

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

Focusing Activities
for
Macbeth
Small Group Discussion Questions
Act II

Directions: Before reading the scenes in Act II, discuss the questions in small groups. You may want to make notes about your discussion so you can share them with classmates or refer back to them after you've read the scene.

**scenes i
and ii.**

Although Lady Macbeth has reconvinced her husband that he should kill Duncan, what do you think might prevent them from being successful?

**scenes iii
and iv.**

How do you think the other nobles will react when they learn that Duncan has been murdered? How do you think his sons Malcolm and Donalbain will react? Macbeth? Lady Macbeth? The common people of Scotland?

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

Prereading Activity
for
Macbeth
Vocabulary
Act II

Directions: Shakespeare uses the following words in Act II. The section below provides a brief definition of each word and provides a sentence to illustrate its meaning. You may wish to review the words for a particular scene immediately before reading it.

Definitions.

scene i

1. **husbandry:** (n.) careful, thrifty management of domestic resources.
Example: My grandmother's *husbandry* of her household accounts allowed her to take many extensive trips to Europe.
2. **summons:** (n.) a request, demand, call to duty, task, or performance.
Example: Making only a B on the first calculus test was a *summons* to Jennifer to work harder in preparing for the next one.
3. **franchise:** (v.) to make or set free.
Example: Trusting in the defendant's innocence *franchised* the attorney to work harder to win on appeal.
4. **palpable:** (adj.) plainly visible; tangible.
Example: When we returned home, we found broken pieces of the lamp on the floor: *palpable* evidence of the cat's guilt.
5. **marshal:** (v.) to usher or lead.
Example: As a school crossing guard, my grandfather *marshals* small children across busy city streets.

scene ii

6. **surfeit:** (v.) to eat or drink excessively.
Example: The politician, *surfeited* from too much wine and dinner, snored loudly while his opponent addressed the guests at the banquet.
7. **contend:** (v.) to struggle; oppose.
Example: Although Enid *contended* an incumbent, she won the election on issues.

Macbeth: Act II Vocabulary (continued)

scene iii

8. **clamor:** (v.) to make loud noises; to drive, force, influence noisily.
Example: The sold-out crowd *clamored* for the rock star to begin the concert.
9. **badge:** (v.) to furnish or mark with a badge.
Example: Bruises and sprains *badged* the football team for the weeks following their championship game.

scene iv

10. **benison:** (n.) benediction.
Example: When we left my friend John's house, his wry *benison* was to "go in pieces."

HANDOUT 3
PROMPTBOOK QUESTIONS

As you work on your promptbook, keep the following questions in mind:

1. Where does the action take place?

2. Who is speaking to whom?

3. What happens in this passage?

4. Where should the characters be positioned on stage? From where and to where are entrances and exits made? Why?

5. What props are required by the passage?

6. Especially important are questions about the characters:
 - What motivates these characters to say what they say?

 - Do the characters' objectives change in this passage? If so, when and why? Or do only tactics change? What obstacles stand in each character's way? What happens when objectives meet obstacles?

- Where would you place vocal pauses?
 - In what tone of voice is the line spoken? Why?
 - How would the characters move here? What facial expressions might accompany the delivery of this line?
-

SCENE II.
The same.

Enter Lady Macbeth.

LADY MACBETH. That which hath made them drunk hath made me bold;
What hath quench'd them hath given me fire. Hark! Peace!
It was the owl that shriek'd, the fatal bellman,
Which gives the stern'st good night. He is about it:
The doors are open, and the surfeited grooms
Do mock their charge with snores. I have drugg'd their possets
That death and nature do contend about them,
Whether they live or die.

MACBETH. [*Within.*] Who's there? what, ho!

LADY MACBETH. Alack, I am afraid they have awaked
And 'tis not done. The attempt and not the deed
Confounds us. Hark! I laid their daggers ready;
He could not miss 'em. Had he not resembled
My father as he slept, I had done't.

Enter Macbeth.

My husband!

MACBETH. I have done the deed. Didst thou not hear a noise?

LADY MACBETH. I heard the owl scream and the crickets cry.

Did not you speak?

MACBETH. When?

LADY MACBETH. Now.

MACBETH. As I descended?

LADY MACBETH. Ay.

MACBETH. Hark!

Who lies i' the second chamber?

LADY MACBETH. Donalbain.

MACBETH. This is a sorry sight.

LADY MACBETH. A foolish thought, to say a sorry sight.

MACBETH. There's one did laugh in 's sleep, and one cried,
"Murther!"

That they did wake each other. I stood and heard them,
But they did say their prayers and address'd them
Again to sleep.

LADY MACBETH. There are two lodged together.

MACBETH. One cried, "God bless us!" and "Amen" the other,
As they had seen me with these hangman's hands.

Listening their fear, I could not say "Amen,"

When they did say, "God bless us!"

LADY MACBETH. Consider it not so deeply.

MACBETH. But wherefore could not I pronounce "Amen"?

I had most need of blessing, and "Amen"

Stuck in my throat.

LADY MACBETH. These deeds must not be thought

After these ways; so, it will make us mad.

