

MACBETH

READING COMPREHENSION

ACT 5

YEAR 3 AND 4

The doctor shivered. The fire was burning low and night had long since sucked the last of the day's warmth from the castle's stones. How much longer must they wait? His legs ached and he longed for his bed. Surely he could attend his patient in the morning? But the maid had been most insistent - rudely so - that he must stay and watch. Well, he'd had enough. He stood, stretched and made as if to leave. Suddenly, she seized his arm.

"Lo you, here she comes! And, upon my life, fast asleep.
Observe her; stand close."

She dragged him to the side of the corridor where they could both better watch the haunted figure slowly pacing towards them. They held their breath as the mistress of the castle passed by, seemingly unaware of their presence. "Her eyes are open!" whispered the doctor.

"Ay, but their sense is shut."

1. *'The doctor shivered. The fire was burning low and night had long since sucked the last of the day's warmth from the castle's stones'.*

The doctor is cold. Tick one box

TRUE FALSE

Tick the antonym for cold

Freezing Hot Icy Fresh

2. Who did the maid want the doctor to see?

Macbeth Lady Macbeth Her mother Her daughter

3. What adjective is used to describe the 'figure' who walks towards them?
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Earlier, the maid had described how she had seen Lady Macbeth for some time now, rise each night from her bed and perform a series of mysterious actions - all whilst asleep. He hadn't believed her then, but now he had no choice. "What is it she does now?" he asked. "Look, how she rubs her hands!" "It is an accustomed action with her" replied the maid, "to seem thus washing her hands: I have known her continue in this a quarter of an hour."

They watched as their mistress bent over her hands, peering at them, searching desperately, then stopping when she seemed to find what she was looking for.

"Yet here's a spot. Out, damned spot! out, I say!"

Her voice was full of such torment, cracked and sad as an abandoned child, that both doctor and maid found their own hands rise instinctively to their hearts in sympathy. They watched as the piteous figure scrubbed frantically at the stain she seemed to see. What could that spot be? What they heard next made the very marrow of their bones freeze.

4. What did the maid say she had seen Lady Macbeth do 'for some time now'. Write down two things

i _____

ii _____

5. Tick two boxes.

Lady Macbeth is....

Washing her hands

Arguing

Sleepwalking

Killing somebody

6. Why did the maid and the doctor feel so sorry for Lady Macbeth. Use evidence from the text to justify your answer

**"One: two: why, then, 'tis time to do't. - Hell is murky!
Yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him?"**

And at that word, 'blood', she set to scrubbing again... The doctor turned to the maid, whispering urgently "Go to, go to; you have known what you should not."
"She has spoke what she should not!" came the maid's sharp rejoinder.
There was more...

"Banquo's buried! He cannot come out on's grave!"

The doctor looked at his patient in horror. Flames danced in her staring eyes. Though reason told him this was just a reflection, he could not help but wonder if she was already burning in hell.

There was no medicine for this, he knew. He could cure the body.... but the soul?
What remedy could he offer to one who, though still living, was already in eternal torment?

7. What 'stain' do you think Lady Macbeth can see on her hands. Explain your answer.

**8. "One: two: why, then, 'tis time to do't. - Hell is murky!
Yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him?"**

Who is the 'old man' that Lady Macbeth is talking about here? Tick one answer

King Duncan

Macbeth

Banquo

The doctor

9. 'There was more...

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A. Why does the doctor look at Lady Macbeth in horror?

B. Why does the doctor think there is not medicine to help Lady Macbeth?

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ANSWERS

1. *'The doctor shivered. The fire was burning low and night had long since sucked the last of the day's warmth from the castle's stones'.*

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2. Who did the maid want the doctor to see?

Macbeth **Lady Macbeth** Her mother Her daughter

3. What adjective is used to describe the 'figure' who walks towards them?

haunted

4. What did the maid say she had seen Lady Macbeth do 'for some time now'. Write down two things

i. rise each night from her bed

ii. perform mysterious tasks

5. Tick two boxes.

Lady Macbeth is....

Washing her hands Arguing
Sleepwalking Killing somebody

6. Why did the maid and the doctor feel so sorry for Lady Macbeth. Use evidence from the text to justify your answer

She seemed so sad and lost, like a small child;
“Her voice was full of such torment, cracked and sad as an abandoned child”

7. What ‘stain’ do you think Lady Macbeth can see on her hands. Explain your answer.

Blood. Because she is feeling guilty about all the murders she has helped commit.

8. *“One: two: why, then, 'tis time to do't. - Hell is murky!
Yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him?”*

Who is the ‘old man’ that Lady Macbeth is talking about here? Tick one answer

King Duncan

9. *‘There was more...*

“Banquo’s buried! He cannot come out on’s grave!”

The doctor looked at his patient in horror. Flames danced in her staring eyes. Though reason told him this was just a reflection, he could not help but wonder if she was already burning in hell.

There was no medicine for this, he knew. He could cure the body... but the soul?

- C. Why does the doctor look at Lady Macbeth in horror?

Because she’s just said she helped to kill Banquo

- D. Why does the doctor think there is not medicine to help Lady Macbeth?

Although he might be able to help make her body better she has done too many bad things for him to make her mind/person better.