

## Quiz: *Macbeth*, Act I – Answer Key

### 1. Why did King Duncan strip the Thane of Cawdor of his title and give it to Macbeth?

*The Thane of Cawdor betrayed King Duncan and deserted to the rebel army during the battle. Macbeth fought heroically in the battle, killed the rebel leader, MacDonwald, and helped win the day for Duncan's army.*

### 2. What prophecies do the witches make regarding Macbeth?

*He will be Thane of Glamis. (a title he will inherit from his father)*

*He will be Thane of Cawdor.*

*He will be king.*

### 3. What prophecies do the witches make regarding Banquo?

*The witches predicted his children would be kings.*

### 4. How does Lady Macbeth react to the witches' prophecies and the idea of killing the king?

*Lady Macbeth is enthusiastic about obtaining the power that goes with the kingship. She fears that her husband does not have enough ambition to accomplish their (her?) goals.*

*When she hears that the King will visit their castle, she calls on spirits to "unsex" her, and allow her masculine nature to take advantage of the opportunity afforded by the king's visit. When Macbeth arrives at the end of the scene, she urges him to appear innocent while planning the murder of the king.*

## Who said it and what is he/she talking about?

### 5. Fair is foul, and foul is fair:

**Hover through the fog and filthy air.**

*The witches end Scene 1 with this chant. It introduces one of the play's major themes – ambiguity, or the double nature of reality. This play takes place in an ambiguous world where things are not what they seem, where everything is doubtful, a world in which one might easily mistake foul (evil) for fair (good). This idea relates to the witches. Are they evil, or do they represent Fate by predicting the future? The inability to distinguish fair from foul, or good from evil, will affect all the major characters in the play.*

### 6. He's here in double trust:

**First, as I am his kinsman and his subject**

**Strong both against the deed.**

*In Macbeth's first soliloquy, he expresses his doubts about murdering the king. Among the reasons he should not kill the king are his "double bond" as kinsman (countryman) and subject, which should make him oppose the deed he is contemplating.*

*By the end of the scene, Lady Macbeth will bolster his courage and prepare him to commit the murder in the next act.*

### 7. Yet I do fear thy nature;

**It is too full o' th' milk of human kindness.**

*After receiving her husband's letter, Lady Macbeth speculates that her husband may not be ambitious (evil, masculine?) enough to accomplish the goal of becoming king.*

### 8. Look like the innocent flower, but be the serpent under't.

*At the end of Act I, Lady Macbeth advises her husband to hide his true feelings under a false appearance.*

*"Pretend to be innocent, but in reality, be the stinging snake that hides under the flower." The serpent is a familiar Biblical symbol of evil.*

*This quote sounds one of the major themes of the play: double meanings, ambiguity, and the duality of nature. In the world of Macbeth, things are not what they seem. Macbeth and Lady Macbeth use false appearances to betray and kill their enemies. Later in the play, false appearances are turned against them in interesting ways.*