*Macbeth* – Act 4 – Important Concepts

**Act 4, scene 1**

1. How is Macbeth treating the witches in this scene? Provide specific examples. What does this show us about his character?
2. In 4.1.83, Macbeth says he’ll “make assurance double sure.” What does he mean by this? How does he plan to do this?
3. Macbeth asks the witches, “shall Banquo’s issue ever / Reign in this kingdom?” (4.1.102-103). What do the witches show him as a response? What does this indicate?
4. Should Macbeth trust the apparitions the witches show him? Why or why not?
5. What does Macbeth plan to do at the end of this scene?
6. Analyze the following quotation. In your own words, what does it mean? Why is this significant to Macbeth’s character development? What themes does it reflect and how?

from this moment

The very firstlings of my heart shall be

The firstlings of my hand. And even now,

To crown my thoughts with acts, be it thought and done:

The castle of Macduff I will surprise;

Seize upon Fife; give to the edge of the sword

His wife, his babes, and all unfortunate souls

That trace him in his line (4.1.146-153)

**Act 4, scene 3**

1. Malcolm tests Macduff by telling him all the things that will make him a bad king. How does Macduff respond? What does this indicate to us about Macduff’s character? What does this indicate to us about Malcolm’s character?
2. In 4.3.125-132 Malcolm tells Macduff what his true qualities are. List 3 of the qualities he gives and explain why this would make him a good king.
3. How does Macduff respond to the news that his family has been killed?
4. After Macduff finds out about the death of his family, Malcolm tells him to “Dispute it like a man” (4.3.219). What does Macduff say in response? How is this a different view of manliness than we have seen so far in the play?