minds. It was preached from the pulpit, and was reflected in the entire approach to crime and justice—even in the informal way that communities maintained order (for the most part without resorting to process of law by taking the law into their own hands).

S O C I A L O R D E R : A C H A I N O F S T A T U S

Membership in the governing class depended upon eligibility to hold office rather than the actual position held; thus, out of from 15 to 20 thousand eligible persons, only about 2500 held offices from the Crown. The ruling elite (nobility and gentry) comprised a mere 2.5% to 5% of the total population of England and Wales.

Society was divided between those who governed (the "gentle") and those who served (the "base" or "knaves"). A mutually interdependent hierarchy was the accepted teaching of the time—though the governors did not always respect those under them.

The next two pages examine hierarchies within these two categories: the nobility and gentry

T H E N O B I L I T Y

"gentlemen of the greater sort"

- **The King**
- Dukes
- Marquesses
- Earls
- Viscounts
- Barons

T H E G E N T R Y

"the second sort of gentlemen"

- Baronets*
- Knights*
- Esquires*
- Gentlemen*

T H E C O M M O N A L I T Y - L E V E L 1

"the middle people of England"

- Citizens and Burgesses
- Yeomen
- Professionals
- Merchants
- Lawyers
- Administrators
- Clergy

T H E C O M M O N A L I T Y - L E V E L 2

"the fourth sort or class"

- Small merchants or retailers
- Day-labourers, husbandmen, artisans...
- The poor, infirm, and unemployed

S Y M P A T H Y F O R T H E U N D E R W O R L D

In *Measure for Measure*, the sub-plot does deal extensively with an underclass, but it is mainly made up of sexual offenders: Mistress Overdone the bawd, Pompey Bum the pimp, and Kate Keepdown, a prostitute.

Shakespeare's sympathy for these characters is shown in a number of ways: Kate was "broken" not by an "upright-man" but by the playboy, Lucio; and Pompey is given a memorable line when asked why he lives such a "beastly" life: "Truly, sir, I am a poor fellow that would live" (2.1.222).

A H E L L I S H H I E R A R C H Y

Thomas Harman, lover of alliteration, wrote a pamphlet called *A Caveat for Common Cursitors* [a warning for common vagabonds, or beggars], in which he reveals the "abominable, wicked, and detestable behaviour of these rowsey, ragged rabblement of rakehells."

Harman is relentlessly moral in his condemnation of the people he describes; the modern reader will read between the lines of an underclass both desperate and proud.

Here is Harman's hellish hierarchy:

R u f f l e r

A returned soldier who refuses to beg, but bullies, robs and steals.

U p r i g h t - m a n

Previously a servant, who is "skilful in picking, rifling, and filching," and who will bully lesser vagabonds. They are too proud to travel with their women ("morts").

H o o k e r o r A n g l e r

Carries a pole with a hook on the end, to snatch items through windows when people are asleep.

R o g u e

Less skilled than the hooker, and more timid, the rogue is a more conventional thief.

P r i g g e r

A horse thief.

A b r a m - m a n

Pretends to be mad, and to have been in the hospital for the insane, Bedlam.

C o u n t e r f e i t c r a n k

Pretends to have the "falling sickness," epilepsy.

D u m m e r e r

Pretends to be dumb, if not deaf. According to Harman, "the most part of these are Welshmen."

Then (lower in status than the men) there are the female beggars:

B a w d y - b a s k e t

Carries a basket with trinkets, and uses it to get on good terms with the maidservants in a gentleman's house, from which they then steal.

A u t e m - m o r t

Actually married, often to an upright-man; she will take her children with her.

W a l k i n g m o r t

Not married, and therefore vulnerable to other beggars, especially men: "Many of these had, and have children. When they get aught, either with begging, bitchery, or bribery, they are quickly shaken out of all by the upright-men."

D o x y

"These doxies be broken and spoiled of their maidenheads by the upright-men," and then become prostitutes.

D e l l

"[A] young wench, able for generation, and not yet known or broken by the upright-man."

