



TEACHER PACK

# OTHELLO

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE



## ABOUT THIS PACK

This pack supports the RSC's 2015 production of *Othello*, directed by Iqbal Khan, which opened on 4<sup>th</sup> June at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre in Stratford-upon-Avon.

The activities provided are specifically designed to support KS3-4 students studying or seeing the play, offering a deeper insight into the choices that can be explored through staging.

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These symbols are used throughout the pack:



#### READ

Notes from the production, background info or extracts



#### ACTIVITY

A practical or open space activity



#### WRITE

A classroom writing or discussion activity



#### LINKS

Useful web addresses and research tasks

# EXPLORING THE STORY



## SYNOPSIS

A full synopsis of the play is available, while the production is on, at

<http://www.rsc.org.uk/whats-on/othello/synopsis.aspx>

### NOTES FROM THE REHEARSAL ROOM

In rehearsals, director Iqbal Khan asked the company to think about how, and why, the characters change during the course of the play; how do their experiences and relationships affect them? In particular, the company looked at the key moments when trust is broken between characters.

In this pack, we have chosen to focus on exploring Othello's own journey through the play: in what ways does he change? What are the key moments that cause these changes to take place? How do the other characters interact with him, and how do these interactions alter the course of his story?



### ACTIVITY 1: JOURNEYS

This activity invites students to look in detail at the journeys of two key characters in the play: Othello and Iago. Using the Key Moments Resource included in this pack, invite students to trace the story from the perspective of each of these two characters. This activity is a good way for students to familiarise themselves with the key points of the plot.



Lucian Msamati as Iago and James Corrigan as Roderigo in *Othello*. Photo by Keith Pattison.

Encourage students to think about how Othello's behaviour and personality seems to change repeatedly throughout the play, while Iago seems more constant.

- Divide students into small groups.
- Assign each group a character, either Othello or Iago.
- Ask each group to look at the five key moments in the play for their character, and to create a still image for each of these moments.
  - If students know the play well, you might want to challenge them to select their own key moments rather than using the ones in the Resource Materials.
- Challenge them to find a way of moving from one image to the next, showing their character's journey. Encourage them to use the text provided.
- Finally, ask each group to show their sequence of images to the rest of the class.
- Reflect on the two different journeys with the whole group, asking:

- What was each character's journey?
- How did the journeys differ from each other?
- Which character do they think changed more over the course of the play?
- Where their language was used, were there any differences?

## NOTES FROM THE REHEARSAL ROOM

Before rehearsals had begun, Iqbal made the choice to cast non-white actors in the roles of both Iago and Emilia.

This decision stimulated discussion around cultural identity. In rehearsals, the company were joined by Abdul-Rehman Malik, a London-based journalist, educator and organiser, who talked with them about the possibilities of representing Emilia as a practising Muslim: for example, whether or not she should wear a head scarf.

As Iago is often portrayed as a racist character whose hatred of Othello is motivated by racial difference, this casting choice immediately changes his motivation: the central belief that motivates his actions.

All of the actors were encouraged to think about the essential 'truth' for their character.



## ACTIVITY 2: CHARACTER TRUTHS

This activity will help students to familiarise themselves with the main characters, think about how the characters relate to each other in the play and will help them to develop an understanding of a character's motivation.

- Divide students into small groups and ask each group to look at one of the characters: Othello, Iago, Desdemona, Emilia, and Cassio.
- Ask each group to look at the list of their character's actions and statements (in the Resources).
- Now ask them to imagine that their character is a candidate in an election and they are campaigning to win everyone else round to their way of thinking.
- Invite them to come up with a single line, like a political slogan, that embodies their character's key truth. For example, Iago's slogan could be 'Don't wear your heart on your sleeve', or Desdemona's could be 'Nothing is more important than love'.
- Finally, invite each group to take it in turns to persuade the others that they are right.



Joanna Vanderham as Desdemona in *Othello*.  
Photo by Keith Pattison.



## ACTIVITY 3: VENICE AND CYPRUS

Action in the play moves, early on, from the Venetian court to the war-torn island of Cyprus. This activity will help students to understand the contrast between the worlds by looking in more detail at how the characters behave differently in each place.

### NOTES FROM THE REHEARSAL ROOM

Costume designer Fotini Dimou discussed with the company how the two worlds of Venice and Cyprus might look different from each other.

