

# Unit #3: "I Am Not What I Am" in *Othello*

10<sup>th</sup> Grade Language Arts

Mr. Coia

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Period: \_\_\_\_\_

## Thurs 10/15

- Shakespeare's Insults
- Introduction to Shakespeare and *Othello*
- Watch: "Why Shakespeare?" (20 min)
- Character triangle and map
- Watch trailer for 1995 [Othello](#)
- Write #1: Make five predictions about themes
- Read I.1 (Act 1, scene 1, 8 pages)
- "I am not what I am"

HW: Finish reading and marking section

## Mon 10/19

- SOTW #5
- Write #2: "How important is a reputation for a teenager? To you?"
- Reading quiz on I.1
- Read I.2-3 (23 pages)
- Choral reading of I.3.149-196 (alternate each line)
- Watch film clip of Act I
- Close Reading sheet of I.3.343-447 in small groups
- Characterization Review sheet

HW: Finish reading and marking section; finish Character Review sheet

## Wed 10/21

- **Notebook/supply check**
- Read II.1-2 (15 pages)
- Read-thru and act-thru of II.1.181-233
- Reading Iago's soliloquy (II.1.308-34)
- "Iago's Web" sheet

HW: Finish reading and marking section

## Fri 10/23

- Read II.3 (15 pages)
- Reading Iago's two soliloquies (II.3.356-83; 391-410)
- "In Other Words" sheet (paraphrasing)

HW: Finish reading and marking section; "In Other Words" sheet

## Tues 10/27

- SOTW #6
- Reading quiz Act II
- Read III.1-2 (4 pages)
- Choosing writing topic: Seven Statements
- Write#3: "Write your topic from Seven Statements. Where do you see this evident so far in the play?"
- Acting groups scene for III.3

HW: Finish reading and marking section

## Thurs 10/29

- Read III.3 (23 pages)
- Practice selected scene

HW: Finish reading and marking section; get together to practice your scene

## Mon 11/2

- ACTING DAY: Scenes from III.3
- Read III.4 (10 pages)
- "Who was Wronged?" sheet
- Discussion on gender issues in play
- "Pass the Handkerchief" acting script

HW: Finish reading and marking section; finish "Who was Wronged?" sheet

## Wed 11/4

- SOTW #7
- Write #4: "Think of TV or movie actors and actresses that you enjoy. If you were the casting director for a movie adaptation of *Othello*, who might you cast as Othello, Iago, Cassio, and Desdemona? Why?"
- Complete act III questions
- "Desdemona's Handkerchief" sheet
- Read IV.1 (13 pages)
- *Othello's* breakdown discussion

HW: Finish reading and marking section

<b>End of Quarter One</b>
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## Mon 11/9

- Reading quiz
- Read IV.2 (11 pages)
- Work on Seven Statements writing assignment

HW: Finish reading and marking section

## Thurs 11/12

- Read IV.3 (5 pages)
- Willow scene
- Gender issues discussion
- Write #5: "Choose any line from IV.2 or IV.3 and create a poem that includes that line."
- Act IV questions

HW: Finish reading and marking section; complete questions

**Mon 11/16**

- Write #6: "How should this play end in order for it to be a satisfying ending?"
- Read V.1-2 (28 pages)
- Act V questions
- Watch *Othello* film clips

HW: Write your rough draft of your Seven Statements writing

**Wed 11/18**

- Writing time and conferring on Seven Statements essay
- IC: Storyboard This! activity

HW: Final draft of essay; print Storyboard AT HOME

<b>Fri 11/20</b> <b>Parent-Teacher Conferences</b>
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**Mon 11/23**

- Sharing Storyboards and essays
- Brainstorming for Socratic Seminar
- Watch *Othello* film clips

HW: Type responses and quotations to use in Socratic Seminar

**Wed 11/25**

- Socratic Seminar: "What is the main theme in *Othello*?"
- [This is a mandatory assignment that cannot be reconstructed outside of class. If you have an excused absence, you must write a 600-700-word essay answering this question. You must have a minimum of two clear quotations from the play in MLA format. Due Monday, 11/30.]

<b>Thanksgiving Break</b>
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**Notebook and Supply Check**

You'll need the following for our notebook check **Wed 10/21**. Remember, we'll add to this throughout the year to provide you with an orderly notebook. Therefore, you need ALL the pieces to receive credit. No partial credit offered on this.

You need two tabs with the following:

LA Handouts:

- Unit guide #3 (on top)
- *Othello Story Map*
- Unit guide #2
- Technology marked articles (unit guide 1, p. 9-13)
- Passages on Reading and Thinking Handout (unit 1, p 14)
- 6 Traits Overview sheet
- 6 Traits grading rubric
- "How Do I Format My Paper?" handout (unit 1, p. 7-8)
- Class Rules sheet, initialed

LA Classwork:

Notes from lectures, presentations, mini-lessons. Remember you should be taking notes each class period. You will also have at least 25 sheets of loose-leaf paper in your binder, and your pens, pencils, highlighter, etc.

## Assignments for the *Othello* Unit

**Seven Statements Writing:** You will be assigned two of seven statements in which you will agree or disagree with each and refer to specific incidents or scenes in the play to support your conclusions. Each will be about 300 words.

**Acting Groups:** Your team will perform one part of Act III.3.

**Socratic Seminar:** Our graded discussion is “What is the main theme of *Othello*?”

**Class Participation:** Each class, you are expected to take part in our acting and discussions of this play. Each class, you’ll earn up to 10 participation points. If you have an excused absence, you can earn the points by doing one of the following by the next class day. Use our standard format sheet.

1. Write a sonnet explaining the scene(s) covered
2. Write a one-page discussion between two characters from this section.
3. Pick a short portion of this section, and write a 10-15 sentence analysis of this line.