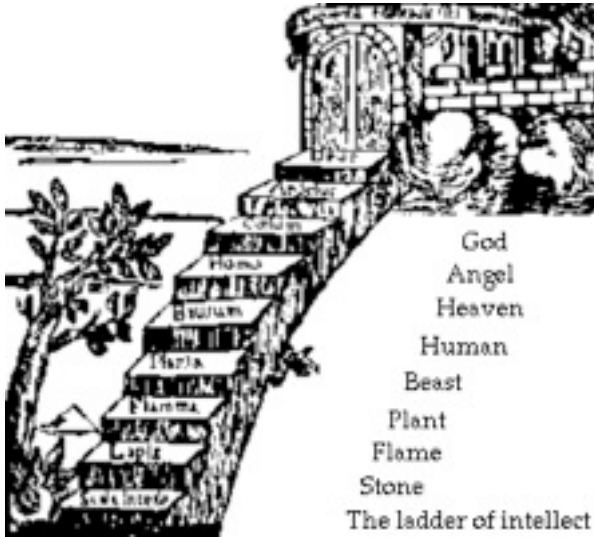
K i n c h i n m o r t a n d K i n c h i n c o

The kinchin mort is a girl, the kinchin co a boy. Even for these Harman has no pity, for he comments, "soon ripe, soon rotten."

W R I T E R S O F T H E U N D E R W O R L D

As well as Thomas Harman, quoted extensively in the "hellish hierarchy" list, two dramatists of the period, Robert Greene and Thomas Dekker, turned their hands to writing pamphlets about the underworld. In all these documents, we should be aware of the attractiveness of sensation, and the tendency to fictionalize.

T H E C H A I N O F B E I N G



The story of the creation could be seen as a logical progression from light, to the waters, to the earth, to planets, to animals, and finally to humans. In this image there is an orderly progression upwards. This sense of order, and its consequent fixed hierarchy, were convenient for the stability of both church and state.

AN ORDERLY PROGRESSION

In this table, you can see one of the ways that the world might be seen as an ordered progression in the process of creation.

S T O N E	passive existence
F L A M E	existence and movement
P L A N T	existence, movement, and growth
B E A S T	existence, movement, growth, and will (desire)
H U M A N	existence, movement, growth, will, and reason
A N G E L	existence, movement, growth, will, reason, and understanding (i.e. a full understanding of God)

O R D E R O F T H E S E X E S

The concept of equality between the sexes would have seemed very foreign to most in Shakespeare's day: Adam was created first, and Eve from his body; she was created specifically to give him comfort, and was to be subordinate to him, to obey him and to accept her lesser status. A dominant woman was unnatural, a symptom of disorder.

The medieval church had inculcated a view of women that was split between the ideal of the Virgin Mary, and her fallible counterpart, Eve, or her anti-type, the Whore of Babylon. Unfortunately, the Virgin Mary was one of a kind, so there was often a general distrust of women. Renaissance and Medieval literature is often misogynistic. Queen Elizabeth cultivated the view that she was the ideal; Joan of Arc, on the other hand (at least in Shakespeare's play *Henry VI, Part One*), was seen as a devil.

The courtly poet Sir Thomas Wyatt dramatized a debate between two pastoral figures on the opposing views of women as ideal and fallible.

The accepted hierarchy of the sexes was so much taken for granted that it influenced even the literature of farming.

Q ' S

Is this worldview problematic?

How do you think this worldview has shaped our attitudes towards women and the environment today?

MACBETH: TRAGEDY + THE TRAGIC HERO

WHAT IS TRAGEDY?

Tragedy is a dramatic form in which the central protagonist (the hero/ine) is tested by circumstances and defeated as a result of her or his human weakness.

Our modern understanding of *tragedy* is derived from Aristotle's classical text, entitled, **Poetics**. Aristotle's ideas revolve around three crucial effects: first, the audience develops an emotional attachment to the tragic hero/ine; second; the audience **fears** what may befall the hero/ine; and finally (after misfortune strikes) the audience **pities** the suffering hero.