They considered the weather in both places, as well as the culture. Would Venice be fashionable? What about Cyprus – as a military culture, would the clothing look more utilitarian?

The company talked about developing a visual 'language' where Venice would be 'white' and Cyprus would be 'tanned'.

- Ask students to read the Resource entitled 'Two Worlds' which contrasts each character's actions in Venice and Cyprus. e.g. in Venice Othello makes a calm and confident speech to the court whereas in Cyprus Othello believes that Desdemona is unfaithful and reacts with murderous anger.
- Organise students into small groups.
- Encourage the groups to create a design for the two worlds, using the characters' actions to help them decide on the feel of each place. For example, what kind of world might Cyprus have to be in order to inspire the kind of things the characters do there? How could they put this across?
- Questions they might consider:
  - In what ways is life easier, harder, or otherwise different for their character when they travel to Cyprus?
    - Consider how familiar that world is to them. For example, Othello is comfortable being a military General whereas Desdemona's known world is Venice.
  - How might those differences be reflected visually?
  - For example, Cyprus is a violent place in the grip of war. What sort of colours, shapes and textures would they use to show this?
- Invite students to share their designs with the rest of the group.
- Reflect with the group:
  - What do all of the designs have in common?
  - What themes have the students identified?
  - Why is design so important when creating the worlds for this play?

## WAYS TO EXTEND THIS WORK

- In rehearsals, the company worked with a movement coach, Diane, in order to explore the vocabulary of dance that might influence their performance.
- They tried some traditional Cypriot dances, and also listened and danced to music from North Africa, such as Ganawa music/dance from Morocco  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0por-UC3fSQ>, Orchestre Faïçal - Ana melit ana melit  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DCtOfic1pUs>, Malnash Diyah (Spineless) by Maurice Louca  
<https://mauricelouca.bandcamp.com/track/malnash-diyah-spineless>
- Invite students to listen to/watch the music tracks linked above, and to think about how they would characterise this type of music.
- How could you reflect that in the way the characters move on stage?

# A MAN'S WORLD

## NOTES FROM THE REHEARSAL ROOM

In rehearsals, voice coach Alison Bomber worked with the company to explore different ways to 'get the words inside you', so that they would be really feeling the words and not saying them as an academic exercise.

The activity below is adapted from one of the exercises that the company did with Alison.



## ACTIVITY 4: OTHELLO'S SPEECHES

This activity invites students to explore two speeches of Othello's: one from near the beginning of the play, and the other from Act IV.



Hugh Quarshie as Othello in *Othello*. Photo by Keith Pattison.

By 'walking the speech' on their feet, students can directly experience the differences between the two speeches, as the change in Othello's state of mind between these two points is vividly reflected in the different rhythm and pace of the speeches.

Encourage students throughout to keep active and to keep the body alive, to keep their movement conscious and their attention focused on the speech.

- First, read through the two speeches as a whole group. How do they look different on the page?
- Ask everyone to get to their feet and begin walking, while you read the first speech.

- Ask them to begin by walking at a steady pace. When the speech reaches a full stop, everyone should stop, and then start walking again in a different direction.
- Now, read it a second time, and this time add the commas, colons and semi-colons – they can make you change direction but don't stop your flow.
- Then, move on to the second speech, and repeat the exercise.
  - First, ask students to stop every time you reach a full stop, and change direction.
  - Then, to change direction every time you reach a comma, colon, semi-colon or dash.
  - Finally, add in movements for question marks and exclamation marks.
- Discuss and reflect:
  - Compare and contrast the two speeches.
  - What differences did you notice when walking the speeches?
  - What does this suggest about how Othello is thinking and feeling at each point?
  - What is different about the imagery?



## ACTIVITY 5: HIERARCHY AND HATRED

### NOTES FROM THE REHEARSAL ROOM

Throughout rehearsals, Iqbal emphasised that Cyprus is a hostile and violent place, in the middle of a war, and the characters are there as soldiers. This context is always present and affects everything that takes place there.

Iago and Othello have been soldiers together for many years and have fought side by side in many life-threatening situations. This trust between them has been destroyed by Othello's decision to make Cassio – who has no experience as a soldier – his lieutenant.