## Standards for the *Othello* Unit

### Reading

- 10E1c.2:** Analyze the purposes and the characteristics of different forms of dramatic literature to include comedy, tragedy, and dramatic monologue.
- 10E1c.4:** Evaluate interactions among characters in a literary text and explain how those interactions affect the plot.
- 10E1c.5:** Analyze characters’ traits by what the characters say about themselves in narration, dialogue, and soliloquy.
- 10E1c.7:** Evaluate an author’s development of time and sequence, including the use of literary devices such as foreshadowing or flashback.
- 10E1c.11:** Identify and describe the function of dialogue, soliloquies, asides, character foils, and stage designs in dramatic literature.

### Writing

- 10E2a.6:** Develop the main ideas within the body of the composition through supporting evidence in scenarios, commonly held beliefs, hypotheses, and definitions.
- 10E2a.12:** Apply criteria developed by self and others to evaluate the mechanics and content of writing.
- 10E2a.13:** Provide constructive criticism to other writers with suggestions for improving organization, tone, style, clarity, and focus; and edit and revise in response to peer reviews of own work.
- 10E2b.1:** Write for different purposes and audience, adjusting tone, style, and voice as appropriate.

### Speaking

- 10E3a.7:** Make judgments about the ideas under discussion and support those judgments with convincing evidence.
- 10E3a.19:** Deliver descriptive presentations that:
- a. Establish a clear point of view on the subject of the presentation.
  - c. Contain effective, factual descriptions of appearance, concrete images, shifting perspectives, and sensory details.

## **SEVEN STATEMENTS ABOUT *OTHELLO***

Below are seven statements about the play-opinions, not facts, that have been voiced by various critics of the play-some of which you will agree with, some not, though some are not as obvious as they may seem at first.

You will be assigned **two of seven statements** in which you will agree or disagree with each and refer to specific incidents or scenes in the play to support your conclusions. **Each will be about 300 words.**

**Use regular paper formatting for this.**

1. Othello's real problem is his own jealousy.
2. It is very important to the play for Othello to be black.
3. Desdemona is not a wimp. She is a soldier's wife and fit to be so. She has good sense, stubbornness, and courage. She can stand up to Othello for the sake of what she thinks right, even when he is in a dangerous mood and few people would care to face him.
4. Desdemona is not angelically pure. The potential for unrestrained desire must be in her character in order for the drama to work. The more loving she is, the easier it is for Othello to think she has deceived him.
5. Iago is not a "motiveless malignity" as he has been called-a devil who does evil for its own sake. He has a thirst for power and the wit to contrive a way to get it. Desdemona's death is a side effect he did not really intend.
6. Iago's cleverness is not total. He builds into the intricate structure of his plot a piece of terrible stupidity: he fails to understand his wife.
7. The war between Othello and Iago is fundamentally a dispute between the goodness and evil of the world.

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***Othello* Act I Characterization Review**

**Act I**

Strong	Brave	Manipulative	Ignorant	Racist	Naïve
Deceiving	Honorable	Hot-headed	Loyal	Dishonest	Cruel
Stubborn	Faithful	Revengeful	Honest	Weak	Unfair

**A. Provide two character traits for each of the following characters**

**B. Then, locate one supporting quote for each trait**

Character	Traits	Direct Quotes
Othello	1.	
	2.	
Iago	1.	
	2.	
Roderigo	1.	
	2.	
Desdemona	1.	
	2.	
Brabantio	1.	
	2.	

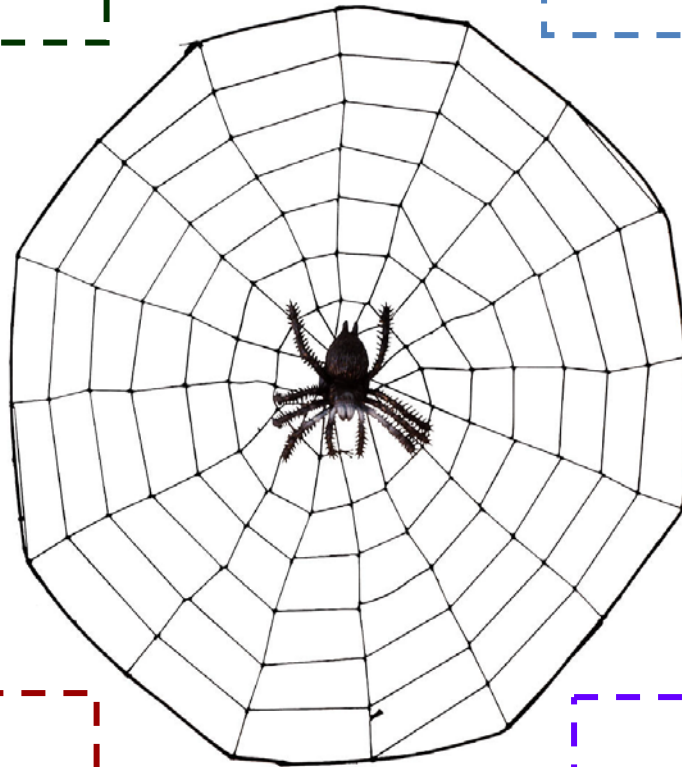
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***Othello Act II: "Iago's Web"***

At the conclusion of Act II, Iago's soliloquy reveals the designs for his widening net to entrap all those around him. Take a moment to *restate* Iago's intentions for each character.

Cassio

Desdemona



Emilia

Othello

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Per: \_\_\_\_\_

**Othello Act III: "Who Is Wronged?"**

**First:** Reflect on who has been wronged the most by the end of Act II. Is it Roderigo, Othello, Cassio or Desdemona? Write several sentences *expressing* your opinion.

**Next:** Make a prediction indicating whom you believe stands to be hurt the most as the play continues.

**Activity A:** Using the first 90 lines of Act III, scene iii, *describe* how each character unknowingly takes part in beginning the next phase of Iago's plan.