ELEMENTS OF TRAGEDY

- **The Hero/Heroine:** in tragedy, we see the downfall of ONE great hero or heroine: a person who is held in high esteem by his or her community.
- **The Element of Pathos:** early in the drama, we witness the heroes and heroines perform brave deeds and show their abilities as compassionate and understanding leaders. Consequently, we feel a sense of pity (pathos) as the hero/heroine experiences exceptional hardship.
- **Suffering, Calamity and Death:** in tragedy, we witness the suffering and eventual death of the hero/heroine. The suffering and calamity are exceptional, unexpected and generally expand far beyond the hero or heroine.
- **The Hero/Heroine is a Person of High Estate:** the sense of tragedy is heightened when we witness a person of high social esteem suffer a "fall from grace".
- **The Elements:**
 - fate/chance and inevitability
 - physical horror (violent catastrophe)
 - the abnormal/supernatural
 - morality: faith, truth, justice righteousness
- **The Tragic Formula:** in tragedy, the plot develops through a series of complications which lead to a **catastrophe**; a sudden **reversal** of the hero/heroine's fortune from happiness to disaster.

P R O F I L E : T H E T R A G I C H E R O

- 1. The Hero/Heroine is of Noble Stature:** since tragedy involves the fall of a tragic hero, one theory is that one must have a lofty position to fall from or else there is no tragedy (just pathos).
- 2. The Hero/Heroine Possesses a “Tragic Flaw” (hamartia):** the tragic hero/heroine must fall due to some flaw in his or her own personality. The most common tragic flaw is *hubris* (excessive pride/ambition).
- 3. The Hero/Heroine Possesses Free Will:** while there is often a discussion of the role of fate in the downfall of a tragic hero/heroine, there must be an element of choice in order for there to be a true tragedy. The tragic hero falls as a result of *choosing* a false course of action.
- 4. The Hero/Heroine’s Punishment Exceeds the Crime:** the audience must not be left feeling that the tragic hero/heroine got what she or he deserved. Part of what makes the action “tragic” is to witness the injustice of what has occurred to the tragic hero.
- 5. The Hero/Heroine Experiences Self-Awareness:** before the moment of death, the tragic hero/heroine often comes to an understanding regarding his or her own moral weaknesses and flaws.
- 6. The Play Evokes ‘Catharsis’ Within the Audience:** catharsis is a feeling of “emotional purgation” that an audience feels after witnessing the plight of a tragic hero. The audience feels emotionally drained, but exultant.

M A C B E T H T A L K

1. You will be tracking lines in the play that reflect the thematic element that you have chosen for your Macbeth : RE-CONSTRUCTED > RE-ENVISIONED > RE-TOLD activity.
2. You will now be able to read and talk about the lines that you have tracked.
3. Sign-up for an ACT in the play.
4. Identify two passages of at least four (4) lines that reflect your chosen theme within the ACT.
5. Practice reading the passages dramatically and creatively. Make sure that you stress specific words, punctuation, use pauses and emotion.
6. Be prepared to explain:
 - what the passages mean
 - how the passages reflect the theme
7. On the day after your lines have been listened to (or the act has been finished), you will read ONE passage to your classmates and explain what the passage means and how it reflects the theme.
8. Think about a question that you have about any issue, theme, idea or symbol in the play and ask it.

e v a l u a t i o n

- knowledge and understanding of the passage/play is _____
1 2 3 4 5
- application of dramatic and creative reading skills (i.e. stress, emotion, pronunciation, pause, punctuation) is _____
1 2 3 4 5
- communicates understanding of the play _____
1 2 3 4 5
- thinking about the issues, themes, ideas, or symbols is _____
1 2 3 4 5

View the *Shakespeare-TOLD*, Macbeth, and fill in the checklist to determine the tragic nature of Macbeth, as a play, and Macbeth as a character.