This activity focuses on the main male characters Othello, Iago and Cassio, and their complex relationship with each other as soldiers.

- As a whole group, read through the three edited scenes in the Resource. While reading, ask students to think about the role of each man:
  - At the beginning of the play
  - Soon after arriving in Cyprus
  - At the end of the play
- Divide students into groups of three so that each group has an Othello, an Iago, and a Cassio. Note that for Scene 3, you will need a group of four (including Lodovico).
- Then ask each group to rehearse one of the three short scenes.
- In each scene, encourage students to think about who is in control; who can give orders, and who must take them? How will they represent that on

### WAYS TO EXTEND THIS WORK

- Ask students to research military marches.
- Invite them to discuss why marching is an important part of army training. Why is it so important for soldiers to work together and to trust each other?
- Encourage students to think about the relationship between soldiers who are fighting a battle together – e.g. all having to work together to fire a weapon or carry out a battle plan.
- Iago says that Cassio has very little experience of battle, unlike himself, and yet he has been promoted above him. How do you think this makes Iago feel?

stage? Are they standing or sitting, staying still or walking around?

- Remind students that these characters are all soldiers currently engaged in a battle campaign, and to think about how they would indicate that in their scene. For example, would the characters salute each other when they enter and exit?
  - During rehearsal Iqbal encouraged the actors to experiment with how they entered the scenes with news so encourage students to think about the impact this has.
- Ask each group to share their scenes with the rest of the class.
- Reflect as a whole group and discuss:
  - Which character was in control in each of the three scenes? How did this change?
  - Is there a difference between who appears to be in control, and who really has the power?
  - How does Othello change from the first scene to the second, and then from the second to the third? Does he lose status and power?

## INCONSTANCY

### NOTES FROM THE REHEARSAL ROOM

Water as a symbol is very important in this production; it represents inconstancy, as it is always flowing and changing. This links to the idea of Cyprus as an island, surrounded by a treacherous sea.

The activities below explore the way that Othello's loyalties and beliefs are shaken, and eventually change conclusively, during the course of this pivotal scene.



### ACTIVITY 6: DIVIDED LOYALTIES

This activity is an opportunity to explore in more detail the pivotal scene of Act 3 Scene 3, in which Iago successfully convinces Othello that Desdemona has been unfaithful to him. In rehearsals, the company broke this scene down in detail to look at exactly when, and how, Othello's trust in Desdemona is broken.

- Divide students into pairs.
- Using the short versions of each 'mini scene' of Act 3 Scene 3 in the Resources, ask each pair to rehearse one of the mini scenes.
- Then, show all of the scenes back to the rest of the group, in sequence.
- Discuss with students:
  - What are the key moments in this scene?
  - What changes during the course of the scene?
  - Who is in control at each stage?

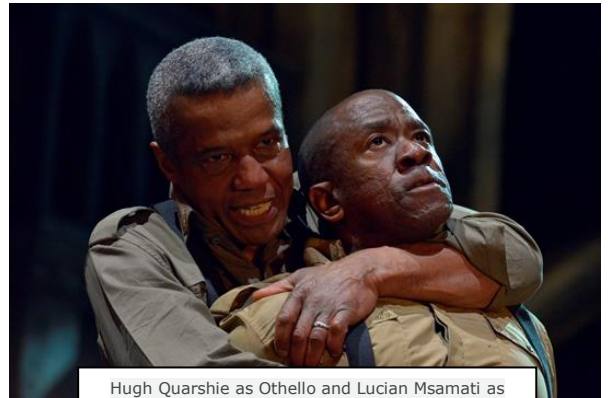




## ACTIVITY 7: TRUST GAMES

The following activity, which looks at one part of Act 3 Scene 3 in more detail, was used by the company in rehearsals when exploring ways to play this scene.

- Ask two students to play Othello and Iago, changing the pairs for each new way of playing the scene.
- Explain that during rehearsals Othello was able to improvise, while Iago stayed on script. As students experiment with this scene you may want to see what impact this has.
- Ask each pair in turn to play the scene in the following ways:
  - Play the scene with a ball, throwing it back and forth to each other. When do you throw it? When do you keep it?
  - Play the scene so that whenever Othello has had enough of what Iago is saying, he can cut in with his own line.
  - Play the scene using objects around the room – picking things up and seeing how that affects the text.
  - Play as if Iago is genuine in everything he says.
  - Play as if Othello doesn't believe anything Iago says.
- Reflect with students:
  - Who is in control in this scene?
  - What does Iago want?
  - Why does Iago use Cassio?