<b>Cassio</b>	
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<b>Emilia</b>	
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<b>Desdemona</b>	
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Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Per: \_\_\_\_\_

***Othello Act II.2: "In Other Words"***

Paraphrase the following passages from II.2 and comment on them.

<b>Quotation</b>	<b>What it says in your own words</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Cassio: I have lost the immortal part of myself, and what remains is bestial. 2.3.282-83		
CASSIO: O God, that men should put an enemy in their mouths to steal away their brains! 2.3.308-10		
IAGO: She holds it a vice in her goodness not to do more than she is requested. 2.3.340-41		
IAGO: When devils will the blackest sins put on, / They do suggest at first with heavenly shows. 2.3.371-72		
IAGO: Thou know'st we work by wit and not by witchcraft. 2.3.393		
Line of your choice		

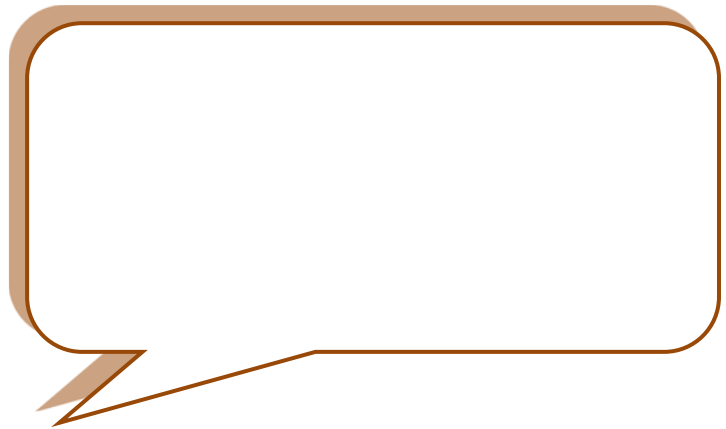


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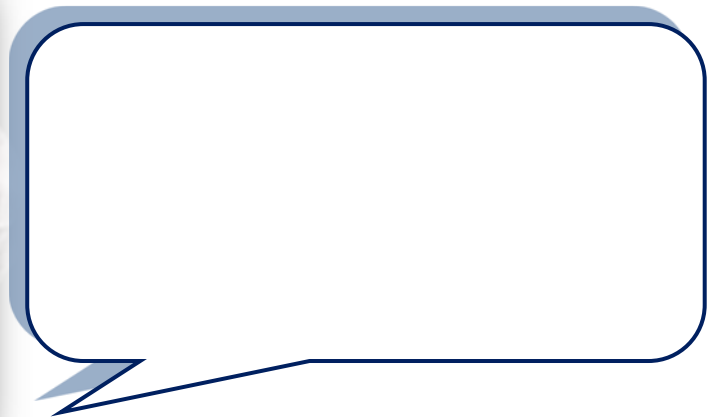
***Othello* Act III-IV: “Desdemona’s Handkerchief”**

**Part I:** In order to believe Iago’s accusations, Othello demands proof of Desdemona’s cheating. With this in mind, examine the importance of Othello’s by providing a direct quote for each of the following characters as they comment about the handkerchief.

