

Lady Macbeth and how to get what you want

Task 1: Put the events of 'Macbeth' in the correct order.

- a. Macbeth is shaken after the meeting with the witches. The King of Scotland, Duncan, congratulates Macbeth on his bravery at war and asks if he can come to stay the night at Macbeth's castle. Macbeth writes to his wife to tell her that the King will be visiting them that evening. He also tells her of the witches he has met and what they have told him.
- b. Finally, Lady Macbeth kills herself and Macbeth is killed in battle. The new King of Scotland, Malcolm, promises that he will rule Scotland kindly and well.
- c. Becoming king does not make Macbeth feel secure. He remembers the witches' prophecy and starts worrying that Banquo's children will become king and knock him off the throne. He hires an assassin to kill his friend Banquo.
- d. Macbeth kills more and more people to make sure that he stays king. He also starts to see things which aren't there, for example the ghost of his friend Banquo. Meanwhile, Lady Macbeth can't stop thinking about the terrible murder and her part in it.
- e. On the way home from battle a soldier called Macbeth and his friend, Banquo meet three witches. The witches tell Macbeth that one day he will be King of Scotland and that Banquo's children will one day also be kings.
- f. When Macbeth gets home, his wife, Lady Macbeth, is very excited. She really wants Macbeth to become king. She persuades her husband to kill King Duncan when he comes to stay at their castle. Macbeth and Lady Macbeth murder King Duncan and make it look as if the King was killed by his two servants. Macbeth kills the servants and becomes king.

Task 2A: Read some of the things that Lady Macbeth says in Act 1, Scene 7. Try to guess what they mean then match them with the modern translations.

1. He has almost supp'd: why have you left the chamber?
2. Art thou afeard to be the same in thine own act and valor as thou art in desire?
3. When you durst do it then you were a man.
4. But screw your courage to the sticking-place, and we'll not fail.
5. When Duncan is asleep, his two chamberlains will I with wine and wassail so convince that memory, the warder of the brain shall be a fume.

Task 2B: Match sentences 1-5 in Task 2A with their modern translations below.

- a. Are you too scared to go and get what you really want?
- b. When Duncan is asleep, I'll get his two servants so drunk that they won't remember a thing.
- c. He's almost finished eating. Why have you left the room?
- d. When you dared to do it, you were a man.
- e. Get a hold on your courage, and we won't fail.

Task 4: Lady Macbeth uses different techniques to persuade Macbeth. Look at the techniques she uses and add some examples.

Technique	Example from Act 1, Scene 7 (modern translation)	Your example
Flattery	When you dared to do it, you were a man. And if you do this, you will be even more of a man.	
Reassurance	Get a hold on your courage, and we won't fail.	
Putting someone down	Will you love as a coward in your own mind, always saying 'I can't' after you say 'I want to', like the poor old cat in the story?	
Emphasising determination	I have fed a baby and know how sweet it is to love a baby. But I would take the baby from my breast and dash its brains out, if I had sworn to do it in the same way that you have sworn to do this.	

Task 5: Your teacher will give you a role play card. Don't show it to your partner!

- Read your role card. What do you need to persuade your partner to do?
- How can you persuade your partner? Prepare what you will say to your partner. Use some of the persuasive techniques from Task 4.
- Role play the situation with your partner.
- Watch some other role plays. Which persuasive techniques do students use?