Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

**“Power really DOES go to your head: Giving people a taste of authority can corrupt even honest members of a group” by Ellie Zolfagharifard**

* Scientists in Switzerland asked volunteers to play the 'dictator game'
* In the game, people were given complete control over deciding pay
* They had choice of awarding less to group but more to themselves
* People rated as less honest at first exhibited more corrupt behaviour
* But, over time, those who scored high on honesty also behaved badly

01Historian Baron John Acton famously declared that 'power tends to corrupt and 02absolute power corrupts absolutely.'

03Now, more than a century after Acton's accusation, scientists have shown that even 04the most noble lose sight of their values when handed the right to govern.

05A series of experiments found that once honest people had tasted power, they 06couldn't resist rewarding themselves at the expense of others.

07After undergoing psychological testing to measure individual differences, including 08honesty, the volunteers played the 'dictator game'.

09In the game, they were given complete control over deciding pay outs to themselves 10and their followers.

11The leaders had the choice of making pro or anti-social decisions - the latter resulting 12in awarding less money to the group but more to the leader's own earnings.

13The findings showed those rated as less honest at first exhibited more corrupt 14behaviour.

15But, over time, even those who initially scored high on honesty scales were not 16shielded from the corruptive effects of power.

17'One thing that angers me, my children and most people across the world is why do 18powerful leaders not do more good?' said Professor John Antonakis from the 19University of Lausanne, Switzerland.

20'Is it because of power? Do we really have to worry about this force? Is what Acton 21said really true?

22'Corrupt individuals exhibit moral deterioration by using their power to benefit 23themselves and, by doing so, cause harm to the greater good.

24'Powerful individuals are able to impose their decisions and preferences on weaker 25individuals.'

26In the study, the leader was given a pot of money and allowed to divide it how they 27liked. The more they took out for themselves, the less was left for their followers.

28'The results were clear. Power corrupts. When given more followers and more 29choices, the leader was more likely to make an anti social decision,' Professor 30Antonakis said.

31'In a way, power is to leaders what taste is to vampires. Once they get a taste of it, 32they cannot let go. The more followers they had, the more corrupt they became.'

33The participants were also given saliva tests which showed anti-social decisions were 34highest among those with the highest levels of testosterone, the male sex hormone.

35'What we observed was real corruption using real stakes. For instance, some 36participants walked out of the lab with about $100 (£60) in payouts,' Professor 37Antonakis said.

38'They knew if they profited they would harm the public good.'

39'We think strong governance mechanisms and strong institutions are the key to 40keeping leaders in check,' he added.

41'Organisations should limit how much leaders can drink from the seductive chalice of 42power.'

Directions: *For each of the questions, provide your answers in complete sentences. Some of the questions require you to utilize text evidence to support your answer. When this is the case, be sure to provide a quotation from the article to support your response.*

01.) Using evidence from the above article to support your response, how does this article apply directly to William Shakespeare’s character, Macbeth?

02.) According to the information found within this article, is selfishness the root of corruption? Why do you believe this is?

03.) Describe, generally, what the “dictator game” is.

04.) What happened to participants of the study who were rated as honest over a long enough timeline? Be sure to provide text evidence to support your response.

05.) Biologically, what did participants who were rated as corrupt have more of? Why is this something that should be alarming to us, as citizens?

06.) Did this experiment utilize real currency? How do you think this effected the outcome of the experiment?

07.) Reading *Macbeth* during your senior year in high school was no coincidence. What reason do you personally believe exists for you reading the play at this point in your life?

08.) Aside from this article’s obvious connections with *Macbeth*, what other reason(s) do you think there are for reading it?