

## **LADY MACBETH: WHY IS SHE SO SUCCESSFUL IN GETTING HER WAY?**

**AGES:** High School

### **DESCRIPTION**

Why do all actresses want to "be" Lady Macbeth? Who is she really? A witch? a flirt? An insecure wife of a successful man? An ambitious opportunist? Or all of the above?

### **MATERIALS**

1. Text of the play
2. A bit of classroom space
3. Risk-taking students

### **FULL LESSON PLAN**

#### **Purpose:**

To gain insight into Lady Macbeth and Macbeth's early relationship

#### **Method:**

1. Depending on size of class, divide class into 2 or 4 groups.
2. Have each group paraphrase Act 1, Scene 7 into contemporary language.
3. Assign roles or ask for volunteers to assume the following tasks:
  - Portraying Lady Macbeth
  - Portraying Macbeth
  - Directing
  - Set/ staging/props
  - Diction coach
  - Sub-text writer(s)

**Note:** each student in the group should have a responsibility.

4. Once the roles have been defined, inform the groups that they are going to be portraying this scene by stressing two very different interpretations of Lady Macbeth. One group will portray her as overtly gentle but flirtatious; the other group will portray her as domineering and controlling. Do NOT announce this to the entire class.

5. Provide about 20 minutes for the groups to practice. Time will vary according to class length.
6. The first group then presents their skit to the entire class.
7. Students not in the group presenting should compose 3 questions as they view the other presentation. These questions can be asked in “talk-back sessions which can be held immediately after the presentation. At least one question should focus on Macbeth’s response to Lady Macbeth in this scene.
8. Once a group has finished, the next group should present its version of the scene to the class.
9. Following a “question and answer period” held after the presentations, all students should return to re-examine the original text and answer the following questions (s): Having studied the entire play, which version of Lady Macbeth, do you believe, seems to be truer to Shakespeare’s text? Why do both the manipulative and flirtatious Lady Macbeth both “work”? Use textual references to support which you claim.
10. Homework: Finish reading Act 1. .