

Ambition

Lady Macbeth worries that Macbeth does not have the 'illness' (wickedness and determination) to pursue their ambition to be 'great' (Scene 5) and powerful. Banquo and Macbeth react differently to the witches' predictions: Macbeth is immediately overwhelmed by the desire to become king.

Trust and loyalty

Macbeth, Lady Macbeth and Banquo all treat Duncan to pledges of love and loyalty. We know that, in the case of the first two, these pledges are false.

Appearance and reality

Duncan had 'an absolute trust' in the treacherous Cawdor (Scene 4) and concludes that you can't tell what someone is thinking by looking at their face. Yet both Duncan and Banquo seem to find in the 'face' of Macbeth's castle reassuring signs of trustworthiness (Scene 6). In contrast to Duncan, Lady Macbeth is sharply aware of the advantage of deception: 'Look like the 'innocent flower,/But be the serpent under it', she advises Macbeth (Scene 5).

REVIEW



IT!

- 1 Your Shakespeare exam question is in Paper 1. Is it section A or section B?
- 2 How long should you spend on your Shakespeare question?
- 3 Where do the witches say they will meet Macbeth?
- 4 What is the name of the Scottish rebel who Macbeth kills in battle?
- 5 Why does Duncan call Macbeth 'valiant cousin! Worthy gentleman'?
- 6 When Ross describes Macbeth as 'lapp'd in proof', what does he mean?
- 7 Why is Duncan able to give Macbeth the title of Thane of Cawdor?
- 8 According to Banquo, how does Macbeth react to the witches' predictions for him?
- 9 What do the witches predict for Banquo?
- 10 Angus reports that the Thane of Cawdor lives 'under heavy judgement'. What does he mean by these words?
- 11 Macbeth thinks to himself, 'My thought, whose murder is yet fantastical...' What does he mean?
- 12 Why is Duncan amazed that Cawdor turned out to be a traitor?
- 13 When Macbeth is thinking about the title of Prince of Cumberland, what does he mean by his 'black and deep desires'?
- 14 When Lady Macbeth hears about the witches' 'promise', what does she fear about Macbeth?
- 15 What does Lady Macbeth mean when she asks spirits to 'unsex' her?
- 16 What important advice does Lady Macbeth give her husband in Scene 5?
- 17 Look at Duncan and Banquo's arrival at the Macbeths' castle. Write down four words and/or short **phrases** that show that the castle makes them feel safe and relaxed.
- 18 In his speech at the beginning of Scene 7, what reasons does Macbeth give for being reluctant to kill Duncan?
- 19 Lady Macbeth says that while her baby was smiling at her, she would 'Have pluck'd my nipple from his boneless gums/And dash'd the brains out...' Why does she say this, and what might be the effect of these words on an audience?
- 20 At the end of Scene 7, Macbeth decides to kill Duncan. What finally makes his mind up? ('I am settled')