**Emilia:** III.iii. 290-320



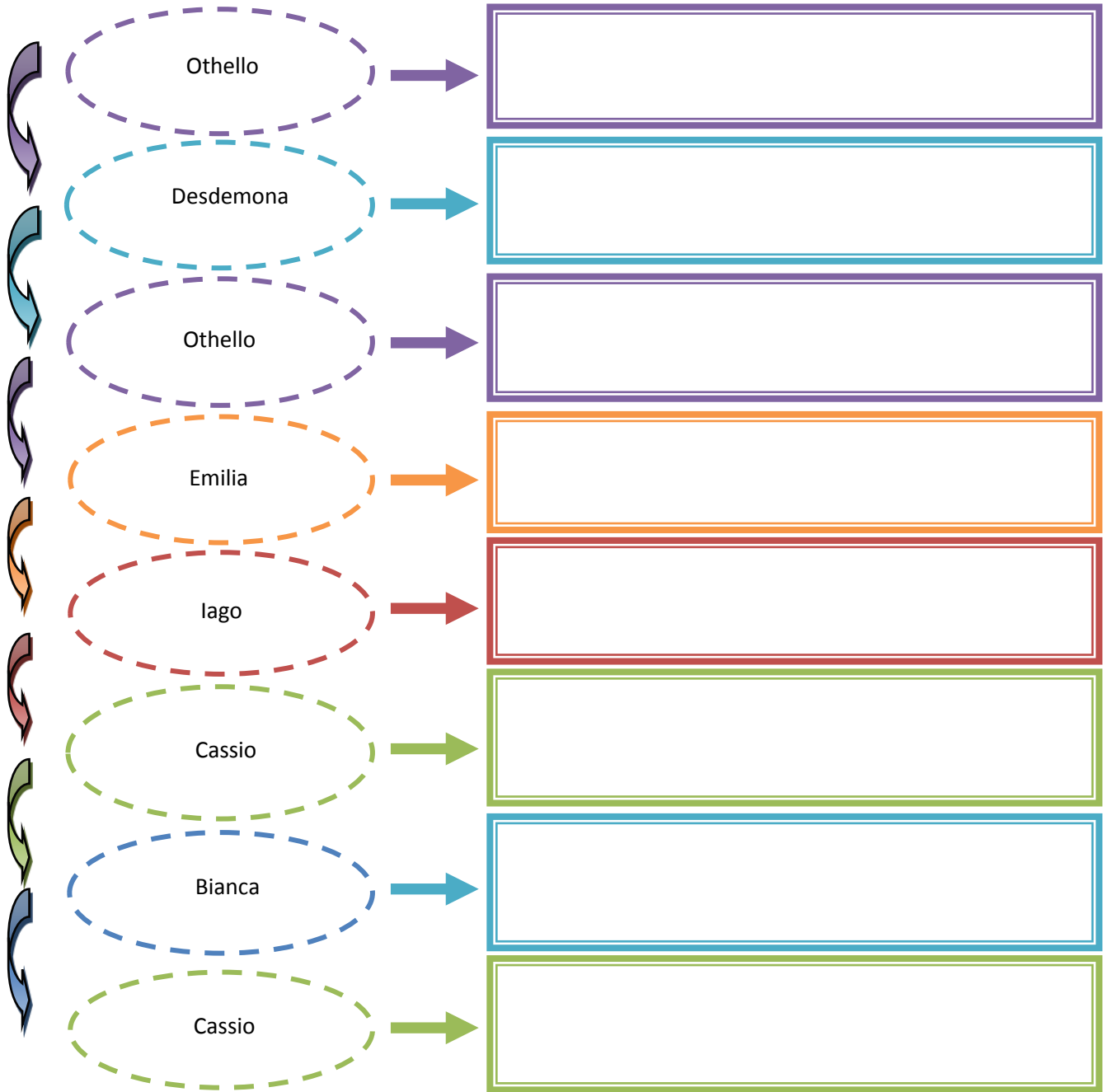
**Iago:** III.iii. 435-445



**Othello:** III. iv.55-75



**PART II:** As Act III comes to a close, Desdemona's handkerchief takes on an increasingly important role. Follow the handkerchief as it travels between various characters and explain how each character came to possess it.



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**Othello Act III Questions**

*Directions: Please answer the following questions and statements in full, complete sentences.*

1. How does Othello respond after Desdemona's continual begging for Cassio?

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2. Explain the irony of everyone considering Iago to be "honest" and "trustworthy."

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3. Describe the emotional cycle Othello experiences once Iago suggests Desdemona is cheating on him.

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4. Why must Iago take his time to convince Othello about Desdemona and Cassio?

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5. Explain the importance of Desdemona's handkerchief.

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6. What role does Emilia play in Iago's plot? Explain specifically.

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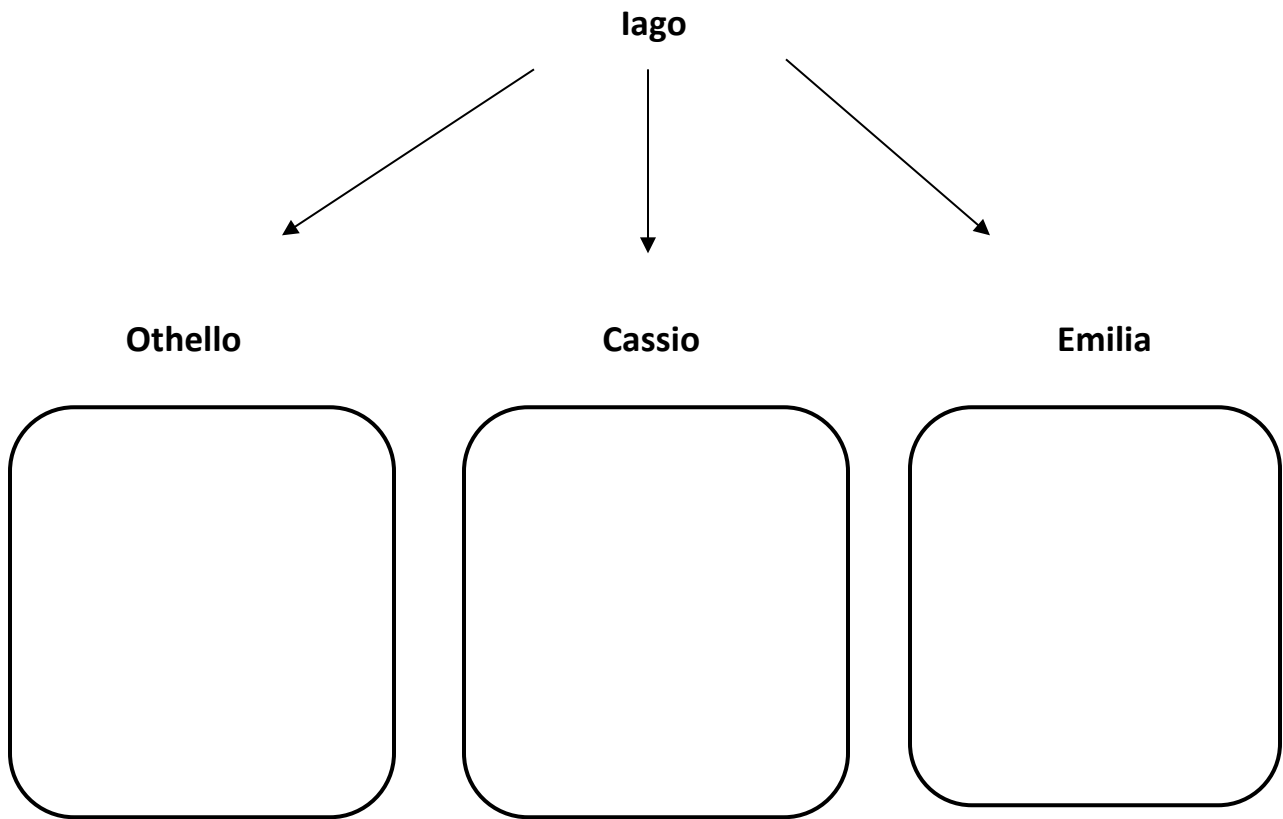
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7. Explain Bianca's role. (How does Cassio unknowingly include her?)