ELEMENTS OF TRAGEDY/ TRAGIC HERO	YES	NO	EVIDENCE FROM FILM
The Hero/Heroine			
Elements of Pathos			
Suffering, Calamity and Death			
The Hero/Heroine is a person of High Estate			
Element of Fate/Chance & Inevitability			
Element of Physical Horror			
Element of the Abnormal			
Element of Morality			
The Tragic Formula			
The Hero/Heroine is Of Noble Stature			
The Hero Possesses a Tragic Flaw			
The Hero/Heroine Possesses Free Will			
The Hero/Heroine's Punishment Exceeds the Crime			
The Hero Experiences Self Awareness			
The Play Evokes "Catharsis" Within the Audience			
conclusion: is Macbeth a tragic play with a tragic hero?			

MACBETH: ACT 1 VOCABULARY

Know how to use the following words in sophisticated sentences.

disbursed	buttress
tempest-tossed	frieze
rapt	procreant
enkindle	cherubin
liege	surcease
peerless	quell
unsex	
pall	
woingly	

MACBETH: ACT 1 STUDY QUESTIONS

Act 1 Scene 1

1. When will the three witches meet again?

Act 1 Scene 2

2. What news does Duncan hear? Summarize the news.
3. Explain the meaning of the following lines:

*So well thy words become thee as thy wounds;
They smack of honour both (Duncan).*

4. Who is the disloyal traitor?

Act 1 Scene 3

5. Explain the meaning of the following lines:

*Sleep shall neither night nor day
Hang upon his pent-house lid;
He shall live a man forbid (First Witch)*

6. What do the three witches reveal to Macbeth?

7. Explain the meaning of the following lines:

*Good sir, why do you start; and seem to fear
Things that do sound so fair? I' the name of truth,
Are ye fantastical, or that indeed
Which outwardly ye show? (Banquo)*

8. What does the First Witch tell Banquo and what does she mean?
9. Has Macbeth thought about becoming King? Find specific lines from the text.
10. Do you think that Macbeth is sincere about his thoughts about becoming King? Explain.
11. Explain the meaning of the following lines:

*Were such things here as we do speak about?
Or have we eaten on the insane root
That takes the reason prisoner? (Banquo)*

12. What is a contemporary expression for, “what can the devil speak true?”
13. Why does Macbeth get the title of Thane of Cawdor?
14. Explain the meaning of the following lines:

*To win us to our harm,
The instruments of darkness tell us truths,
Win us with honest trifles, to betray's
In deepest consequence. (Banquo)*

15. Explain the meaning and significance of Macbeth's aside.
16. Explain the meaning of the following lines:

*New honors come upon him,
Like our strange garments, cleave not to their mould
But with the aid of use. (Banquo)*

Act 1 Scene 4

17. Explain the meaning of the following lines:

*There's no art
To find the mind's construction in the face:
He was a gentleman on whom I built
An absolute trust. (Duncan)*

18. Who is Duncan going to establish the estate upon?
19. Explain what Macbeth's aside (lines 55-60) reveals about his thought process.

Act 1 Scene 5

20. Explain what Lady Macbeth's opening monologue/soliloquy reveals about her opinion of Macbeth.
21. Explain the meaning and significance of Lady Macbeth's monologue:

*The raven himself is hoarse
That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan
Under my battlements. Come, you spirits
That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here,
And fill me from the crown to the toe top-full
Of direst cruelty! make thick my blood;
Stop up the access and passage to remorse,
That no compunctious visitings of nature
Shake my fell purpose, nor keep peace between
The effect and it! Come to my woman's breasts,
And take my milk for gall, you murdering ministers,
Wherever in your sightless substances
You wait on nature's mischief! Come, thick night,
And pall thee in the dunnest smoke of hell,
That my keen knife see not the wound it makes,
Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark,
To cry 'Hold, hold!'*

22. What is Lady Macbeth advising Macbeth to do?
23. What does this scene reveal about the characters of Lady Macbeth and Macbeth, as well as the relationship between them?

