

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

Focusing Activities
for
Macbeth
Small Group Discussion Questions
Act IV

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

scene i. In Act III, scene iv, Macbeth promised to go to the witches again "for now I am bent to know/ By the worst means the worst, for mine own good." In light of Hecate's speech to the witches in Act III, scene v, what do you think they will tell him?

scene ii. At the end of scene i, Macbeth vows vengeance upon Macduff. What do you think Macbeth has to gain by murdering Macduff's wife and children? What does he have to lose?

scene iii. If you were Macduff meeting with Malcolm in England, what might you ask Malcolm to do? As Malcolm, how might you respond to Macduff's request?

Name _____

Act IV

27. Why is Macbeth so anxious to find the witches? Do you think he's making a mistake?
28. Describe the apparitions and their messages.
29. How does Macbeth decide to retaliate against Macduff?
30. What does Malcolm need in the way of assurance from Macduff?
31. How has the English king offered to help defeat Macbeth?

Act V

32. How has Lady Macbeth changed since she was first seen in the play? What habits has she developed?
33. Why are Macbeth's robes said to "hang loose about him"?
34. Why is Macbeth so sure nothing bad will happen to him?
35. What clues do the soldiers' activities give you that Macbeth may be wrong?
36. What finally happens to Lady Macbeth?
37. Why is Macbeth so confident Young Siward won't kill him?
38. What surprise does Macduff spring on Macbeth?
39. What does Macduff bring to Malcolm?
40. Who will now be king of Scotland?

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

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.

Scene	<i>What Macbeth says, does, or what others say about him</i>	<i>What this reveals about Macbeth's character</i>
Act IV, scene i Macbeth meets the witches a second time		
Act IV, scene i Lennox informs Macbeth that Macduff has fled to England		
Act IV, scene iii Macbeth has Macduff's family murdered		

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

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 IV, scene ii Macduff flees to England		
Act IV, scene iii Macduff meets with Malcolm		
Act IV, scene iii Ross tells Macduff that Macbeth has murdered his wife and children		

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

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 IV, scene ii Macduff goes to England		
Act IV, scene ii Ross goes to England		
Act IV, scene iii Ross tells Macduff that Macbeth has murdered his wife and children		

Guide to Character Development—Conclusions Act 4

You have been tracking some of the characters in act 4 of *Macbeth* and drawing conclusions about what their characteristics are based on the three ways Shakespeare reveals his characters:

- Through what the characters say
- Through what the characters do
- Through what other characters say about them

Get into groups according to the characters you have been tracking and share your conclusions with the other members of the group. Come to a consensus as a group about your character(s) and be prepared to share your conclusions with the rest of the class. Be sure to use the text to support your conclusions as you report to the class as a whole.

	Conclusions about	Textual Evidence
Macbeth		
Macduff		
Ross		

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Postreading Activity
for
Macbeth
Language Exploration.
Imagery
Act IV

In addition to figurative language, symbolism, and verbal irony, Shakespeare also uses *imagery*: language that appeals to the senses of *sight*, *touch*, *taste*, *smell*, and *hearing*. Because our senses provide our direct contact with the world, poets often appeal to these concrete experiences to help convey more abstract ideas. Shakespeare often develops imagery in combination with figurative language.

Notice how Lady Macbeth appeals to the senses and reveals her desire to have the resolve to murder Duncan (Act I, scene v):

•

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

•

Directions: The following passages from Acts III and IV contain examples of imagery. Working in pairs, small groups, or as your teacher directs, review each passage in the context of the play and decide which sense Shakespeare appeals to and what the passage suggests to the reader.

Macbeth: Act IV Language Exploration Imagery (continued)

1. Banquo reflecting upon the truth of the witches' prophecies (Act III, scene i):

~

*. . . .If there come truth from them,
As upon thee Macbeth, their speeches shine,
Why by the verities on thee made good
May they not be my oracles as well,
And set me up in hope?*

~

2. Macbeth reflecting upon possible threats to his power (Act III, scene ii):

~

*We have scotched the snake, not killed it.
She'll close, and be herself, whilst our poor malice
Remains in danger of her former tooth.*

~

3. Macbeth referring to his plans to have Banquo murdered (Act III, scene ii):

~

*Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest chuck,
Till thou applaud the deed. Come seeling night,
Scarf up the tender eye of pitiful day,
And with thy bloody and invisible hand
Cancel and tear to pieces that great bond
Which keeps me pale.*

~

Macbeth: Act IV Language Exploration Imagery (continued)

4. The First Murderer before killing Banquo (Act III, scene iii):

~

The west yet glimmers with some streaks of day.