Hugh Quarshie as Othello and Lucian Msamati as Iago in *Othello*. Photo by Keith Pattison.

## THE RESOLUTION

### NOTES FROM THE REHEARSAL ROOM

When rehearsing the scene below (Act 4 Scene 3), the actors Ayesha Dharker (Emilia) and Joanna Vanderham (Desdemona) played with a pool of water in the middle of the stage. They experimented with different ways of interacting with the water, flicking it at each other as part of a game, or as if they wanted to disappear into it.



## ACTIVITY 8: PREPARING FOR THE END

*Othello* has a famous and tragic end, with three of the main characters murdered on the stage. This activity invites students to put themselves in the position of these three characters as they make their preparations for the final scene.

Encourage students to consider the journeys that the two women, as well as Othello himself, have taken during the course of the play.

How has the Desdemona of Act 1, who showed great strength in speaking up for Othello in front of her father and the Venetian court, found herself in the position of submitting to what she has reason to suspect may be her imminent death? Why does she still love and defend Othello when Emilia criticises him?

- First, divide students into pairs, and ask each pair to read the short extract from Act 4 Scene 3 (in the Resources).
- Assign a character to each pair. Invite them to discuss with their partners:
  - How does their character feel during this scene?
  - What does their character think about the events that have happened since arriving in Cyprus?
  - What is their character afraid might happen next?
  - What do they think their character would wish for, at this moment in the play?
- Having considered these questions, ask each pair to write down their answers, and then to share with the rest of the group.

### WAYS TO EXTEND THIS WORK

- Encourage them to think about how their character is feeling, and to reflect on the events of recent days and weeks. You could do this as a speech or as a writing activity.

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# RESOURCES

## THE STORY: FIVE KEY MOMENTS

### OTHELLO

1. Othello and Desdemona are recently married and Othello, the General of the Army, has just promoted Cassio to be his lieutenant instead of his more experienced Ensign Iago. Desdemona's father is angry about the marriage of his daughter and Othello explains to the Venetian Court how he wooed Desdemona with tales of his adventures at war.

*She Loved me for the dangers I had passed,  
And I loved her that she did pity them.*

2. Othello lands in Cyprus to fight against the Turks, although his ship arrives after everyone else's and Desdemona is already there when he arrives. Othello announces a party to celebrate Cyprus being safe and the newly promoted Cassio gets drunk and brawls with the other men. Othello punishes him for his drunkenness and violent behaviour by taking away his promotion.

*Cassio, I love thee,  
But never more be officer of mine.*

3. Cassio tries to get Othello to forgive him by sending musicians to play, but Othello has them sent away. Iago then tells Othello while they are inspecting the fortifications that he suspects Desdemona and Cassio are having an affair. At first, he doesn't believe it and even promotes Cassio again but then Iago tells him that he has seen Cassio with Desdemona's handkerchief.

*O, that the slave had forty thousand lives!  
One is too poor, too weak for my revenge.*

4. Othello then overhears Iago and Cassio talking and watches as the prostitute Bianca gives Cassio the handkerchief. A letter arrives from Venice calling Othello back, placing Cassio in charge, and Othello gets angry and hits Desdemona. Later that same evening he accuses Desdemona of being a whore even though she says she is not, and Emilia supports her. Othello tells Desdemona to wait for him in bed and send Emilia away. He hears Cassio cry out and assumes Iago must have killed him as planned. After this, Othello murders Desdemona, believing that she has been unfaithful to him.

*Yet I'll not shed her blood,  
Nor scar that whiter skin of hers than snow,  
And smooth as monumental alabaster:  
Yet she must die, else she'll betray more men.*

5. Emilia finds Desdemona dying. As she dies she says she has committed suicide and Emilia asks Othello what has happened. Emilia then realises what Iago has done and tells Othello the truth about the handkerchief which she helped to steal and plant in Cassio's room. Deeply distraught, he wounds Iago before killing himself.

