

By the end of studying Act 1 Scene 5 Macbeth I need to know:

Plot: Lady Macbeth receives a letter from Macbeth, analysis Macbeth's character and they decide that Duncan must die.

Ideas: Shakespeare establishes the close relationship between Lady Macbeth and Macbeth. Supernatural forces are re-introduced by Lady Macbeth and her language demonstrates the evil she is contemplating.

<p>Vocabulary</p>	<p>Perfect report- the best knowledge (either he has made enquiries about the Witches or his own experiences has proved them right) Missives- messengers Deliver thee- report to you Dues of rejoicing- appropriate joy Milk of human-kindness- gentleness of decent humanity Illness should attend it necessary wickedness What thou...holily what you would like passionately to have, you would like to obtain by fair means Thoud'st have...undone You would like to have something (the crown) but it demands, 'you must do thi' if you wishit, and you are more afraid to do this necessary job than eager to reverse it if it were actually done Hie hasten Chastise...tongue correct or strengthen with my strong words Golden round crown Metaphysical supernatural Informed sent word ahead Had the speed of him came faster than he did Raven bird announcing death Mortal deadly Crown top of her head Thick so that pity cannot pass to her heart Remorse compassion Compunctious...nature natural feelings of pity Fell dreadful Nor keep it nor intervene between my intention and its fulfilment For gall in exchange for sour milk Ministers evil spirits Sightless invisible Wait on nature's mischief attend on the disasters and evil possible in the world Pall wrap, hide as in a coffin cloth Dunnest darkest Hereafter of the future (the third prophecy) Ignorant unknowing Instant present To beguile..time to deceive people, look as they expect you to look Provided for dealt with (ironic way of saying killed) Dispatch care Look up clear appear cheerful To alter... fear to show a disturbed face is a betrayal of troubled thoughts</p>
<p>Context (To inform interpretation)</p>	<p>Jacobean society was patriarchal, meaning that men were considered to be the leaders and women their inferiors. Women were regraded as "the weaker sex" not just in terms of physical strength, but emotionally too. It was believed that women always needed someone to look after them. If they were married, their husband was expected to look after them. If they were single, then their father, brother or another male relative was expected to take care of them. Even though there had been an unmarried woman on the throne in Elizabethan England, the roles of men and women were very limited. There were very clear expectations of men and women and in general men were expected to be the breadwinners and women to be housewives or mothers. Childbearing was considered a great honour to women, as children were blessings from God. Women were not allowed to enter certain professions e.g. law, medicine, politics but they could work in domestic services e.g. cooks, maid. Women were also allowed to write works of literature, providing the subject was suitable for women: mainly translations or religious works. Women were not allowed to act on the public stage or write for the public stage. Acting was considered dishonourable for women. In Shakespeare's plays, the roles of women were often played by young boys. A man was considered to be the head of marriage, and he had the legal right to chastise his wife. However, it is important to understand what this "headship" meant. It did not mean that the husband was able to command his wife to do anything he pleased. He was expected to take care of her and be a good father to any children they had. If a husband felt the need to chastise his wife, then he was not allowed to be cruel or inflict harm. There was no divorce: marriage generally lasted as long as the couple both lived. A black cloth was hung on the stage during tragedies; the roof of the stage was called the 'heavens.' The 'pall' and 'heaven' of Lady Macbeth's curse may refer to these (lines 49-51) Shakespeare's plays often contain allusions like this to the situation techniques of dramatic performance.</p>

Reading:

Read to the punctuation not the end of the line.