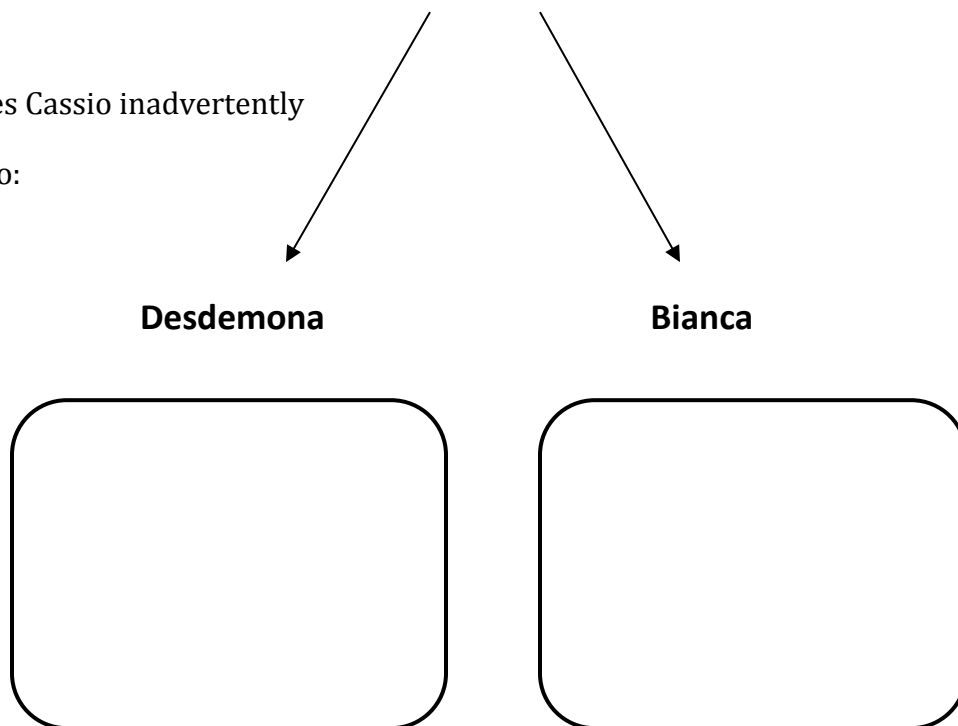
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8. How does Iago use each character?



9. How does Cassio inadvertently help Iago:



### Act III.3 Scenes to Perform

Here are 10 short scenes from Act 3. Your groups will prepare one scene and present it to the class. Be sure to put emphasis on voice inflection and subtext. To help you, note the summaries and directions that accompany each scene.

#### Directions:

1. Choose your scene
2. Choose your group
3. Practice in class and out
4. Perform on Monday 11/2

**SCENE 1 3.3.100-146** ("Excellent wretch!" through "I think so too"). Iago starts to poison Othello's mind.

LINES: Othello, 33; Iago, 14

**SCENE 2 3.3.147-200** ("Men should be what they seem" through "who dotes, yet doubts suspects, yet strongly loves!"). Iago goes further in his campaign to make Othello doubt Desdemona's fidelity.

LINES Iago, 43; Othello, 11

DIRECTIONS: Cut some of Iago's and Othello's longer speeches.

**SCENE 3 3.3.201-49** ("O misery!" through "I am bound to thee forever"). Othello begins to believe Iago's hints.

LINES: Iago, 25; Othello, 24

DIRECTIONS: Aggressively cut Iago's long speeches.

**SCENE 4 3.3.250-82** ("I see this hath a little dashed your spirits" through "My lord, I take my leave"). Othello expresses belief in his wife's honesty. and Iago goes still further with his hints, subtly attacking Othello's sense of self-worth.

LINES: Iago, 25; Othello, 8

DIRECTIONS: In the speech beginning at line 268 (from "Ay, there's the point!") Iago suggests that Desdemona's choice of Othello is unnatural. What are the implications of this? How will the person playing Othello react nonverbally to Iago's lines?

**SCENE 5 3.3.283-320** ("Why did I marry?" through "'Il not believe it"). Othello expresses his doubts. Iago reenters and deepens them, exits again. Emilia and Desdemona enter as Othello is speaking.

LINES: Iago, 13; Othello, 25; Desdemona, 0; Emilia, 0

DIRECTIONS: Decide what fears Othello is expressing when he says "Haply, for I am

black /And have not those soft parts of conversation / That chamberers have, or for I am declined / Into the vale of years-yet that's not much- / She's gone." How does Othello react to Desdemona's entrance?

**SCENE 6 3.3.321-43** ("How now, my dear" through "I nothing but to please his fantasy"). Othello has begun to doubt Desdemona, and his behavior toward her has changed. Desdemona drops her handkerchief without realizing it, and Emilia picks it up, saying she will have the "work [of the handkerchief] ta'en out" and give it to Iago.

LINES: Desdemona, 10; Othello, 4; Emilia, 10

DIRECTIONS: Use one of the class handkerchiefs. Since what happens in this short scene sets in motion a series of events that results in catastrophe, this acting team should figure out carefully exactly how Othello rejects the handkerchief, how and why Desdemona lets it fall, and how Emilia reacts when she picks it up. Where does Emilia hold the handkerchief when she sees Iago coming?

**SCENE 7 3.3.344-82** ("How now? What do you here alone?" through "which thou owedst yesterday"). Iago gets the handkerchief from Emilia and, after she exits, says he will plant it in Cassio's lodging.

LINES: Iago, 24; Emilia, 15

DIRECTIONS: Decide what motivates Emilia to offer Iago the handkerchief after all. (The decision belongs to the actor. Emilia's lines do not explain this.) What is her objective, and how will the actor playing Emilia make it clear? How will the actor playing Iago take the handkerchief from her? Or will Emilia hand it over? The stage directions are not Shakespeare's. You can invent your own.

**SCENE 8 3.3.383-434** ("Ha, ha, false to me?" through "I'll love no friend, sith love breeds such offense"). Othello reenters and expresses increasing conviction that Desdemona is betraying him with Cassio.

LINES: Othello, 37; Iago, 15

DIRECTIONS: Speculate about why Othello insists to Iago, "Villain, be sure thou prove my love a whore! / Be sure of it. Give me the ocular proof." Consider the irony of his demand.

