The Knowledge

**Macbeth**

1. Macbeth begins the play as ‘**brave**’ and ends as a ‘**dead butcher**’.
2. He believes that Duncan is a good king and has been ‘**so clear in his great office**’.
3. Macbeth’s ‘**vaulting ambition**’ leads him to kill Duncan, although he initially says he will ‘**proceed no further in this business**’.
4. Lady Macbeth accuses him of being ‘**green and pale**’ and calls him a ‘**coward**’ when he expresses doubts.
5. He worries that Duncan’s blood will never wash clean from his hands and that he will ‘**sleep no more**’.
6. In the aftermath of the murder, Lady Macbeth accuses Macbeth of being ‘**infirm of purpose!**’
7. With Duncan ‘**in his grave**’, Macbeth hires murderers to kill Banquo and Fleance.
8. Macbeth’s mental fragility is demonstrated when he accuses Banquo’s ghost of shaking ‘**thy gory locks**’ at him.
9. With the feast disrupted, Lady Macbeth once again accuses him of being ‘**unmann’d**’.
10. At the end of the play, isolated and deluded, Macbeth vows that he will ‘**not be afraid of death and bane**’.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Brave | Ruthless | Ambitious | Tyrannical | Erratic |
| Loyal | Violent | Hesitant | Cowardly | Isolated |

**Lady Macbeth**

1. Lady Macbeth is ambitious and intelligent, but at the end of the play she is described as a ‘**fiend-like queen**’.
2. She believes her husband is equally ambitious, but also ‘**too full o’ the milk of human kindness**’ (i.e. not ruthless enough).
3. Lady Macbeth evokes the power of evil spirtis to ‘**unsex**’ her and fill her ‘**top-full of direst cruelty!**’
4. She is the architect of the plan to murder Duncan; she tells Macbeth to ‘**leave all the rest to me**’.
5. In the aftermath of the murder, Lady Macbeth is decisive and domineering; she orders Macbeth to ‘**give me the daggers**’.
6. She scolds Macbeth for his weakness by saying that it is ‘**a foolish thought to say a sorry sight**’.
7. When Macbeth sees the ghost of Banquo, Lady Macbeth attempts to calm the situation by asking the ‘**worthy**’ thanes to ‘**sit**’.
8. Towards the end of the play, Lady Macbeth sleepwalks and ‘**rubs her hands**’.
9. She sees spots of Duncan’s blood on her hands and says that ‘**all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand**’.
10. The doctor eventually reports to Macbeth that Lady Macbeth is ‘**troubled with thick coming fancies**’.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Intelligent | Charming | Manipulative | Domineering | Cruel |
| Ambitious | Persuasive | Decisive | Ruthless | Troubled |

**Macduff**

1. Macduff arrives to wake the Duncan the morning after the murder takes place; he was commanded ‘**to call timely on him**’.
2. Macduff dutifuly describes Duncan as ‘**royal**’, his ‘**master**’ and his ‘**king**’.
3. Upon discovering Duncan’s dead body, he loudly exclaims ‘**O horror! horror! horror!**’ in anguished confusion.
4. Maduff’s loss of control contrasts to Macbeth’s hyperbole; Macbeth eulogises Duncan’s ‘**silver skin**’ and ‘**golden blood**’.
5. Macbeth furiously notes Macduff’s absence at the feast, remarking that he ‘**denies his person at our great bidding**’.
6. The witches warn Macbeth to ‘**beware Macduff**’, but he is confident that ‘**none of woman born shall harm**’ him.
7. Macbeth hires murderers to kill Macduff’s wife and family; the first murderer calls Macduff a ‘**traitor**’.
8. Before being slaughtered, Macduff’s son calls the first murderer a ‘**lia**r’ and ‘**shag-hair’d villain!**’
9. Meanwhile, in England, Macduff bemoans Macbeth’s ‘**great tyranny**’ and calls him a ‘**hell-kite**’ for slaughtering his family.
10. In the final stages of the play, Macduff demands that Macbeth ‘**show thy face!**’ before killing him.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Principled  | Dutiful | Moral | Intelligent | Vengeful |
| Honourable | Devoted | Honest | Suspicious | Merciless |