

Banquo – Exam Approach (Question (b) 40 minutes recommended)

Write about Banquo and the way he is presented in Macbeth. [25]

- 1) **Who is Banquo? What is our initial impression of him?**
- 2) **Duncan: ‘Worthy gentleman!’ ‘Noble, Banquo’** – What do these comments from the king show?
- 3) **‘The earth has bubbles...and these are of them.’** – How Banquo react to the witches?
- 4) **‘To win us to our harm, the instruments of darkness tell us truths, win us with honest trifles, to betray us in deepest consequence.’** – Why is Banquo fearful of the witches? How does this differ to Macbeth’s reaction?
- 5) **‘Look how our partner’s rapt.’** – What is Banquo the first to notice about Macbeth?
- 6) **‘At your kind’st leisure.’** – How does Banquo react to Macbeth’s request to speak about the witches?
- 7) **‘But still keep my bosom franchised and allegiance clear.’** – Why does Banquo say this to Macbeth? What does it show?
- 8) **(aside) ‘I fear thou played’st most foully for ‘t... But hush, no more.’** – When Banquo says this to the audience, what does this prove?
- 9) **‘May they not be my oracles as well? But hush, no more.’** – What does this quote show? How is Banquo different than Macbeth in terms of the witches?
- 10) **Why does Macbeth order the murder of Banquo and his son, Fleance? What does this reveal about Macbeth?**
- 11) **‘Your highness’ ‘My lord’** – How does Banquo speak to Macbeth? What does this show?
- 12) **Macbeth: ‘Quit my sight!’ ‘Let the earth hide thee!’** – Why does Shakespeare include Banquo’s ghost at the Macbeth’s banquet?

Overall, what does Banquo represent and symbolise? (moral compass, fatal flaw = too trustworthy, kind)

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