*I kissed thee, ere I killed thee: no way but this,  
Killing myself, to die upon a kiss.*

## IAGO

1. Iago tells Rodorigo, a courtier in Venice, that he hates Othello because he chose Cassio as his lieutenant rather than him. He explains to the audience that he plans to have his revenge on him and persuade Rodorigo to raise money to help, promising to help him win Desdemona.

*O, sir, content you:  
I follow him to serve my turn upon him.*

2. Once the Army has moved to Cyprus and they are waiting for Othello to arrive Iago sees Cassio and Desdemona and decides to convince Othello something is happening between them. He then tricks Cassio into getting drunk, causing Othello to sack him.

*If I can fasten but one cup upon him,  
With that which he hath drunk tonight already,  
He'll be as full of quarrel and offence  
As my young mistress' dog.*

3. Iago continues his plot for revenge against Othello, telling him that Desdemona is unfaithful. He persuades his wife, Emilia, to give him Desdemona's handkerchief so that he can use it to convince Othello that Desdemona is disloyal. Iago takes the handkerchief and plants it in Cassio's room.

*I will in Cassio's lodging lose this napkin,  
And let him find it. Trifles light as air  
Are to the jealous confirmations strong  
As proofs of holy writ.*

4. Iago then stages a conversation with Cassio, asking him about the prostitute Bianca, for Othello to overhear. Iago uses this conversation to persuade Othello that Desdemona is unfaithful and tells Roderigo that he needs to kill Cassio to win Desdemona back. While Othello and Desdemona are alone in their room, Roderigo stabs Cassio in the leg and he cries out. Iago runs away, coming back and pretending to be outraged at Roderigo's attack on Cassio and killing him.

*O murd'rous slave! O villain! [He stabs Rodorigo]*

5. After Othello has murdered Desdemona and Othello realises what Iago has done he tries to kill him but Iago disarms him, kills Emilia and flees. As he escapes, Iago is caught but refuses to tell anyone his reasons for his actions. Iago is sentenced to death.

*Demand me nothing; what you know, you know:  
From this time forth I never will speak word.*

## CHARACTER TRUTHS: ACTIONS AND STATEMENTS

**OTHELLO**, the Moor, a general in military service of Venice

- A famous and successful General who has fought many battles
- Woos and marries Desdemona in Venice
- Sent to lead the army in Cyprus
- Is fooled by Iago into believing his wife is unfaithful
- Murders her in revenge
- Kills himself when realising she was in fact faithful to him

*Then must you speak*

*Of one that loved not wisely but too well;*

*Of one, not easily jealous but, being wrought,*

*Perplexed in the extreme;*

**IAGO**, a villain, Othello's flag-bearer

- Has known Othello for many years and fought with him
- Believed by Othello and others to be honest and trustworthy
- Plots his revenge on Othello for choosing Cassio as his lieutenant
- Carefully lays his plans resulting in the sacking of Cassio and then the deaths of Othello, Desdemona, Roderigo, and his own wife, Emilia

*My friend, thy husband, honest, honest Iago.*

**DESDEMONA**, daughter to Brabantio, wife to Othello

- Young and beautiful
- Secretly marries Othello and is disowned by her father
- Follows Othello to Cyprus
- Tries to defend Cassio to Othello
- Is murdered by Othello, who believes she has been unfaithful

*a maid*

*That paragons description and wild fame;*

*One that excels the quirks of blazoning pens,*

**CASSIO**, an honourable lieutenant

- A Florentine, well-educated and well connected but with no experience of battle
- Tricked by Iago into getting drunk and becoming embroiled in a fight, he loses his position
- Is nearly murdered by Roderigo who has been set up by Iago
- Finally is put in charge of the army in Cyprus after Othello's downfall

*A man that all his time*

*Hath founded his good fortunes on your Love;*

**EMILIA**, wife to Iago

- Works as a maid to Desdemona
- Is loyal to her husband although she doesn't always understand him
- Cares deeply for Desdemona, but is suspicious of Othello
- She is appalled when she realises what Iago has done
- Murdered by Iago at the end of the play

