**Macbeth Socratic Seminar 2018**

1. Was Macbeth Killing Duncan for himself, or for his wife?
2. Jack from *Lord of the Flies* and Macbeth were both obsessed with power, why? What similarities/differences do we see in their characters? What other connections do you see between the texts?
3. Does power corrupt everyone, or does it depend on the person?
4. Why was there a third murderer? What does this add to the play?
5. Discuss how the film versions interprets the themes of *Macbeth*. What is the effect of the setting choice, time-period, characters?
6. Discuss the role of the witches in the film versions. What is the significance of the witches acting as nurses in the Patrick Stewart version?
7. How do you think the story would have been different if Macbeth had a son (or any child)?
8. Do you believe that deep down, Macbeth actually cared about his wife’s death?
9. How would the plot be different if Lady Macbeth behaved like the “typical house-wife” and acted in more traditional gender roles?
10. What gender stereotypes does Shakespeare reinforce or go against in *Macbeth*?
11. Did Lady Macbeth take on more than she could handle? Why? Explain with examples from the text?
12. What was Macbeth’s breaking point? Give examples.
13. Is ambition Macbeth’s tragic flaw? Or is it something else?
14. Did Macbeth kill out of free will, or fate? Why? What evidence do we have of this?
15. Do you think the witches indirectness is better? Or should they be more direct? Why are they not direct in their statements to Macbeth?
16. What if Macbeth and Lady Macbeth swapped their roles? Do you think Macbeth would have felt the same amount of guilt? Would things have ended up the same way if Lady Macbeth had been in charge?
17. What motivates Lady Macbeth to encourage her husband to murder? Do you think she wanted Macbeth to kill Duncan so he could be king, or so she could be queen? Was she just looking out for herself, or was it an example of love for her husband?
18. Was Macduff a traitor to his family for leaving them like he did?
19. Why does Fleance not come back? What is Shakespeare’s reason for doing this?
20. Would Macbeth have pursued the throne without hearing the prophesies? What evidence do we have of his character that demonstrates this?
21. Did the witches want Macbeth to die all along, knowing he’d listen to them?
22. Why did Shakespeare kill Lady Macbeth before Macbeth? What is the effect of this choice?
23. Why did Old Siward care more about how his son died than his actual death? What is Shakespeare’s point about war or honor throughout the play?
24. Would Macbeth be a good leader today?
25. Does Macbeth feel guilt thoughout the play? Or is it another emotion that seems to plague him with a “mind full of scorpions”?
26. Why does Shakespeare not directly tell us how Lady Macbeth died (other than when it is implied in Malcolm’s final speech)? How is this choice significant to the overall story? Is it significant that her death takes place off stage rather than on stage?
27. Why does Shakespeare choose to have so many gory deaths in the story? What is he saying about violence or war?
28. What is the significance of this play taking place in a time of war? Would Macbeth have gained power if it were not in a time of war? Explain.
29. Was Macbeth born evil? Or does he become it? What about Lady Macbeth?
30. What is “good” in Macbeth? In Lady Macbeth?
31. Are there any truly “good” characters in the play?
32. By the end of the play, is Macbeth more self-destructive, or unempathetic?
33. How big of an influence do you think the witches had in all of *Macbeth*?
34. Will Malcom be a good king? What evidence do we have of this?
35. What would Machiavelli say about Macbeth’s choices throughout the play? What of his choices would he agree with, and what (if anything) would he say is too far?

**Discussion Rubric—**

Score yourself and your contributions to today’s discussion.

**Circle number that corresponds most accurately with today’s experience.**

1. How many comments did you make in today’s discussion?

**1 (none) 2 (one comment) 3 (two comments) 4 (3 + comments)**

1. How would you rate the quality of your comments,1 being “terrible” (the lowest) and 4 being ”awesome and insightful” (the highest).

**1 (terrible) 2 (ok…not great, but I tried) 3 (good!) 4 (I am a discussion wizard)**

1. Did you use specific examples to prove your points? Both in comments and in reference to others’ comments.

**1** **(no) 2 (a few times) 3 (sometimes) 4 (So much!)**

1. Did you abide by all the Socratic Seminar Rules?

**1 (no) 2 (I tried) 3 (yes, with a few lapses) 4 (I rocked this)**

**Final Total \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_/16**

**Reflection Questions (You must Complete all of these!) \_\_\_\_\_\_/4**

1. **What was the most interesting/thought provoking thing that you contributed to the discussion (or, if you struggled to participate, what do you wish you would have added?**
2. **What was the most interesting/thought provoking thing said by someone else during the discussion? What was interesting about their comment?**
3. **In the space below, write a short reflection on the activity. What points did this discussion clarify? Did it change your mind on anything? What did you do well in discussion? What can you improve on in further discussion?**