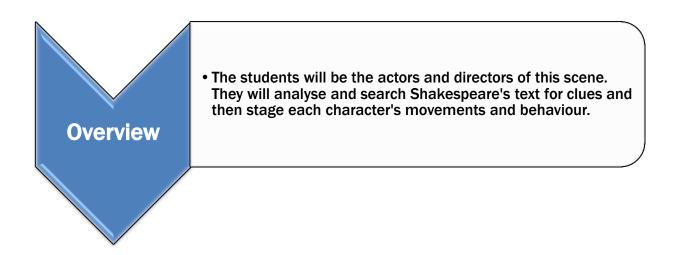
MACBETH - Lady Macbeth's Sleepwalking - Act V, Scene 1



Grade Level	Subject Area	Curriculum Expectations and Learning Outcome	Time Needed	Space	Materials
7-12	English, Drama	Develop and explain interpretations of the Shakespearean text, using evidence from the text and visual cues to support their interpretations;	^a 1-2 class Periods	Desks in groups, then open spaces for exploring the text	Attached handouts of Activities

Macbeth - Lady Macbeth's Sleepwalking - Act V Scene I

Activity:

Lady Macbeth's guilt of the murders of Duncan, his two guards and Banquo starts to undermine her emotion stability, leading her to sleepwalk and imagine there is blood on her hands that she cannot wash away. Her physician and gentlewoman are observing her.

You are the actors/directors of this scene. Read the entire scene first then work out how you envision each character would behave and respond physically and emotionally. <u>Hint:</u> The staging clues are in the text! ©

A room in Dunsinane Castle

Enter a Doctor of Physic (medicine) and a Waiting-Gentlewoman (personal attendant)

DOCTOR

I have two nights <u>watched</u> with you, but can perceive no truth in your report. When was it she last <u>walked</u>?

GENTLEWOMAN

Since <u>his majesty¹</u> <u>went into the field</u>², I have seen her rise from her bed, throw her night-gown upon her, unlock her <u>closet</u>, take forth paper, fold it, write upon't, read it, afterwards <u>seal</u> it, and again return to bed; yet all this while in a most fast sleep.

DOCTOR

A great <u>perturbation</u> in nature, to receive at once the benefit of sleep, and do the <u>effects</u> of watching. In this <u>slumbery agitation</u>, besides her walking and other <u>actual</u> performances, what at any time have you heard her say?

GENTLEWOMAN

That, sir, which I will not report after her.

remained awake sleepwalked

1. Macbeth 2. went to the battlefield

chest/cabinet personal stamp in hot wax on a letter

disturbance appearances and actions of waking sleepwalking/disturbed state of mind active

DOCTOR

You may to me: and 'tis most meet you should.

GENTLEWOMAN

Neither to you nor any one, having no witness to confirm my speech.

Enter LADY MACBETH, with a taper (candle)

Lo you, here she comes. This is her very guise and, upon my life, fast asleep. Observe her; stand close.

DOCTOR

How came she by that light?

GENTLEWOMAN

Why, it stood by her. She has light by her continually, 'tis her command.

DOCTOR

You see, her eyes are open.

GENTLEWOMAN

Ay, but their sense is shut.

DOCTOR What is it she does now? Look, how she rubs her hands.

GENTLEWOMAN

It is an accustomed action with her, to seem thus washing her hands; I have known her continue in this a quarter of an hour.

LADY MACBETH

Yet here's a spot.

DOCTOR

Hark, she speaks; I will set down what comes from her, to satisfy¹ my remembrance² the more strongly.

LADY MACBETH

Out, damned spot! Out, I say!-One, two. Why, then, 'tis time to do't.-Hell is murky!-Fie, my lord, fie, a soldier, and afeard? What need we fear who knows it, when none can call our power to account?-Yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him?

suitable

she is unwilling to say as this would be treason

custom/manner concealed

appear to be

write 1. confirm 2. memory

she imagines the striking of a clock dark

Duncan's murder is not known/ no one can hold us responsible

DOCTOR Do you mark that?		
LADY MACBETH The <u>Thane of Fife</u> had a wife. Where is she now?– What, will these hands ne'er be clean?–No more o'	Macduff	
that, my lord, no more o' that. <u>You mar all with</u> <u>this starting.</u>	your nervousness is spoiling everything	
DOCTOR <u>Go to</u> , go to; you have known what you should not.	come, come (a chastisement)	
GENTLEWOMAN She has spoke what she should not, I am sure of that. Heaven knows what she has known.		
LADY MACBETH Here's the smell of the blood still; all the <u>perfumes of Arabia</u> will not sweeten this little hand. 0, 0, 0.	spices	
DOCTOR What a sigh is there! The heart is <u>sorely charged</u> .	heavily burdened	
GENTLEWOMAN I would not have such a heart in my bosom for <u>the</u> <u>dignity of the whole body.</u>	the sake of life itself/ worth	
DOCTOR Well, well, well,–		
GENTLEWOMAN Pray God it be, sir.		
DOCTOR This disease is beyond my <u>practice;</u> yet I have known those which have walked in their sleep who have died holily in their beds.	professional medical skill	
LADY MACBETH Wash your hands, put on your night-gown, look not so pale.–I tell you yet again, Banquo's buried; he cannot come out <u>on's</u> grave.	on his	
DOCTOR Even so?	Is that how it is?	

LADY MACBETH

To bed, to bed! there's knocking at the gate. Come, come, come, come, give me your hand; what's done cannot be undone.To bed, to bed, to bed.

Exit

DOCTOR

Will she go now to bed?

GENTLEWOMAN

Directly.

DOCTOR

<u>Foul whisperings are abroad;</u> unnatural deeds Do breed unnatural troubles; infected minds To their deaf pillows will discharge their secrets. More needs she the <u>divine</u> than the physician. God, God forgive us all. Look after her; Remove from her the means of all <u>annoyance</u>, And <u>still</u> keep eyes upon her. So, good night: My mind she has <u>mated</u>, and amazed my sight. I think, but dare not speak.

GENTLEWOMAN

Good night, good doctor.

immediately

terrible rumours are circulating

priest

injury/self-harm always confused

Exeunt

Things to Think About

- 1. What are the most important lines in this scene?
- 2. What does Lady Macbeth's fragmented language signify?
- 3. The hands play an important role in this scene both physically and psychologically. What staging techniques might you use to highlight this in the scene?
- 4. Compare Lady Macbeth's profound changes from the start of the play to this point.