**SCENE 9 3.3.435-90** ("Nay, stay. Thou shouldst be honest" through "I'll tear her all to pieces").

Becoming even bolder, Iago fabricates a story about how Cassio in his sleep revealed his affair with Desdemona.

LINES: Othello, 15; Iago, 41

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**Othello Act IV Questions**

**Directions:** Please answer the following questions and statements in full, complete sentences.

**Scene I**

1. Why is Othello shaking?

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2. What “medicine” is Iago referring to? What might this imply?

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3. While Othello is spying, how does Iago get Cassio to laugh and mimic sexual gestures?

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4. Provide details or quotes revealing Othello’s reaction as he is watching Cassio and Iago talk.

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5. What is Lodovico’s reaction to witnessing Othello hit Desdemona?

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**Scene II**

6. What is ironic about Emilia's comments about the "scoundrel" that spread rumors about Desdemona? Explain your answer fully.

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7. Provide details about Roderigo's frustrations and threats toward Iago.

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8. How does Iago win back Roderigo's trust?

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**Scene III**

9. What is the difference between Desdemona and Emilia's view of being unfaithful?

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10. Explain Emilia's view regarding how husbands treat their wives.

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Per: \_\_\_\_\_

***Othello Act V Questions***

1. \_\_\_\_\_ hides behind the market stall, waiting to attack \_\_\_\_\_.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ is not sure about killing \_\_\_\_\_, so \_\_\_\_\_ says he will be right beside him.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ attempts to stab \_\_\_\_\_, but \_\_\_\_\_ stabs \_\_\_\_\_ instead.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ runs into the fight and stabs \_\_\_\_\_ in the leg, before running away.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ hears \_\_\_\_\_ calling for help and is motivated to go and kill \_\_\_\_\_.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ is wounded and calls for help, but \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ do not go down the dark alley for fear it might be a trap.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ returns, pretending to have just awakened.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ first goes over to see the wounded \_\_\_\_\_, and then goes over to see the “murderer” \_\_\_\_\_ and stabs \_\_\_\_\_ in order to keep him silent.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ arrives and is upset to see \_\_\_\_\_ wounded, but quickly \_\_\_\_\_ attempts to make \_\_\_\_\_ appear suspicious.
10. \_\_\_\_\_ calls for a sedan chair to carry away the wounded \_\_\_\_\_.

**Directions:** For the following questions, provide full, complete sentences with supporting details. The page numbers have been provided to help assist in supporting your ideas.

***Scene II***

11. Describe Othello’s thoughts as he watches Desdemona sleep.

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12. According to Othello, why is it important for Desdemona to confess her sins?

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13. What makes Desdemona's death even more tragic?

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14. Explain Emilia's repetition of the line, "My Husband?"

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15. Why is Emilia upset with Othello? What does she say?

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16. Why does Iago attempt to stab Emilia and then actually does stab her?

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17. Why does Gratiano threaten Iago with torture?

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18. What is the importance of the two letters found on Roderigo's body?

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19. What is Iago's fate?

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## *Othello* Summaries

I suggest reading the summary, then the play, then the summary

**Act I, scene 1** On a street in Venice, there is an argument between Roderigo, a nobleman, and Iago, an *ancient* (captain) in the defense forces. Roderigo, in love with the noble lady Desdemona, has paid large sums of money to Iago, on the understanding that Iago would give her gifts from him and praise him to her. Roderigo hopes to win Desdemona's love and marry her. However, they now have news that Desdemona has left the house of her father, Brabantio, a Senator, and eloped with Othello, a Moor (an African) who is a General in the defense forces.

Roderigo fears he has lost both his lady and his money. Iago reveals to Roderigo that it is in his (Iago's) nature to plot and tell lies to get what he wants and that he has a plan. He hates Othello for promoting Cassio to the position of lieutenant, a position that Iago wanted for himself. Iago plans to bring about Othello's downfall, and Roderigo will have Desdemona. First, they must wake Brabantio and cause an outcry. They bang and shout until Brabantio comes out onto the balcony. Iago tells him in inflammatory words that Desdemona has run away with Othello, and Brabantio, enraged, joins Roderigo to wake the neighbors and organize a search party.

**Act I, scene 2** Iago warns Othello that there may be a legal attempt to break the marriage, but Othello knows his military worth to Venice and meets the Duke and Senators with confidence. Cassio has been sent to fetch him to an urgent meeting about the situation in Cyprus. Iago tells Cassio of Othello's marriage. Brabantio's party arrives; Brabantio threatens

Othello with violence and accuses him of using sorcery to seduce Desdemona, his reasoning being that she would never marry Othello voluntarily. Brabantio calls for Othello's arrest and imprisonment but cedes precedence to the Duke's summons to the emergency meeting.

**Act I, scene 3** Several reports have come in from Cyprus, all calling attention to a Turkish fleet that is expected to attack. The reports differ in the size of the fleet, but all speak of the danger as the combined force has turned back toward Cyprus. Othello enters the meeting with Cassio, Brabantio, Iago, and others, and the Duke immediately appoints Othello to lead the forces to defend Cyprus.

At this point, the Duke notices Brabantio, who believes that his daughter has been corrupted with magic potions because, according to him, she would never willingly marry such a man as she did. Initially, the Duke promises him support in a prosecution for witchcraft, a capital crime, against the man who has seduced his daughter, but when the Duke realizes the seducer is Othello, he calls on the general to defend himself.

Othello describes his courtship of Desdemona in a dignified and persuasive speech (76-93 and 127-169) and asks the Duke to send for Desdemona so that she may speak. Iago leads the group that goes to fetch her. When Othello finishes speaking, the Duke declares in favor of Othello: "I think this tale would win my daughter too" (170). Desdemona then speaks, gently outlining an argument so strong that it finishes the whole debate: She owes obedience and thanks to her father for her upbringing, but now that she is married, her loyalty is to her husband, just as her mother's loyalty was to Brabantio. Fathers must give way to husbands.

