

Othello Revision Questions

4.1

1. What does Othello's language in line 35 suggest about his state of mind? How is his language now much more like that of Iago than it was?
2. Do you think Iago anticipated Bianca's appearance at line 145? How is he able to use her arrival to further his deception?
3. How does Iago go about providing the visual proof of Desdemona's infidelity that Othello had earlier asked for?
4. What's different about Othello's attitude toward Desdemona lines 178 -- 210? What causes this change?
5. How does Iago manipulate Lodovico in the last 20 lines of IV, 1?

4.2

6. According to Othello what's the worst part of being a cuckold?
7. Why doesn't Desdemona react more strongly when Othello accuses her of infidelity?
8. Where in Act IV, 2, does Desdemona finally start to fight back? Explain her physical reaction right after Othello leaves at line 92.
9. Who is the first person in the play to figure out Iago's duplicity? How is Iago able to manipulate this person, even after the truth is known?

4.3

10. As Emilia prepares her mistress's wedding bed, Desdemona talks of her mother's servant Barbary who was forsaken by a mad lover; then she and Emilia talk about whether they would be unfaithful to their husbands or not. What is the significance of this conversation?
11. Explain exactly how Iago manipulates every single person who appears in this scene.

5.2

12. As he enters Desdemona's bedchamber in order to kill her, Othello mutters: "It is the cause, it is the cause, my soul." What is he talking about? In what way might he be rationalizing Desdemona's murder?
13. Often at the end of a play, Shakespeare's tragic heroes have a moment of insight: According to what he says in lines 340, what is Othello's insight into himself?