Act 1 Scene 6

24. How has Lady Macbeth changed from the previous scene?
25. Considering that Lady Macbeth and Macbeth have just planned King Duncan's murder, which of their speeches to Duncan are ironic? Explain why.

Act 1 Scene 7

26. Explain the meaning and significance of Macbeth's monologue (lines 1-28) and what this speech reveals about his conscience:

*If it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well
It were done quickly: if the assassination
Could trammel up the consequence, and catch
With his surcease success; that but this blow
Might be the be-all and the end-all here,
But here, upon this bank and shoal of time,
We'd jump the life to come. But in these cases*

*We still have judgment here; that we but teach
Bloody instructions, which, being taught, return
To plague the inventor: this even-handed justice
Commends the ingredients of our poison'd chalice
To our own lips. He's here in double trust;
First, as I am his kinsman and his subject,
Strong both against the deed; then, as his host,
Who should against his murderer shut the door,
Not bear the knife myself. Besides, this Duncan
Hath borne his faculties so meek, hath been
So clear in his great office, that his virtues
Will plead like angels, trumpet-tongued, against
The deep damnation of his taking-off;
And pity, like a naked new-born babe,
Striding the blast, or heaven's cherubim, horsed
Upon the sightless couriers of the air,
Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye,
That tears shall drown the wind. I have no spur
To prick the sides of my intent, but only
Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself
And falls on the other.*

27. Explain Lady Macbeth's influence on Macbeth. Find specific lines from the text.
28. How is fate handled in this scene?
29. What lines indicate the ruthlessness of Lady Macbeth's mind? Explain why.
30. Explain the meaning and significance of the following lines:

*Away, and mock the time with fairest show:
False face must hide what the false heart doth know. (Macbeth)*

M A C B E T H : A C T 2 V O C A B U L A R Y

Know how to use the following words in sophisticated sentences.

surfeited
multitudinous
incarnadine
consort

benison
suborned

M A C B E T H : A C T 2 S T U D Y Q U E S T I O N S

A c t 2 S c e n e 1

1. Does Banquo know or sense the events that are about to happen? Find the lines.
2. Explain the meaning and significance of Macbeth's soliloquy (lines 42-77) and how this soliloquy develops (reveals) the character of Macbeth.
3. Why don't we see the actual murder of King Duncan? Is this an effective staging technique?

A c t 2 S c e n e 2

4. What does the owl symbolize?
5. Why is the line "sleep no more" important? Explain.
6. What happens to the daggers?
7. What does Lady Macbeth mean when she shouts, "Infirm of purpose!"?
8. What does Lady Macbeth do to 'frame' the guards for murder?
9. What is happening to Macbeth's mind after the murder? Find specific lines from the text.
10. What does water symbolize in this scene?

A c t 2 S c e n e 3

11. What does Lennox sense during the night?
12. What does Macbeth do to cover up the murder?
13. What do Duncan's sons decide to do?
14. What does Banquo suggest he, Donaldbain and Malcolm do?
15. Where do Donaldbain and Malcolm decide to go? Why

A c t 2 S c e n e 4

16. How is the exodus of Donaldbain and Malcolm 'spun'? How does this 'thicken' the plot?

M A C B E T H : A C T 3 - 5 V O C A B U L A R Y

Know how to use the following words in sophisticated sentences.

verities	saucy
dissoluble	overbold
parricide	thralls
naught	dolor
jocund	assay
vizards	thick-coming fancies
seeling	soldier's debt
muse	

M A C B E T H : A C T 3 S T U D Y Q U E S T I O N S

A c t 3 S c e n e 1

1. What are Banquo's suspicions?
2. What does Banquo believe about himself? Find specific lines from the text.
3. Why does Banquo state, "I must become the borrower of the night"?
4. Why does Macbeth fear Banquo? Find specific lines from the text.
5. Why does Macbeth summon the two murderers and what does Macbeth tell them?
6. Why are the two murderers willing and eager to do the deed for Macbeth? Find specific lines in the text.