MACBETH. I heard a voice cry, "Sleep no more!

Macbeth does murther sleep" -the innocent sleep,

Sleep that knits up the ravel'd sleeve of care,

The death of each day's life, sore labor's bath,

Balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course,

Chief nourisher in life's feast-

LADY MACBETH. What do you mean?

MACBETH. Still it cried, "Sleep no more!" to all the house;

"Glamis hath murder'd sleep, and therefore Cawdor

Shall sleep no more. Macbeth shall sleep no more."

LADY MACBETH. Who was it that thus cried? Why, worthy Thane,

You do unbend your noble strength, to think

So brainsickly of things. Go, get some water

And wash this filthy witness from your hand.

Why did you bring these daggers from the place?

They must lie there. Go carry them, and smear

The sleepy grooms with blood.

MACBETH. I'll go no more.

I am afraid to think what I have done;

Look on't again I dare not.

LADY MACBETH. Infirm of purpose!

Give me the daggers. The sleeping and the dead

Are but as pictures; 'tis the eye of childhood

That fears a painted devil. If he do bleed,

I'll gild the faces of the grooms withal,

For it must seem their guilt. *Exit. Knocking within.*

MACBETH. Whence is that knocking?

How is't with me, when every noise appals me?

What hands are here? Ha, they pluck out mine eyes!

Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood

Clean from my hand? No, this my hand will rather

The multitudinous seas incarnadine,

Making the green one red.

Re-enter Lady Macbeth.

LADY MACBETH. My hands are of your color, but I shame

To wear a heart so white. [*Knocking within.*] I hear knocking

At the south entry. Retire we to our chamber.

A little water clears us of this deed.

How easy is it then! Your constancy

Hath left you unattended. [*Knocking within.*] Hark, more

knocking.

Get on your nightgown, lest occasion call us

And show us to be watchers. Be not lost

So poorly in your thoughts.

MACBETH. To know my deed, 'twere best not know myself.

Knocking within.

Wake Duncan with thy knocking! I would thou couldst!

Exeunt.

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

During-reading Activity
for
Macbeth
Guide to Character Development: Macbeth
Act II

Shakespeare reveals his characters in four ways:

- through what the characters say to other characters in dialogue;
- through what the characters reveal about their thoughts through long speeches to the audience called *soliloquies*;
- through what other characters say about them;
- through what they do, their actions.

As you read the play, examine the following scenes for what they reveal about Macbeth's character and fill in the chart briefly using your own words. If you need more room, use the back of the page.

<i>Scene</i>	<i>What Macbeth says, does, or what others say about him</i>	<i>What this reveals about Macbeth's character</i>
Act II, scene i On the way to Duncan's chamber, Macbeth meets Banquo		
Act II, scene i Macbeth's soliloquy ("Is this a dagger which I see before me")		
Act II, scene ii Macbeth and Lady Macbeth meet after Macbeth has murdered Duncan		
Act II, scene ii Someone is knocking at the gate		

© 1994 by The Center for Applied Research in Education

Macbeth: Act II Guide to Character Development: Macbeth (continued)

Act II, scene iii Macduff and Lennox come to escort Duncan		
Act II, scene iv Macduff discovers Duncan's body		

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

During-reading Activity
for
Macbeth
Guide to Character Development: Lady Macbeth
Act II

Shakespeare reveals his characters in four ways:

- through what the characters say to other characters in dialogue;
- through what the characters reveal about their thoughts through long speeches to the audience called *soliloquies*;
- through what other characters say about them;
- through what they do, their actions.

As you read the play, examine the following scenes for what they reveal about Lady Macbeth's character and fill in the chart briefly using your own words. If you need more room, use the back of the page.

<i>Scene</i>	<i>What Lady Macbeth says, does, or what others say about her</i>	<i>What this reveals about Lady Macbeth's character</i>
Act II, scene ii Macbeth and Lady Macbeth meet after Macbeth has murdered Duncan		
Act II, scene ii Someone is knocking at the gate		
Act II, scene iii Macduff and Lennox come to escort Duncan		
Act II, scene iv Macduff discovers Duncan's body		

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

During-reading Activity
for
Macbeth
Guide to Character Development: Banquo
Act II

Shakespeare reveals his characters in four ways:

- through what the characters say to other characters in dialogue;
- through what the characters reveal about their thoughts through long speeches to the audience called *soliloquies*;
- through what other characters say about them;
- through what they do, their actions.

As you read the play, examine the following scenes for what they reveal about Banquo's character and fill in the chart briefly using your own words. If you need more room, use the back of the page.

<i>Scene</i>	<i>What Banquo says, does, or what others say about him</i>	<i>What this reveals about Banquo's character</i>
Act II, scene i On the way to Duncan's chamber, Macbeth meets Banquo		
Act II, scene iv Macduff discovers Duncan's body		

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

During-reading Activity
for
Macbeth
Guide to Character Development: Macduff
Act II

Shakespeare reveals his characters in four ways:

- through what the characters say to other characters in dialogue;
- through what the characters reveal about their thoughts through long speeches to the audience called *soliloquies*;
- through what other characters say about them;
- through what they do, their actions.

