

William Shakespeare
Macbeth
Act 1 Scene 4

Worksheet by:
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1. Why was the Thane of Cawdor executed? (2)
2. "He was a gentleman on whom I built an absolute trust."
 - Duncan says this of the deposed Thane of Cawdor. The king appears to believe precisely the same of the new Thane of Cawdor, namely Macbeth. Explain the irony of this. (4)
3. "I have begun to plant thee, and will labour to make thee full of growing."
 - Comment on the irony of Duncan's promise to Macbeth. (4)
4. "Sons, kinsmen, thanes . . . know,
We will establish our estate upon
Our eldest, Malcolm."
 - What is the problem with this decision? (2)
 - Why does Macbeth in particular view this decision with shock? Why does he leave the king's company so hurriedly? (4)
5. What does Macbeth mean when he says, "I'll make myself the harbinger"? (2)
6. Duncan has been described as "gracious, magnanimous and sweet-natured".
 - Is this a valid description of the king? Explain. (10)
7. "Our duties are to your throne and state, children and servants; which do but what they should, by doing everything safe toward your love and honour"
 - Comment on the irony of Macbeth's words. (4)

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