

Notes, Questions and Quote bank for Othello

Give at least two examples, either in quote form or as an explanation of events from the play (with the Act, Scene and Line numbers it comes from), for the following-

- Evidence of Iago's motivations for disliking Othello.
- Evidence that Othello is respected and of his social standing.
- Evidence of racism.
- Evidence showing Othello to be eloquent, calm, reasoned, dignified and self-assured.
- Evidence of Iago's plotting/scheming, deceit (being two-faced), trying to stir trouble, evilness, growing power.
- Evidence of the double-meanings, crudeness and sexual innuendoes in Iago's lines.
- Evidence suggesting Iago to be an 'honest' man who others trust.
- Evidence of Othello and Desdemona's love.
- Evidence of jealousy (references to jealousy).
- Evidence of characters seeking revenge.
- Evidence of Othello's undoing – lines that show his increasing doubt, paranoia, anger, jealousy, irrationality. (this relates to Act 3 onwards)
- Evidence that relates to the status of women in Elizabethan society (e.g. that they are possessions, that they are to obey men etc...)
- Evidence of women in the play being outspoken.
- Evidence of women in the play being obedient, subservient, naive.
- Evidence of Othello's remorse, realisation of what he has done.

Answer these questions in full sentences in your work books-

1. Why is Othello a tragedy?
2. Who is to blame for the events of the play? Explain why.
 - Is it Iago, for being mercilessly evil, sadistically enjoying the powers of this manipulation?
 - Is it Othello, whose flaws in his character allowed Iago to so easily seek revenge?
 - Is it Desdemona, for being so subservient and naive that she couldn't see the danger she was in?
 - Is it Emilia, for being so ignorant of her husband's true nature?
 - Can Iago be blamed for Othello's actions given that Iago only ever told the truth and it was Othello's misinterpretation of matters?
 - How much is each of the major characters to blame for this evil turn of events?
3. How was it that Iago was able to easily manipulate others in the play?
4. Even after the murder of Desdemona, does Othello remain noble?