

Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

Macbeth – Questions – Act I**Reading Check**

1. Why is Scotland at war at the opening of the play?
2. What three predictions do the witches make in Scene Three?
3. Who is named heir to the Scottish Throne?
4. What is the “double trust” that makes Macbeth hesitate to kill Duncan?
5. How do Macbeth and Lady Macbeth (murderers) plan to implicate Duncan’s servants?

Critical Thinking

1. The play opens with the witches on a stormy night (thunder and lightning). What is the atmosphere and tone created in this short opening scene?
2. How does the line “Fair is foul, and foul is fair,” later echoed (repetition) in Scene 3, foreshadow the events of the entire act.
3. What is the initial impression that the reader has about Macbeth (wounded sergeant’s report)?
4. How is this impression confirmed by Ross in Scene 3?
5. Compare/Contrast the reactions of Macbeth and Banquo to the witches and their predictions.
6. In what ways is Banquo “lesser than Macbeth, and greater”?
7. Is there any evidence in this act that Macbeth had previously entertained the possibility of becoming King? Explain your answer.
8. If Macbeth did think about becoming King, what role do the Witches play?
9. In Scene 5, what are Lady Macbeth’s reactions when she receives her husband’s letter?
10. Compare/Contrast the reactions of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth to the witches’ predictions.
11. In Scene 7, what do we learn about Macbeth’s state of mind?
12. How does Lady Macbeth manipulate and persuade her husband to kill Duncan?
13. How do Lady Macbeth and Macbeth plan to kill Duncan?
14. What is the dramatic effect of seeing the plotting of the murder as Act I ends?
15. Explain how Act I acts as the Exposition of the play.