

Macbeth Study Guide – Act IV

As a group, complete the following study guide. Remember to *read* each scene out loud as a group before you answer the questions.

Act 4, Scene 1 – Double, double, toil and trouble

Read the famous lines chanted by the witches. What are the witches preparing? Why?

Why does Macbeth feel the need to return to the witches?

- | Appearance of Apparitions: | Prophecies: |
|----------------------------|---|
| 1. | “Beware Macduff” |
| 2. | “For none of woman born shall harm Macbeth” |
| 3. | “Macbeth shall never vanquished be/Til great Birnam Wood to high Dunsinane Hill shall come against him” |

After the visit with the witches, what does Macbeth intend to do? Why?

Act 4, Scene 2 – Massacre at Macduff’s Castle

How does Lady Macduff feel about her husband’s absence?

What is the purpose of the conversation between Lady Macduff and her son?

What happens to them all?

Act 4, Scene 3 – Malcolm’s Test

Why does Macduff go to England?

Why does Malcolm fear Macduff?

How does Malcolm test Macduff?

When does Macduff pass the test?

What are the “king-becoming graces?” (IV, iii, 91)

What news does Macduff get?

Think and talk with your group about how the actor playing Macduff would be behaving by the end of the scene. What makes us really sympathetic to Macduff by the end of the scene?

What will Malcolm and Macduff do? Why?