

MACBETH STUDY GUIDE QUESTIONS

An important part of the rehearsal process is to make decisions about the characters and the situations they are placed in during the play. The following is a list of questions that were raised by the actors or the director and answered to some degree.

What aspects of the setting are important for advancing the play's themes?

What aspects of the three witches resemble the traditional Greek mythological figures The Fates?

Why is it a break with tradition for Duncan to appoint his son the Prince of Cumberland (the Scottish version of the Prince of Wales)?

Is there any point in the play that Macbeth feels like a fly trapped in a spider's web?

Is Macbeth a victim of fate, or is his doom a self-fulfilling prophecy?

What is the role of pride (*hubris*) in the tragedy?

What aspect of this play makes it a tragedy (in dramatic terms) besides the sad ending?

What is Macduff's character meant to represent?

In what ways is Macbeth the protagonist of the play? In what ways is he the antagonist?

What is the Macbeth's domestic life like? Why do they not have any children?

Why does Macbeth see the ghost of Banquo? Does Lady Macbeth see Banquo's ghost?

What causes Lady Macbeth to go crazy? How does she die?

Why does it take so long for the Scottish lords to desert Macbeth?

PRODUCTION QUESTIONS

How can we do the play with only two actors and how long should it be?

How do we keep the story intact without all the text?

How do we handle the supernatural occurrences in the play?

What will be the role of the music?

How should we handle costume changes and the fact that each actor is playing so many characters?

What aspects of traditional theater (sets, lights, costumes, sound, props) are necessary to allow for suspension of disbelief?

How much audience participation should there be?

How should we handle the blood that is called for in the play?