*Macbeth* 2.1-2.3 Literature Circles

**Directions:** Get into groups of three. Assign parts and read through the assigned scenes using No Fear Shakespeare (and bookmark this page for the future). Read the ORIGINAL text, but pick one person who can translate when you get confused. Try to work through the meaning on your own before turning to No Fear. Answer the guided reading questions AS you read.

**2.1 Roles:**

* **Banquo**
* **Fleance**
* **Macbeth**

**2.2 Roles:**

* **Macbeth**
* **Lady Macbeth**

**2.3 Roles (double or triple up):**

* **Porter (first half only)**
* **Macduff (whole scene)**
* **Lennox (first half only)**
* **Lady Macbeth (second half only)**
* **Banquo (second half only)**
* **Macbeth (second half only)**
* **Donalbain (second half only)**
* **Malcolm (second half only)**

**Act II, scene i**

1. What is significant about the weather?

2. What do you suppose is keeping Banquo from sleeping?

3. What is significant about Macbeth’s saying, *I think not of them*, after Banquo had admitted to dreaming about the Weird Sisters?

4. In his soliloquy after Banquo leaves, what does Macbeth tell us he sees? What could account for this apparition?

5. Why does Shakespeare have Macbeth hallucinate?

**Act II, scene ii**

1. Compare Macbeth’s and Lady Macbeth’s reactions immediately after the crime.

2. Why does Lady Macbeth not commit the murder when she is in the room?

3. Macbeth’s response *Macbeth shall sleep no more* is frequently quoted. What is the meaning of this response?

4. How does Lady Macbeth get Duncan’s blood on her hands?

**Act II, scene iii**

1. The Porter’s scene, or the “knocking at the gate,” is a much debated scene by scholars, but many agree it is the typical comic relief scene seen in Shakespeare’s plays. What do you suppose the dramatic purpose of a comic relief scene is? Why is the Porter’s soliloquy in prose rather than poetry?

2. Who is the one who points out the inappropriateness of Lady Macbeth’s initial response to the murder?

3. What double meaning might Shakespeare have intended for Macbeth’s line, *He does: he did appoint so,* in response to Lennox’s asking, *Goes the King hence today?*