
KÖNIGS ERLÄUTERUNGEN

Band 117

William Shakespeare, **MACBETH**

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PRÜFUNGSAUFGABEN MIT MUSTERLÖSUNGEN

In Ergänzung zu den Aufgaben im Buch (Kapitel 6) finden Sie hier zwei weitere Aufgaben mit Musterlösungen. Die Zahl der Sternchen bezeichnet das Anforderungsniveau der jeweiligen Aufgabe.

task 5 **

'Lady Macbeth – a dominant and controlling wife is to blame for the tragic outcome of the play.'
Discuss the statement.

Model answer

EVIL POWER
AND STRENGTH

Lady Macbeth is only partly to blame for the tragic outcome of the play. It is her longing for the crown that makes her encourage Macbeth to carry out the murder of the king. She prays for evil power and strength and appears as a dominant wife who controls her husband because she knows his human weakness which may prevent the deed.

Without her encouragement, Macbeth would not have killed Duncan at his own house, but once carried out the deed, Macbeth is a despot who does not need his wife's support anymore. He rules suspecting everyone around him and thus, Lady Macbeth is not involved in his plans anymore. She even doesn't know about the murder of Banquo. So on the hand, she encourages the murder of Duncan while he is a guest at their castle and she represents the dangers of a violation of order that go with a reversal of roles. Thus, she has the dramatic function to generate the plot and the ideological background to the play.

SHE HAS
LOST POWER
TO CONTROL
MACBETH.

But on the other hand, she is not to blame for the tragic outcome of the play because after Macbeth has been crowned and rules fully as a despot, she is disturbed in her mind. She is a woman, still, and has lost power to control her husband because once Macbeth has committed the murder he does not need her support anymore. She walks in her sleep and speaks her part in the crimes she has committed so that the order is restored.

task 6 *

Analyse the monologue and explain why and to what effect Macbeth speaks those words aside.
(Text: Aside: Act 1, scene 3, ll. 130–141)

Model answer

UNCONTROLLED
DESIRES

The aside presents Macbeth's reaction to the new title Thane of Cawdor. It shows to the audience how his ambition overwhelms his conscience; uncontrolled desires for power can easily shake an honourable and conscious character like Macbeth.

MACBETH
CANNOT RESIST
THE TEMPTATION.

He reflects on the outcome of the predictions and cannot decide if they are good or bad. However, he feels tempted to the killing of the honourable king and kinsman but at the same time, he knows that it would be a hellish deed against the order (l. 135), "Against the use of nature" (l. 137). His whole microcosm is shaken: "Shakes so my single state of man" (l. 140). He feels disordered and this is what has a dramatic impact on the audience: Macbeth knows what he is doing, he is fully aware of the evil he is about to commit but he cannot resist the temptation.