Othello must go immediately to Cyprus to command its defense, and Desdemona requests to go as well. The Duke grants her wish, and

Othello, who must leave that night, delegates Iago to follow later in another ship, bringing Desdemona and whatever else is needed. Iago's wife, Emilia, will look after Desdemona as her maid. As Othello leaves, Brabantio warns Othello, "She has deceived her father, and may thee" (289), but Othello is certain of Desdemona's faithfulness.

Iago and Roderigo are left on stage. Roderigo is downcast and talks of drowning himself. Iago replies with scorn that such misery is silliness and convinces Roderigo to go to Cyprus and wait for Desdemona to come to him, as she will surely soon become bored with Othello. Iago, because he hates Othello, says he will help Roderigo have Desdemona and reminds Roderigo to bring plenty of money.

Iago, alone on stage, considers the situation: He has consolidated his source of money, and he has heard a rumor that Othello has had sex with his wife, Emilia. Although he does not believe the rumor, he will act as though he does to feed his hatred. Also Iago will aim to get Cassio's position of lieutenant, which he thinks should have come to him.

**Act II, scene 1** Act II and all subsequent acts take place in Cyprus, in the Venetian fortifications. Montano, Governor of Cyprus, awaits the arrival of the Venetian forces, delayed by a violent storm at sea. A messenger arrives with news that the Turkish fleet has been so damaged by the storm that it no longer threatens Cyprus. Cassio's ship, followed by Desdemona's ship, is the first Venetian ship to arrive. Desdemona's first question is for news of Othello. The two pass the time, waiting for news, and Iago watches, planning to catch Cassio in his own courtesies.

Othello finally arrives, triumphant, and he, Desdemona, and the others go into the fortress. Iago stays behind to tell Roderigo that Desdemona is in love with Cassio and convince him to pick a fight with Cassio to cause mutiny and

have him removed. Iago, in his second soliloquy, speaks again of his hatred for Othello. The details are not yet clear, but Iago plans to drive Othello mad.

**Act II, scene 2** The herald reads a proclamation declaring a night of general festivities to celebrate both the destruction of the Turkish fleet and Othello's recent marriage.

**Act II, scene 3** Cassio, commanding the night watch during the time of feasting and drinking, takes his orders from Othello, who directs the soldiers to drink with moderation and keep the peace. Cassio and Iago, his second in command, will see to this. Then Othello and Desdemona retire to bed, the first night they will spend together since their marriage.

Alone, Iago makes suggestive remarks about Desdemona to Cassio, which Cassio turns aside; then Iago invites him to drink. Cassio declines, but Iago wheedles and urges him, until Cassio finally relents. Iago spurs Roderigo into a fight with Cassio; others join in and Iago sends Roderigo to ring the alarm bell, waking Othello and bringing him and his armed men to the spot. Othello demands to know who started the fight, and feigning reluctance, Iago names Cassio. Othello relieves Cassio of his post on the spot. Then he and Desdemona return to bed.

Iago advises Cassio to ask Desdemona to speak on his behalf with her husband. Cassio agrees, and Iago uses his wife, Emilia, to arrange a private meeting between Cassio and Desdemona.

**Act III, scene 1** Cassio meets with a group of musicians and a clown (a countryman) whom he sends to find Emilia. Iago sends Emilia out to speak with him, and she reports that Desdemona and Othello are discussing the events of last night. Desdemona has spoken up for Cassio, and Othello, who likes him, has undertaken to bring him back into favor when the right moment comes.

**Act III, scene 2** Othello sends a letter back to Venice by ship and makes an inspection of the fortifications.

**Act III, scene 3** Cassio speaks to Desdemona, asking her to intercede with Othello on his behalf. Desdemona willingly agrees, knowing that Cassio is an old friend of Othello's. She promises to speak of him with her husband repeatedly until the quarrel is patched up and Cassio is recalled.

When Othello and Iago enter, Cassio, who is embarrassed because of his antics the previous night, embraces Desdemona and departs. Iago seizes the opportunity to make an undermining comment — "Ha, I like not that" — that rankles in Othello's mind. Desdemona speaks of Cassio, and Othello, to please her, agrees to see him, but he is distracted by his private thoughts.

In a conversation with Iago, in which Iago continues to imply that he knows something that he refuses to divulge, Othello denies that he would give himself over to jealousy. In his denial, he shows himself most vulnerable. He is consumed with doubt and suspicion. Othello voices his old fears that Brabantio was right, that it was unnatural for Desdemona to love him, that he was too horrible to be loved, and that it could not last. Iago leaves, and Othello contemplates his situation: He could be tricked, married to a woman who is already looking at other men, and he fears that he must wipe her out of his heart. He tries to tell himself that it is not true.

When Desdemona re-enters, Othello's aspect is changed; he watches her intently, looking for signs, and brushes away her handkerchief when she seeks to sooth him. They go in to dinner, and Emilia picks up the fallen handkerchief, one that her husband, Iago, often urged her to steal from Desdemona. Emilia decides to have a copy made to give to Iago, but he enters, sees the handkerchief, and snatches it from her.

When Othello enters, Iago sees that Othello cannot regain his peace of mind. His speech is fevered, sweeping and frantic; he believes that his wife has been unfaithful to him. Othello then turns on Iago with savage intensity and demands to see the proof of Desdemona's infidelity. Cornered, Iago produces the dream story: Cassio spoke in his sleep, embraced him, called him Desdemona, and cursed the Moor. Iago tells Othello that he has seen Cassio wipe his brow with a handkerchief embroidered with strawberries; Othello recognizes this handkerchief as the one he gave to Desdemona.

Othello dismisses love and calls for vengeance. Certainty has freed his mind from doubt and confusion. Now he swears action, and Iago swears to help him. Othello wants Cassio dead, Iago agrees to do it, and then Othello wonders how to kill Desdemona.