Half line breaks-Lady Macbeth and Macbeth in lines 56-58 speak in half line breaks. This makes their speech sound urgent and hurried-they are both nervous and need to act quickly

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Themes	<p>Good and Evil- Lady Macbeth's dark and terrifying soliloquy shows how evil she is. Her references to "spirits" and "hell" links her with the witches.</p> <p>Reality and Appearances- Lady Macbeth encourages Macbeth to deceive Duncan by pretending to be something he's not</p> <p>The supernatural- Lady Macbeth's greeting echoes the Witches' language from Act 1 Scene 3 (lines 47-49)</p>
Deeper understanding	<p>An atypical woman- Shakespeare introduces us to Lady Macbeth 'reading a letter', this helps identify her as intelligent- coupled with the fact Macbeth refers to her as 'dearest partner in greatness', somewhat suggesting Macbeth sees his wife as an equal as opposed to himself a superior. . Significantly, in his letter, Macbeth says nothing of their prophecy to Banquo; perhaps he is already afraid of its implications. Her depiction of her husband 'too full of the milk of human kindness', presents him as effeminate and the idea that 'the raven himself is hoarse that croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan under my battlements' subtly reinforces the power that she has- she sees the castle as hers. Arguably, this is undermined by the fact she is speaking in soliloquy, perhaps questioning the extent to which she truly has power. Indeed, when the servant enters and mentions Duncan is arriving she resorts to a typical feminine role- 'thou art mad to say it' suggests she is panicking because she has had not enough time for 'preparation'- we, as the audience, know that this refers to the murder, however she is also adhering to expectation here- the flustered and panicked housewife who wants to be a good hostess and prepare the castle. Her lack of power also reflects how she must be manipulative- as women at this time wouldn't typically have power. Instead she must 'pour [her] spirits in [Macbeth's] ear'. Any member of Shakespeare's audience who had seen his play <i>Hamlet</i> four years previously would be more than aware of the significance of this line, for in that play the good King Claudius is murdered by poison administered through the ear. With this, the scene is rapidly becoming darker. The fact the audience meet her alone on stage means that we are privy to her innermost thoughts, which are filled with the imagery of death and destruction. When she speaks, in her next soliloquy, of her 'fell purpose,' her intentions are described in the most grotesque and frightening terms. First she bids the spirits to literally deprive her of her femininity, to thicken her blood, and to stop her ability to weep. Next, she prays that those same evil spirits should suckle her, converting what should be her nourishing mother's milk to "gall" (bitterness). Lastly, she calls upon the night itself to hide her actions in a 'blanket' of darkness- just as Macbeth bids 'stars [to] hide [their] fires' in Act 1 Scene 4. It is no coincidence that these last words reflect those of Macbeth in the previous scene: Shakespeare is creating a strong verbal bond between husband and wife that will continue throughout the play.</p> <p>In the lines that follow, Lady Macbeth uses several significant metaphors of concealment: Macbeth's face is like "a book, where men / May read strange matters" (63-64); then, in a brilliantly ironic reference to the Genesis story, "Look like the innocent flower, / But be the serpent under it" (66-67). The apparent paradise promised by the Witches is soon to become a hell. An important psychological point is also made: Lady Macbeth herself does not hide her feelings in the same way that Macbeth does. She is not rapt in wonderment, simply practical. The last line of the scene, "Leave all the rest to me," is quite modern in its tone. With this blunt and chilling imperative, Lady Macbeth completes her transformation from woman to man. From now on, she plays on the reversal of roles; she has adopted the role of "man of action," forcing her husband into the more passive role of accomplice.</p> <p>Lady Macbeth's manipulation- Lady Macbeth's manipulation in this scene is rather subtle. Despite belittling him in soliloquy, stating he is 'too full of the milk of human kindness', when he appears she lavishes praise on him- 'Great Glamis! Worthy Cawdor!' which creates the idea she is proud of his achievements and new title. However, this also serves as a subtle promise- if him being made Cawdor has impressed her so greatly, when he is pronounced King 'greater than both' she will be even more impressed. Equally, upon stating that 'never shall sun that morrow see'- informing him that Duncan will be killed, she doesn't wait for his response but appears startled at the panic on his face 'your face, my thane, is a book where men may read strange matters'- almost suggesting that she is this fear or panic he shows is unexpected (all the while using his title 'my thane' to construct the appearance of power). It's also interesting to compare this to Act 1 Scene 7, after Macbeth refuses to kill the king- she states 'what beast was it that broke this enterprise to me?' somewhat implying that it was his idea to kill the king. She distorts the events of Act 1 Scene 5 in Act 1 Scene 7 for her own purpose.</p> <p>Completing verses- It's typical for upper class characters, in Shakespeare's plays, to speak in verse (written in iambic pentameter). Within this scene, there are a few examples of where Macbeth speaks in incomplete verse- ending an utterance on 5 or 6 syllables, only to have Lady Macbeth's utterance complete that verse. This helps to reflect the subtle and hidden power that Lady Macbeth has over her husband. [it's also something to look out for in Act 4 Scene 1- when the witches give the appearance of submissiveness towards Macbeth].</p> <p>Militaristic language- Lady Macbeth uses militaristic language to describe her intention to 'chastise [Macbeth] with the valour of [her] tongue'- by personifying her tongue she is suggesting he great power that lies within her speech. Whereas a soldier might demonstrate 'valour' in a battle, Lady Macbeth will show it through speaking- her words are her weapon.</p>
Quotes and references	<p>"I fear thy nature is too full of the milk of human kindness" Lady Macbeth assumes that Macbeth will hesitate over killing Duncan. This suggests that at this point Macbeth isn't totally evil. Shakespeare uses this metaphor to suggest that despite his reputation, as a brave warrior, Macbeth also has a strong sense of compassion. Milk is mild, natural and importantly, white. We associate this with purity, yet as the play progresses, Macbeth will be increasingly linked to the contrasting red of blood.</p> <p>"Unsex me here" Lady Macbeth does not want to be a woman. She sees women as weak and incapable of murder</p> <p>"Come you spirits" Lady Macbeth's language links her to the witches – she uses imperatives which makes it sound like she is casting a spell</p> <p>"Look like the innocent flower but be the serpent under it" Lady Macbeth instructs Macbeth to hide his true desires and deceive everyone. The enjambement of these lines highlights her deliberate slyness and her cunning. <i>The turning point at the conjunction "but" shows the sharp contrast between outward appearance and inner reality.</i> We see how manipulative Lady Macbeth is here as she begins with the imperative verb 'look' she is controlling her husband. The imagery reminds the audience of the serpent in the Garden of Eden. Lady Macbeth's language links her to Eve (the woman who tempted Adam to betray God) by using this imagery Shakespeare shows Lady Macbeth as manipulative and sinful</p> <p>'Make thick my blood" Lady Macbeth calls on spirits to take away any feelings of pity she may have. The word 'blood' appears over 40 times in <i>Macbeth</i> – not to mention appearances by related words such as 'bloody', 'bleeding' and so on. Shakespeare's constant repetition of the word 'blood' stresses to his audience the full horror of what is happening.</p>

