

Yr. 11 LITERATURE Shakespeare: Macbeth

Read the following extract from Act 1 Scene 7 and answer the questions that follow.

At this point in the play, Macbeth and Lady Macbeth are considering whether to kill Duncan.

LADY MACBETH

What beast was't, then,
That made you break this enterprise to me?
When you durst do it, then you were a man;
And, to be more than what you were, you would
Be so much more the man. Nor time nor place
Did then adhere, and yet you would make both:
They have made themselves, and that their fitness
now
Does unmake you. I have given suck, and know
How tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me:
I would, while it was smiling in my face,
Have pluck'd my nipple from his boneless gums,
And dash'd the brains out, had I so sworn as you
Have done to this.

MACBETH

If we should fail?

LADY MACBETH

We fail!
But screw your courage to the sticking-place,
And we'll not fail

(a) Explore how Shakespeare presents the character of Lady Macbeth as a powerful woman in this extract.

Refer closely to the extract in your answer.

(b) In this extract, Lady Macbeth has been shown as a powerful woman.

Explore the portrayal of women elsewhere in the play.

In your answer you must consider:

- how women are presented
- the importance of women in the plot of the play.

You should refer to the context of the play in your answer.