A c t 3 S c e n e 2

7. Why is Macbeth still so gloomy? Find the lines in the text.
8. Why is Macbeth envious of Duncan?
9. Why doesn't Macbeth tell Lady Macbeth his plans for Banquo?

A c t 3 S c e n e 3

10. Briefly explain the events in this scene.

A c t 3 S c e n e 4

12. Is Macbeth 'imprisoned'? Explain.

13. Explain what the following lines reveal about Macbeth's state of mind:

*That, when the brains were out, the man would die,
And there an end; but now they rise again,
With twenty mortal murders on their crowns,
And push us from our stools: this is more strange
Than such a murder is.*

14. What does Macbeth request of the ghost?

15. What has Macbeth lost in this scene? Find specific lines.

A c t 3 S c e n e 5

16. Why does Hecate appear in this scene?

A c t 3 S c e n e 6

17. What are Lennox and the other Lords discussing? Briefly explain.

M A C B E T H : A C T 4 S T U D Y Q U E S T I O N S

A c t 4 S c e n e 1

1. Why do you think that Shakespeare made the apparitions appear as: 1) an armed head, 2) a bloody child, 3) a child crowned with a tree in hand and 4) a show of eight kings, with glasses in hand, and Banquo last? Comment on the symbolism of each apparition and the overall effect of these apparitions on Macbeth.

2. Explain the meaning and significance of the following lines:

Time, thou anticipatest my dread exploits:
The flighty purpose never is o'ertook
Unless the deed go with it; from this moment
The very firstlings of my heart shall be
The firstlings of my hand. And even now,
To crown my thoughts with acts, be it thought and done:
The castle of Macduff I will surprise;
Seize upon Fife; give to the edge o' the sword
His wife, his babes, and all unfortunate souls
That trace him in his line. No boasting like a fool;
This deed I'll do before this purpose cool.
But no more sights!--Where are these gentlemen?
Come, bring me where they are. (Macbeth)

A c t 4 S c e n e 2

3. What does Lady Macduff think about her husband? Find specific lines.
4. How is our sympathy (pathos) generated for Lady Macduff and her son during their brief, witty dialogue?
5. How does this scene show the further deterioration of Macbeth's character?

A c t 4 S c e n e 3

6. What is Malcolm comparing Macbeth to? Find specific lines in the text.
7. How does Malcolm describe himself in comparison to Macbeth?
8. Explain the meaning and significance of the following lines:

*Boundless intemperance
In nature is a tyranny; it hath been
The untimely emptying of the happy throne
And fall of many kings. But fear not yet
To take upon you what is yours: you may
Convey your pleasures in a spacious plenty,
And yet seem cold, the time you may so hoodwink.
We have willing dames enough: there cannot be
That vulture in you, to devour so many
As will to greatness dedicate themselves,
Finding it so inclined. (Macduff)*

9. What does Malcolm believe will become of him if he becomes king?
10. What does Malcolm reveal about his maturity in his speech (lines 133-156)?
11. What does Ross believe his country has become? Find specific lines.
12. What is Malcolm's advice to Macduff after Macduff discovers/hears that his family has been murdered?

MACBETH: ACT 5 STUDY QUESTIONS

Act 5 Scene 1

1. Why does Lady Macbeth's gentle woman call the doctor?
2. What is the doctor's opinion (diagnosis) of Lady Macbeth's condition? What does he base his opinion on? Find specific lines.

Act 5 Scene 2

3. Briefly explain the events of this scene.

Act 5 Scene 3

4. How does Macbeth treat the messenger?
5. Describe Macbeth's state of mind?
6. How does Macbeth want the doctor to treat Lady Macbeth?

Act 5 Scene 4

7. Why is Malcolm so sure of victory? Find specific lines in the text.

Act 5 Scene 5

8. Describe Macbeth's state of mind in this scene. Refer to specific lines.

Act 5 Scene 6 - 8

9. How does Macbeth greet the battle that is right in front of his face?
10. What is the assumed cause of Lady Macbeth's death?
11. How are all the prophecies fulfilled?
12. How are the events resolved (ie. who is king) in the play?