As you read the play, examine the following scenes for what they reveal about Macduff's character and fill in the chart briefly using your own words. If you need more room, use the back of the page.

<i>Scene</i>	<i>What Macduff says, does, or what others say about him</i>	<i>What this reveals about Macduff's character</i>
Act II, scene iv Macduff discovers Duncan's body		
Act II, scene v Malcolm and Donalbain flee and Macbeth is named king		

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

During-reading Activity
for
Macbeth
Guide to Character Development: Ross
Act II

Shakespeare reveals his characters in four ways:

- through what the characters say to other characters in dialogue;
- through what the characters reveal about their thoughts through long speeches to the audience called *soliloquies*;
- through what other characters say about them;
- through what they do, their actions.

As you read the play, examine the following scenes for what they reveal about Ross's character and fill in the chart briefly using your own words. If you need more room, use the back of the page.

<i>Scene</i>	<i>What Ross says, does, or what others say about him</i>	<i>What this reveals about Ross's character</i>
Act II, scene iv Ross and the old man discuss the murder of Duncan and its effects		

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

During-reading Activity
for
Macbeth
Guide to Character Development: Malcolm
Act II

Shakespeare reveals his characters in four ways:

- through what the characters say to other characters in dialogue;
- through what the characters reveal about their thoughts through long speeches to the audience called *soliloquies*;
- through what other characters say about them;
- through what they do, their actions.

As you read the play, examine the following scenes for what they reveal about Malcolm's character and fill in the chart briefly using your own words. If you need more room, use the back of the page.

<i>Scene</i>	<i>What Malcolm says, does, or what others say about him</i>	<i>What this reveals about Malcolm's character</i>
Act II, scene iii Macduff discovers Duncan's body		
Act II, scene iv Malcolm and Donalbain flee		

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

Postreading Activity
for
Macbeth
Language Exploration
Figurative Language: Personification and Apostrophe
Act II

We have seen how Shakespeare uses *simile* and *metaphor* to develop figurative language. Like Shakespeare, we also use other devices to express abstract ideas more concretely, among them *personification* and *apostrophe*.

We use *personification* to give human characteristics to inanimate or nonhuman things. We may say that "Love is blind," or argue with the soft drink machine that "eats" our change. In Act I, scene ii, the Captain personifies Macbeth's sword (brandished steel) and suggests that it acted on its own to bring Macbeth face to face with Macdonwald:

~•~

*Disdaining fortune, with his brandished steel,
Which smoked with bloody execution,
Like valor's minion carved out his passage
Till he faced the slave;*

~•~

Another figurative device is to address a person or abstract idea directly although it is not or cannot be present. This device is called *apostrophe*. The following expressions are examples:

~•~

Death, be not proud.

~•~

or

~•~

*Twinkle, twinkle little star,
How I wonder what you are?*

~•~

Macbeth: Act II Language Exploration (continued)

When Lady Macbeth learns that Duncan is coming to Inverness and that she'll have her opportunity to murder the king, she addresses spirits using an apostrophe (Act I, scene v):

~

*. . . Come you spirits
That tend mortal thoughts, unsex me here,
And fill me from crown to the toe top-full
Of direst cruelty!*

~

Directions: The following passages contain examples of personification and apostrophe. Working in pairs, small groups, or as your teacher directs, review each passage within the context of the play and develop an interpretation of the passage. You may want to review the quotations within the fuller context of a particular speech.

1. Ross describing the Norwegian banners flying from the battlements of the castle at Fife (Act I, scene ii):

~

*From Fife, great King,
Where Norwegian banners flout the sky
And fan our people cold.*

~

2. Angus relating the downfall of the former Thane of Cawdor (Act I, scene iii):

~

*But treasons capital, confessed and proved,
Have overthrown him.*

~

Macbeth: Act II Language Exploration (continued)

3. Lady Macbeth learning that Duncan comes to Inverness (Act I, scene v):

⋮

*. . . 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!*

⋮

4. Banquo describing Inverness castle to Duncan (Act I, scene vi):

⋮

*This guest of summer,
The temple-haunting martlet, does approve,
By his loved mansionry, that the heaven's breath
Smells wooingly here.*

⋮

5. Lady Macbeth to her husband (Act I, scene vii):

⋮

*Was the hope drunk,
Wherein you dressed yourself? Hath it slept since?
And wakes it now to look so green and pale,
At what it did so freely?*

⋮

Macbeth: Act II Language Exploration (continued)

6. Banquo contemplating the witches' prophecies (Act II, scene i):

~

*. . . Merciful powers,
Restrain in me the cursed thoughts that nature
Gives way to in repose*

~

7. Macbeth on his way to murder Duncan (Act II, scene i):

~

*I go and it is done. The bell invites me.
Hear it not Duncan, for it is a knell
That summons thee to heaven, or to hell.*

~

8. Macbeth going to bed after the murder but hearing the knocking at the gate (Act II, scene ii):

~

Wake Duncan with thy knocking. I would thou couldst.

~

9. Macduff informing others of the murder (Act II, scene iii):

~

Confusion now hath made his masterpiece!

~