**Act IV**

**Scene i**

**Big Ideas**

1. **The witches prepare their “charm” for Macbeth.**
2. **“Secret, black, and midnight hags!” Macbeth knows they are not wholesome. Demands they tell him what they know.**
3. **Witches offer their “masters”; Macbeth accepts.**
4. **Three apparitions:**
	1. **An armed Head/”beware Macduff” (Why just a head?)**
	2. **A bloody child/”none of woman born shall harm Macbeth” (Isn’t everyone born of woman?) (Who is the child?) (What is the significance of the bloody child?)**
	3. **A child crowned, with a tree in his hand/”Macbeth shall never vanquish’d be until Great Birnam Wood to high Dunsinane Hill shall come against him” (Who is the child?) (Why is he holding a branch?)**
5. **Macbeth believes he understands these visions and has gained security with this knowledge.**
6. **The final show – the line of kings who resemble Banquo – upsets him.**
7. **Lennox brings news that Macduff has fled to England. Macbeth has resolved to be impulsive and fast-acting; he intends to attack Macduff’s castle, killing everyone in it.**

**Scene ii**

1. **At Macduff’s castle, Lady Macduff and Ross discuss Macduff’s leaving. L Macduff feels it was wrong of him, while Ross counsels her to remember how noble her husband is and how the country is suffering.**
2. **Lady Macduff and her young son have a playful exchange about his father leaving. Dramatic irony – we (audience) know that they are about to die.**
3. **Messenger arrives, warns her to flee, but it is too late. Macbeth’s murderers attack and kill all in the castle. Shows how depraved and blood-thirsty Macbeth has become – slaughtering innocent people for no reason.**

**Scene iii**

1. **England, near King Edward’s castle. Malcolm and Macduff meet.**
2. **Discuss the terrible state of Scotland. Dramatic irony – “,,,he hath not touch’d you yet.”**
3. **Malcolm is suspicious of Macduff. Infer that Macbeth has already tried tricks to have him return to Scotland. Does not know who is trustworthy.**
4. **Macduff is frustrated; he has pinned his hopes on Malcolm returning to Scotland to help overthrow Macbeth and take the crown which is rightfully his.**
5. **Malcolm begins to “test” Macduff by describing how much more terrible than Macbeth he would be should he become king. (Want all the women, all the land of the nobles, money, live a depraved and sinful life)**
6. **Macduff tries to promise that Malcolm can have what he wants, but Malcolm’s final “promise” of being a wicked king undoes him. He feels there is no hope for Scotland and he can never return.**
7. **Malcolm then is reassured that Macduff is honorable and honest and that they are on the same side, and states his virtues and that he is even now prepared to march against Macbeth.**
8. **A doctor enters, discusses the virtues of England’s King Edward. Presents a sharp contrast to Scotland’s Macbeth.**
9. **Ross arrives with news of the slaughter of Macduff’s family. Malcolm urges Macduff to turn his grief into anger. Macduff vows to be the one to face Macbeth.**