

10 – IAGO'S FIRST SOLILOQUY

What effect does direct address to the audience have?

WHAT YOU NEED

- A piece of note paper, or a notebook and something to write with.
- A computer with internet connection, ready to watch these clips: [Exploring a Soliloquy](#) and [Iago's Soliloquy in Performance](#).
- A copy of Act 1 Scene 3 to read, either on the page or onscreen.

ACTIVITY

- Research the definition of 'Soliloquy.'
- Watch the video [Exploring a Soliloquy](#). (This is of the actor Pappa Essiedu talking about *Hamlet*, but his points can be applied to other soliloquies.)
- Read through Iago's speech at the end of Act 1 Scene 3, beginning '*Thus do I ever make my fool my purse.*' This is the first time in the play Iago, or indeed any character, directly addresses the audience.
- Think about the three topics that were explored in the video: Punctuation, Sounds and Line Endings. Circle or make a note of examples in Iago's speech where these elements seem interesting to you. What effects do these interesting moments have on the listener?
- Watch the soliloquy in performance [here](#), performed by Lucian Msamati.
- Notice moments where the actor has decided to engage directly with the audience. What effect does this have?
- What position does it put the audience in, hearing first-hand from the villain of the play and their intentions?

EXTENSION

- Samuel Taylor Coleridge claims that Iago's soliloquies reveal '*the motive-hunting of motiveless malignity.*' Summarise if you agree with this statement or not.
- To what extent do you agree that Iago makes up the plan to 'abuse Othello's ear' on the spot? What effect does the audience seeing this have?