

My Hands are of Your Colour (W. Shakespeare)

Macbeth, Act II, Scene II

Re-enter Lady Macbeth.

- Lady Macbeth My hands are of your colour; but I shame
To wear a heart so white. [*Knock*] I hear a knocking
At the south entry: – retire we to our chamber.
A little water clears us of this deed:
5 How easy is it then! Your constancy
Hath left you unattended. – [*Knock*] Hark! more knocking.
Get on your night-gown, lest occasion call us,
And show us be watchers. – Be not lost
So poorly in your thoughts.
10 Macbeth To know my deed, 'twere best not know myself.
[*Knock*]
Wake Duncan with thy knocking: I would thou couldst!
Exeunt.



Image: [Pixabay](https://pixabay.com/)

(Text: Spiazzi, Tavella, Layton (2012). *Performer. Culture and Literature 1*. Zanichelli)

ACTIVITIES

1. Find the following words. What do you think they mean? Use a dictionary when necessary.
 - a. Shame
 - b. Chamber
 - c. Deed
 - d. Unattended
 - e. Night-gown
2. Underline the stage directions in this text. What are they used for? How are they signaled?
3. In which situations are stage directions useful?
4. Find information about this play. Describe the main characters and summarise the plot.
5. Read this dialogue and complete the stage directions.

Emma: It's cold in here, isn't it? [...] Much better now!

Ted: [...]

Emma: [...] If you agree, you can use words, not just move your head!

Ted: [...]

Emma: [...] So you're going to communicate using your shoulders now?

Ted: [...]

Emma: I don't think that's funny at all! I'm off! [...]

KEY

ACTIVITIES

1. Find the following words. What do you think they mean? Use a dictionary when necessary.

- a. Shame
- b. Chamber
- c. Deed
- d. Unattended
- e. Night-gown

2. Underline the stage directions in this text. What are they used for? How are they signaled?

Stage directions: *Re-enter Lady Macbeth; Knock; Exeunt*

They are used to explain actions or events that are not conveyed in the dialogue. They are included in italics, and in square brackets when they are in the middle of a sentence.

3. In which situations are stage directions useful?

They are useful for actors who are going to perform a play, for the directors and the backstage crew, and also for the people who read a play instead of seeing it in the theatre.

4. Find information about this play. Describe the main characters and summarize the plot.

Students' own answers.

5. Read this dialogue and complete the stage directions.

Example:

Emma: It's cold in here, isn't it? [*Closes window*] Much better now!

Ted: [*Nods*]

Emma: [*Crossed*] If you agree, you can use words, not just move your head!

Ted: [*Shrugs*]

Emma: [*Speaks angrily*] So you're going to communicate using your shoulders now?

Ted: [*Giggles*]

Emma: I don't think that's funny at all! I'm off! [*Bangs the door*]



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