

Macbeth Prereading Questions

Overview: These questions are designed to provoke thought, specifically thought about the issues raised by Shakespeare's play. There are no standard "right answers," though there are certainly thoughtful or thoughtless ones.

Please consider all questions carefully. These questions are intended to make you ask yourself why you believe as you do, so in your answers for each question, please illustrate the reasoning behind your answer. In short, tell me how come you think so. Examples from personal experience, literature you have read, movies you have seen, or events in history or current events would all be very helpful as long as they are essential to illustrating why you think so.

Average expected length for each answer: Approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ of a page. Longer is generally better.

Questions:

1. Is evil inherent in human nature? That is, are some people just "born evil," or is evil caused by circumstance or environment?
2. Are women "naturally" more evil than men?
3. Are our lives determined by fate, or by the acts of our free will?
4. Is redemption truly possible? That is, is it possible to commit an act of genuine evil and truly recover from it?
5. Is it possible to admire or respect a person whom you know has committed acts of genuine evil?
6. Do "the ends justify the means"? That is, if one uses morally evil methods to acquire a goal, is that goal forever tainted or polluted by the actions one has taken to achieve it?