~

5. Lady Macbeth urging Macbeth to be a jovial host (Act III, scene iv):

~

*My royal lord,
You do not give the cheer. The feast is sold
That is not often vouched, while 'tis a-making,
'Tis given with welcome. To feed were best at home;
From thence, the sauce to meat is ceremony,
Meeting were bare without it.*

~

6. Macbeth addressing Banquo's ghost (Act III, scene iv):

~

*Avaunt, and quit my sight, let the earth hide thee!
Thy bones are marrowless, thy blood is cold.
Thou has no speculation in those eyes
Which thou dost glare with.*

~

Macbeth: Act IV Language Exploration Imagery (continued)

7. Macbeth has disrupted the banquet with his ranting at Banquo's ghost (Act III, scene iv):

~•~

*It will have blood, they say; blood will have blood.
Stones have been known to move, and trees to speak.*

~•~

8. Macduff describing Macbeth's tyranny to Malcolm (Act IV, scene iii):

~•~

*Let us rather
Hold fast the mortal sword; and like good men,
Bestride our down-fallen birthdom. Each new morn,
New widows howl, new orphans cry, new sorrows
Strike heaven on the face, that it resounds
As if it felt with Scotland, and yelled out
Like syllable of dolor.*

~•~

9. Malcolm commenting on his fear that he may be more of a tyrant than Macbeth (Act IV, scene iii):

~•~

*It is myself I mean; in whom I know
All the particulars of vice so grafted,
That when they shall be opened, black Macbeth
Will seem as pure as snow, and the poor state
Esteem him as a lamb, being compared
With my confineless harms.*

~•~

Macbeth: Act IV Language Exploration Imagery (continued)

10. Malcolm resolved to attack Macbeth once Macduff vows revenge (Act IV, scene iii):

~

*This tune goes manly.
Come go we to the King, our power is ready,
Our lack is nothing but our leave. Macbeth
Is ripe for shaking, and the powers above
Put on their instruments. Receive what cheer you may
The night is long that never finds the day.*

~

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Prereading Activity for
Macbeth
Vocabulary
Act IV

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

Definitions

scene i

- 10 1. **harp:** (v.) to give voice or utterance to.
Example: In the eulogy, the minister *harped* many of the emotions of the entire congregation attending the funeral.
- 11 2. **potent:** (adj.) powerful; influential.
Example: Some varieties of chili peppers are more *potent* than others.
- 12 3. **impress:** (v.) conscript, draft, force into military or other service.
Example: In Shakespeare's time, gangs of sailors often kidnapped unsuspecting young men and *impressed* them into service aboard ship.
- 1 4. **perni-
cious:** (adj.) harmful; destructive; lethal.
Example: The *pernicious* fumes of ammonia spread across the city.
- 2 5. **firstling:** (n.) the first of a kind; first-born offspring.
Example: Macbeth's murdering of Duncan was a *firstling* of evil.

scene ii

- 13 6. **school:** (v.) to inform, teach, train.
Example: We have failed to *school* our miniature schnauzer not to bark every time someone knocks on the front door.

Macbeth: Act IV Vocabulary (continued)

scene iii

147. **desolate:** (adj.) isolated; lonely.
Example: Until the small boy made friends at camp, he felt it was a *desolate* place that his parents had sent him to.
158. **intemperance:** (n.) excessive indulgence of a natural appetite or passion; lack of moderation.
Example: Andy's *intemperance* about driving fast has resulted in several speeding tickets.
169. **avarice:** (n.) insatiable greed for riches; inordinate desire to gain or hoard wealth.
Example: King Midas' *avarice* was ultimately the cause of his own downfall.
310. **scruples:** (n.) tiny parts; doubt; difficulty.
Example: Our young son has no *scruples* in accepting anyone's friendship, so he often gets used by others.