*Let husbands know*

*Their wives have sense like them: they see and smell,*

*And have their palates both for sweet and sour*

*As husbands have.*

## THE TWO WORLDS

### In VENICE

**OTHELLO**

makes a calm and confident speech to the court

**IAGO**

appears deferential to Othello while secretly plotting against him

**DESDEMONA**

explains to her father and to the court that she loves Othello

**CASSIO**

comes to tell Othello that the Duke wishes to see him

### In CYPRUS

believes that Desdemona is unfaithful and reacts with murderous anger

puts his plan of revenge into action, resulting in many deaths

allows herself to be alone with Othello even though she is scared of him

drinks himself into a stupor and is violent to Rodorigo



## **OTHELLO'S SPEECHES (Edited by RSC Education)**

### **Act I scene iii**

Most potent, grave, and reverend signiors,  
My very noble and approved good masters,  
That I have ta'en away this old man's daughter,  
It is most true; true, I have married her:  
The very head and front of my offending  
Hath this extent, no more. Rude am I in my speech,  
And little blessed with the soft phrase of peace:  
For since these arms of mine had seven years pith,  
Till now, some nine moons wasted, they have used  
Their dearest action in the tented field,  
And little of this great world can I speak,  
More than pertains to feats of broil and battle,  
And therefore little shall I grace my cause  
In speaking for myself. Yet, by your gracious patience,  
I will a round unvarnished tale deliver  
Of my whole course of love: what drugs, what charms,  
What conjuration and what mighty magic –  
For such proceeding I am charged withal –  
I won his daughter.

### **Act IV scene i**

Lie with her? Lie on her? We say lie on her when they belie her. Lie with her! Zounds, that's fulsome! Handkerchief – confession – Handkerchief! To confess and be hanged for his labour. First to be hanged and then to confess! I tremble at it. Nature would not invest herself in such shadowing passion without some instruction. It is not words that shakes me thus! Pish! Noses, ears and lips! Is't possible? – Confess? Handkerchief? O devil!

# OTHELLO, IAGO, CASSIO SCENES (Edited by RSC Education)

## 1. Beginning of the play (Act I scene ii)

OTHELLO But look, what lights come yond?

IAGO Those are the raised father and his friends:  
You were best go in.

OTHELLO Not I: I must be found.  
My parts, my title and my perfect soul  
Shall manifest me rightly. Is it they?

IAGO By Janus, I think no.

*Enter Cassio, with men bearing torches*  
[...]

CASSIO The duke does greet you, General,  
And he requires your haste-post-haste appearance  
Even on the instant.

OTHELLO What is the matter, think you?

CASSIO Something from Cyprus, as I may divine:  
It is a business of some heat. [...]

OTHELLO 'Tis well I am found by you.  
I will but spend a word here in the house  
And go with you. *[Exit]*

CASSIO Ancient, what makes he here?

IAGO Faith, he tonight hath boarded a land carack:  
If it prove lawful prize, he's made for ever.

CASSIO I do not understand.

IAGO He's married.

CASSIO To who?

IAGO Marry, to— Come, captain, will you go?

## 2. In Cyprus (Act 2 scene iii)

**OTHELLO**                               What is the matter, masters?  
Honest Iago, that looks dead with grieving,  
Speak, who began this? On thy love, I charge thee.

**IAGO**                                       [...] I cannot speak  
Any beginning to this peevish odds;  
And would in action glorious I had lost  
Those legs that brought me to a part of it.

**OTHELLO**                               How comes it, Michael, you are thus forgot?

**CASSIO**                               I pray you pardon me: I cannot speak.  
[...]

**OTHELLO**                               Give me to know  
How this foul rout began, who set it on;  
[...] 'Tis monstrous. Iago, who began't?

[...]  
**IAGO**                                       I had rather have this tongue cut from my mouth  
Than it should do offence to Michael Cassio.  
Yet, I persuade myself, to speak the truth  
Shall nothing wrong him. [...]

**OTHELLO**                               I know, Iago,  
Thy honesty and love doth mince this matter,  
Making it light to Cassio. Cassio, I love thee,  
But never more be officer of mine.

### 3. At the end (Act V scene ii)

**LODOVICO** O thou Othello, thou was once so good,  
Fallen in the practice of a damned slave,  
What shall be said to thee?