Terminology	<p>Imperatives – giving a command</p> <p>Soliloquy- act of speaking one's thoughts aloud when by oneself or regardless of any hearers, especially by a character in a play.</p> <p>Symbolism- the use of symbols to represent ideas or qualities</p> <p>Metaphor- a word or phrase is applied to an object or action to which it is not literally applicable.</p> <p>Fatal flaw- in tragedy, a defect that leads the character to their demise. Macbeth's arguably is ambition-fuelled by Lady Macbeth</p> <p>Exposition- Introduces the characters, setting, events and key ideas</p>
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Links across the text:

Act 1 scene 1- “Fair is foul and foul is fair’ this emphasises how things in the world are not as they seem.

Act 1 Scene 3 (lines 47-49) Lady Macbeths’ greeting in this scene “Great Glamis..” echoes the witches’ language form Act 1

Act 5 scene 1-Lady Macbeth reads the letter again but Act 5 is in complete contrast she is no longer in control.

Act 3 Scene 2- Macbeth tells Lady Macbeth to ‘make our faces vizards to our hearts, disguising what they are’, echoing Lady Macbeth’s instruction to Macbeth in this scene. This could show one of two things:

1. How good Lady Macbeth is able to manipulate her husband that he ends up telling her to do what she had previously told him.
2. The shift in power between Lady Macbeth and Macbeth after he is crowned king.