

Macbeth: Act IV Reading and Study Guide

I. Vocabulary: Be able to define the following words and understand them when they appear in the play. Also, be prepared to be quizzed on these words.

thrice: three times

conjure: to summon up using supernatural power

potent: powerful

pernicious: destructive; hurtful

laudable: praiseworthy

redress: set right; correct

hoodwink: trick; deceive

avarice: greediness

concord: harmony; peace; agreement

integrity: honesty; possessing firm principles

II. Background Info:

Lucifer: Luc (light) + fer (carry) – leader of the rebellion of angels. Referred to as “brightest” in *Macbeth*.

III. Literary Terms: these will be the terms that we use to discuss this act. Please know them for our discussion and your tests and quizzes.

motif: a recurring object, concept, or structure in a piece of literature. Some motifs from *Macbeth*: blood, visions, clothing metaphor, planting / weed metaphor.

IV. Questions: answer the following questions while you read to check your comprehension.

Scene 1:

1. When the witches are chanting “Double, double toil and trouble; / Fire burn, and cauldron bubble,” what are they doing?
2. What is the “something wicked” that “this way comes”?

3. What does the first apparition tell Macbeth?
4. What does the second apparition tell Macbeth?
5. What does the third apparition tell Macbeth?
6. What is the one more thing that Macbeth wants to know?
7. What do the witches show Macbeth in response to his last request?
8. What does Macbeth say he will do to Macduff?

Scene 2:

9. What reason does Lady Macduff give for why Macduff must not love her and their children?
10. What does Lady Macduff tell her son about Macduff?
11. What reason does Macduff's son give for why the liars and swearers are fools?
12. What does the messenger tell Lady Macduff?
13. What happens at the end of this scene?

Scene 3:

14. What does Malcolm suspect might be Macduff's motivation?
15. What does Malcolm ask Macduff about his family?
16. What is the first reason Malcolm gives when he argues that he would be a bigger tyrant than Macbeth?
17. What does Macduff say he can do for his voluptuousness?
18. What is the second reason Malcolm gives for why he wouldn't be a good king?
19. What is Macduff's final response to Malcolm's description of himself?

20. What does Malcolm tell Macduff about the things he said?
21. What does Malcolm say King Edward is able to do?
22. At first, what does Ross say about Macduff's family?
23. What has England lent Malcolm?
24. What does Ross finally tell Macduff?
25. What "medicine" does Malcolm say they should take to cure the "deadly grief"?