**OTHELLO** Why, anything:  
An honourable murderer, if you will:  
For nought did I in hate, but all in honour.

**LODOVICO** This wretch hath part confessed his villainy.  
Did you and he consent in Cassio's death?

**OTHELLO** Ay.

**CASSIO** Dear General, I never gave you cause.

**OTHELLO** I do believe it, and I ask your pardon.  
Will you, I pray, demand that demi-devil  
Why he hath thus ensnared my soul and body?

**IAGO** Demand me nothing; what you know, you know:  
From this time forth I never will speak word.

## ACT 3 Scene 3 – MINI SCENES (Edited by RSC Education)

1. Desdemona promises Cassio that she will do all she can to mend the breach between him and Othello.

*Be thou assured, good Cassio, I will do  
All my abilities in thy behalf.*

2. Desdemona makes Othello promise that he will speak to Cassio soon.

*Prithee, no more: let him come when he will;  
I will deny thee nothing.*

3. Iago hints to Othello (pretending to be reluctant to speak) that he suspects Desdemona of being unfaithful with Cassio.

*Look to your wife; observe her well with Cassio,  
Wear your eyes thus: not jealous nor secure.  
I would not have your free and noble nature,  
Out of self-bounty, be abused.*

4. Othello is unsure over whether he believes Iago, or trusts Desdemona more. He says he has a headache; she tries to bind his head with her handkerchief, but he pushes it away.

*Your napkin is too little. [He puts the handkerchief from him and she drops it]  
Let it alone. Come, I'll go in with you*

5. Emilia finds the dropped handkerchief and gives it to Iago, knowing he wants it, but not knowing why.

*What he will do with it  
Heaven knows, not I:  
I nothing, but to please his fantasy.*

6. Othello demands proof from Iago of Desdemona's infidelity. Iago tells him that he overheard Cassio talking about her in his sleep, and also that he has seen Cassio with Desdemona's handkerchief.

*I know not that: but such a handkerchief –  
I am sure it was your wife's – did I today  
See Cassio wipe his beard with.*

7. Othello vows to murder Desdemona, and makes Iago promise that he will kill Cassio.

*I will withdraw  
To furnish me with some swift means of death  
For the fair devil. Now art thou my lieutenant.*

## OTHELLO AND IAGO DIALOGUE (Edited by RSC Education)

### Act 1 Scene 3

**IAGO** My noble lord -

**OTHELLO** What dost thou say, Iago?

**IAGO** Did Michael Cassio,  
When you wooed my lady, know of your love?

**OTHELLO** He did, from first to last. Why dost thou ask?

**IAGO** But for a satisfaction of my thought -  
No further harm.

**OTHELLO** Why of thy thought, Iago?

**IAGO** I did not think he had been acquainted with her.

**OTHELLO** O, yes, and went between us very oft.

**IAGO** Indeed!

**OTHELLO** Indeed? Ay, indeed. Discern'st thou aught in that?  
Is he not honest?

**IAGO** Honest, my lord?

**OTHELLO** Honest? Ay, honest.

**IAGO** My lord, for aught I know.

**OTHELLO** What dost thou think?

**IAGO** Think, my lord?

**OTHELLO** Think, my lord? By heaven, he echo'st me,  
As if there were some monster in his thought  
Too hideous to be shown. Thou dost mean something.

## ACT 4 Scene 3 (Edited by RSC Education)

DESDEMONA Your honour is most welcome.

OTHELLO Will you walk, sir?  
O, Desdemona!

DESDEMONA My lord?

OTHELLO Get you to bed on th' instant, I will be returned forthwith. Dismiss your attendant there. Look't be done.

DESDEMONA I will, my lord.

*Exit Othello*

EMILIA How goes it now? He looks gentler than he did.

DESDEMONA He says he will return incontinent,  
And hath commanded me to go to bed,  
And bid me to dismiss you.

EMILIA Dismiss me?

DESDEMONA It was his bidding: therefore, good Emilia,  
Give me my nightly wearing, and adieu.  
We must not now displease him.

EMILIA I would you had never seen him.

DESDEMONA So would not I: my love doth so approve him  
That even his stubbornness, his checks, his frowns –  
Prithee, unpin me – have grace and favour in them.

EMILIA I have laid those sheets you bade me, on the bed.

DESDEMONA All's one.– Good faith, how foolish are our minds!  
If I do die before, prithee shroud me  
In one of those same sheets.

EMILIA Come, come, you talk.