**Examples of Answers**

**Extract A**

*This answer would be in the 16 – 20 mark range.*

Lady Macbeth describes Duncan’s entrance as ‘fatal’ straight after hearing he will be coming to her castle, which shows power because she is capable of making instant decisions. Lady Macbeth’s language in this extract suggests that she is calling for power from evil spirits to help give her strength to carry out the murder of Duncan. She wants to get rid of feminine side: ‘come to my woman’s breasts and take my milk for gall’. It is as if she thinks that she will only be able to carry out the act if her female side is replaced with ‘gall’ - something poisonous and evil. By using imperatives such as ‘come’ and ‘take’ Shakespeare might be showing her to be a powerful woman, capable of selling her soul to get what she wants. Later in the play she no longer appears powerful as she is overcome by guilt which makes her hallucinate.

**Extract B**

*This answer would be in the 26 – 30 mark range.*

Shakespeare clearly wants to show Lady Macbeth as a conflicted character. She is driven and ambitious and is willing to commit regicide to get what she wants. However, she also struggles with a guilty conscience and is ultimately psychologically broken by her remorse. At the start of the play she defies the contemporary fear of witchcraft and calls on evil spirits to ‘unsex me here’ and ‘take my milk for gall’. On one hand, Shakespeare’s use of imperatives highlight her strength and determination. On the other, they illustrate a desperation in the character. This need to change herself and remove the caring, maternal ‘milk’ may in fact foreshadow her inability to ‘stop up th’ access and passage to remorse’. Although Lady Macbeth may be presented as strong and a key catalyst for Duncan’s death at the start of the play, by the end she is weak and overcome by guilt. She seems to be admitting this vulnerability when she imagines seeing blood on her ‘little’ hand in Act 5, Scene 1. Ultimately, Shakespeare is presenting a character who cannot free herself from Christian guilt, even with the help of the supernatural. She may be powerful, but she is not free of remorse and this is her downfall.