

MACBETH
READING COMPREHENSION
ACT 4
YEAR 3 AND 3

In the depths of the night Macbeth lay awake, thinking back to the battle in which he had been such a hero. It seemed a lifetime ago, and he had been different then, a different man. The evening before the fight, he and his warriors had swapped stories of the enemy that they were about to face, talking of the strange gods that the Norwegians believed in and how they would seem to go crazy when they picked up their weapons. One story above all had come back to haunt him; an old soldier, whose lonely teeth whistled as he spoke, had told them all about the Viking Hell: it was, he said, a big, feather bed on which you could always lie down, but never sleep.

He was in hell, then.

Each night he lay down already exhausted from his duties as King, desperate for sleep to come. It never did. Instead, thoughts filled his head, each darker than the one before, flooding his mind with images of his own death and destruction, and how he might lose all that he had fought so hard to gain. Hour after hour he would lie there, staring into the night, seeing strange shapes: ghosts, bodies, witches. At last, dawn would come and he would drag on his rich robes, more tired than when he had lain down.

He could stand it no longer.

1. Who lay awake in the 'depths of the night'?

Banquo

Macbeth

Lady Macbeth

Macduff

2. What was he thinking about?

- | | | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------|---------------|--------------------------|
| The Battle | <input type="checkbox"/> | Dying | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Lady Macbeth | <input type="checkbox"/> | Banquo | <input type="checkbox"/> |

3. What is 'Viking Hell'

A battle, so bloody, that you could never feel clean again.

A big, feather bed on which you could always lie down, but never sleep.

A loud, deafening noise that meant you could never hear again.

4. Why do you think Macbeth was thinking about this 'Viking Hell'?

Because he hates the Norwegians

Because he can't sleep even though he's so tired

5. When Macbeth was lying, unable to sleep would things could he see? Give three examples from the text:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

They knew he was coming, desperate for answers. How could they not? It was their own spell that was bringing him to them. As they took turns to throw ingredients into the pot, each one of the three smiled to herself, whilst chanting the words of power.

“Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire burn and cauldron bubble.
Fillet of a fenny snake
In the cauldron, boil and bake
Eye of newt and toe of frog
Wool of bat and tongue of dog
Adder’s fork and blind worm’s sting
Lizard’s leg and howlet’s wing
For a charm of powerful trouble
Like a hell broth boil and bubble
Double, double toil and trouble”

The charm was done, the magic cast. And, as a fish follows bait, the subject of their spell was on his way.

The eldest of the witches held her hands to the air.

“By the pricking of my thumbs, something wicked this way comes!”

6. Who did Macbeth go to see to try and get answers?

7. Complete the missing words below

Double, double, toil and _____

Fire _____ and cauldron _____

8. The eldest of the witches held her hands to the air

“By the pricking of my thumbs, something wicked this way comes!”

A. Who is coming their way?

Macbeth	<input type="checkbox"/>	Banquo	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lady Macbeth	<input type="checkbox"/>	Macduff	<input type="checkbox"/>

He was here. Macbeth’s face was flushed with blood.

“I conjure you, by that which you profess – answer me!”

And answers came. Warnings....

“Macbeth, Macbeth, Macbeth! Beware Macduff.”

Just as he’d suspected. Good. He would deal with Macduff.
Then there was some comfort...

“None of woman born shall harm Macbeth”

Who lives who is not born of woman? He need fear nobody! Even better news followed.

“Macbeth shall never vanquished be until
Great Birnam wood to high Dunsinane hill
Shall come against him”

That could never happen! How could a forest move? He was safe! Safe!
Oh, how the witches’ words soothed his troubled mind.

9. Who do the witches warn Macbeth to beware of?

10. Tick two reasons the witches give which make Macbeth believe he is safe.

Use evidence from the text to justify your answers

None of woman born shall harm Macbeth

Macbeth is the strongest and bravest soldier

Macduff has died

Macbeth won't stop being king until Great Birnam Wood comes to Dunsinane Hill

11. Why did the 'witches words soothe his troubled mind'?

12. Put these events in order of how they happened

Macbeth was thinking about the battle

Macbeth couldn't sleep

Macbeth thought he was safe as king

Macbeth visited the witches

answers
READING COMPREHENSION
ACT 4
YEAR 3 AND 4

1. Who lay awake in the 'depths of the night'?

Banquo

2. What was he thinking about?

The Battle

3. What is 'Viking Hell'?

A big, feather bed on which you could always lie down, but never sleep.

4. Why do you think Macbeth was thinking about this 'Viking Hell'?

Because he can't sleep even though he's so tired

5. When Macbeth was lying, unable to sleep would things could he see? Give three examples from the text:

Ghosts, bodies and witches

6. Who did Macbeth go to see to try and get answers?

The witches/weird sisters

7. Complete the missing words below

Double, double, toil and **trouble**

Fire **burn** and cauldron **bubble**

8. The eldest of the witches held her hands to the air

“By the pricking of my thumbs, something wicked this way comes!”

B. Who is coming their way?

Macbeth

9. Who do the witches warn Macbeth to beware of?

Macduff

10. Tick two reasons the witches give which make Macbeth believe he is safe.

Use evidence from the text to justify your answers

None of woman born shall harm Macbeth

Macbeth won't stop being king until Great Birnam Wood comes to Dunsinane Hill

11. Why did the ‘witches words soothe his troubled mind’?

Because neither of these things were possible. Everyone has to be born from a woman and forests can't move

12. Put these events in order of how they happened

Macbeth was thinking about the battle	2
Macbeth couldn't sleep	1
Macbeth thought he was safe as king	4
Macbeth visited the witches	3