**Act III, scene 4** Desdemona sends for Cassio to tell him that she has spoken with Othello; she is also worried that she has lost her handkerchief. When Othello enters, he claims a headache and asks her for a handkerchief to bind his head, but he will have only the embroidered strawberry handkerchief. In vain, Desdemona tries to deflect his questions about the handkerchief, speaking again of Cassio. Othello walks out in fury.

Cassio gives Bianca Desdemona's handkerchief, which he found in his lodgings (Iago had placed it there) and asks her to make a copy of it for him, as he will have to return the original when he finds the owner. Bianca immediately recognizes it as belonging to a woman and berates Cassio for having another mistress.

**Act IV, scene 1** In a conversation with Othello, Iago says that Cassio has confessed to sex with Desdemona. This revelation is too much for Othello, who becomes incoherent and faints. When Cassio enters, Iago claims that Othello has epilepsy and has had seizures before. Rather than revive him, they must

let the fit take its course. Iago sends Cassio away, telling him to come back later. Othello, regaining consciousness, talks of himself as one among many cuckolds, but Iago tells him to hide and observe Cassio, who is returning. Iago says he will draw Cassio out to tell of his amorous adventures with Desdemona.

Othello withdraws, too emotionally involved to understand that Iago is manipulating him, and Iago talks with Cassio about Bianca. Othello sees his smiles and laughter but cannot hear the details and believes he is joking about how much Desdemona loves him. Then Bianca herself enters, with Desdemona's handkerchief, which she throws back at Cassio. Seeing his wife's handkerchief in the hands of Cassio's mistress is, for Othello, the "ocular proof" he sought. He is now convinced of Desdemona's infidelity and knows he must kill both Cassio and Desdemona that very night.

**Act IV, scene 2** Othello questions Emilia about Desdemona, but she assures him that nothing immodest has taken place between her mistress and Cassio. Othello, rather than abandon his suspicions, believes Desdemona is so cunning that she has managed to deceive even her maid. Othello speaks with Desdemona in private, threatening to banish her and calling her "whore" and "strumpet" — charges that she immediately denies. Emilia comes in, and Othello leaves. Exhausted, Desdemona knows that she is being punished, but she does not know what for. Emilia suspects that some villain has turned Othello against his wife and stirred up his jealousy. When Desdemona asks Iago's advice, he says that it is only the business of the state that makes Othello angry.

Later, in a conversation with Iago, Roderigo confesses that he has had enough of his romantic quest and plans to withdraw. Iago makes a bold move, linking his two plots together: He urges Roderigo to kill Cassio, explaining that Cassio's death will prevent Othello being sent elsewhere and, therefore, keep

Desdemona in Cyprus. Roderigo allows himself to be persuaded.

**Act IV, scene 3** After the supper, Othello orders Desdemona to go to bed and to dismiss her attendant. Desdemona and Emilia discuss the situation; Emilia sees the marriage with Othello as a mistake, but Desdemona regrets nothing. She has a premonition of death and requests Emilia, if she should die, to wrap her body in one of her wedding sheets, which are now on the bed. Desdemona sings the "Willow Song," remembering the maid Barbary whose lover went mad and abandoned her, and she died singing this song.

**Act V, scene 1** In the street at night, Iago directs Roderigo to ambush Cassio. When Cassio approaches, Roderigo attacks unsuccessfully and is wounded by Cassio. Iago, from behind, stabs Cassio in the leg and runs away while Cassio cries murder. Othello, hearing Cassio's cry, believes that Iago has done the job he has undertaken. Following Iago's lead, Othello must harden his heart against the charms of his wife and spill her blood in the bed where she has betrayed him.

**Act V, scene 2** Desdemona lies asleep in bed, and Othello enters, dreadfully calm and sure in what he must do. Desdemona awakens and calls him to bed, but he tells her to pray at once, repenting anything she needs to repent, and he will wait while she prays because he does not want to kill her soul. Suddenly, Desdemona realizes that Othello intends to kill her. She is afraid, although she knows she is not guilty. Knowing that she cannot convince him of her fidelity, Desdemona weeps and begs him to banish her rather than kill her, or let her live just a little more, but he stifles her, presumably with a pillow.

When Emilia knocks on the door, Othello draws the bed-curtain across, hiding the bed, and opens the door to hear the news. What Emilia reports is not what Othello expected. She says that Cassio has killed Roderigo. Then Desdemona's voice is heard from the bed, saying

"falsely murdered" and Emilia calls for help. Desdemona says that she is innocent, denies that anyone has killed her, and dies.

Emilia and Othello confront each other. Emilia sees herself as a witness and will tell what she has seen, and Othello declares that he has killed Desdemona because of her infidelity. Emilia insists that Desdemona was faithful; Othello replies that Cassio had been with her, and Iago knew all about it. Now Emilia has the key idea. She says "my husband" over and over, while Othello pours out his heart on justice and how he loved her and how Iago is honest. Emilia curses Iago, calls him a liar, and cries murder to waken everyone.

Montano, Gratiano, Iago, and others rush into the bedchamber where Emilia is shouting, and she challenges Iago to defend himself, giving him one last chance to retrieve himself in her estimation. Iago says that Desdemona was indeed unfaithful with Cassio, but Emilia knows this is untrue. She tells how she found the handkerchief, which her husband had asked her to steal, and gave it to him. Iago stabs Emilia and runs out. As she dies, Emilia tells Othello that Desdemona loved him. Othello realizes, too late, that he had been tricked and manipulated.

Iago is caught and brought back. Othello and Cassio demand to know why he did it, but Iago refuses to explain and says he will never speak again. Othello, watching his world unravel, asks the men to remember him clearly, his good points and his bad, as "one that lov'd not wisely, but too well." Then he stabs himself, falls onto the bed, and dies.

Lodovico takes charge, giving Othello's house and property to Gratiano, his next of kin by marriage. Cassio will be commander and have the power to sentence Iago, and Lodovico will return to Venice with the sad news.