

Worksheet 3 – Act 1, Scene 1: Iago and Roderigo Plot

Review: Lecture 2

- ✓ In the last lecture, what parallel did Prof. McRae draw between King James I and the character Othello?

Recall: Lecture 3

Answer these questions after watching the video lecture to check how much you remember about the lecture and the play.

- Which commonly-used phrase does Shakespeare coin at the start of *Othello*?
 - Jealousy is a green-eyed monster
 - In my heart of hearts
 - Wearing your heart on your sleeve
 - A wild-goose chase
- Why is it significant that Iago calls Cassio a 'Florentine'? *Choose two correct answers.*
 - It shows Cassio is also an outsider in Venice
 - Florentines were known to be skilled fighters
 - Because London audiences didn't like people from Florence
 - Because Florence and Venice were competitors in trade
- What happened to King Charles I?
 - He started a war with Italy
 - He killed his father, King James I
 - He had his wife executed for adultery
 - He was executed by his subjects

Bonus point: Why is this significant to our understanding of *Othello*?

Analysis

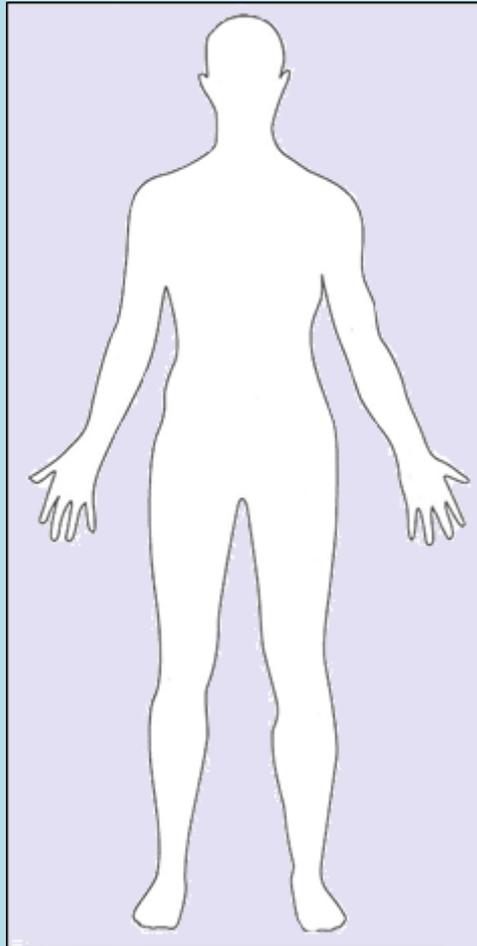
4. Write out the quotation below from Iago's speech (lines 7-23) in modern English. *The first two lines have been done for you.*

**Three great ones of the city,
In personal suit to make me his lieutenant,
Off-capp'd to him:** and, by the faith of man,
I know my price, I am worth no worse a place:
But he; as loving his own pride and purposes,
Evades them, with a bombast circumstance
Horribly stuff'd with epithets of war;
And, in conclusion,
Nonsuits my mediators; for, 'Certes,' says he,
'I have already chose my officer.'
And what was he?
Forsooth, a great arithmetician,
One Michael Cassio, a Florentine,
A fellow almost damn'd in a fair wife;
That never set a squadron in the field,
Nor the division of a battle knows
More than a spinster

**Three prestigious people from
Venice, trying to make me
Othello's lieutenant, went and
paid their respects to him...**

5. How is the theme of jealousy introduced in the speech above?
6. What might Iago mean when he says “I am not what I am” (line 66)?
7. Create a character profile for Iago using the template below:
 - In the grey area, collect words that describe how Iago appears to the audience at this point in the play.
 - In the white area, collect words that hint at what Iago is concealing.

Make sure you include quotations from Act 1, Scene 1.



Evaluation

8. The first recorded performance of *Othello* took place on 1st November 1604 in the Banqueting House at Whitehall, the London palace of King James I. Write a diary entry by a member of the court, describing their reaction to the first scene of the play.

Consider:

- That King James I himself is present at the performance
- Concerns people had in court about King James being an outsider
- The ‘revolutionary’ sentiment of Iago’s line ‘all masters/ cannot be truly follow’d’
- How Iago presents himself to the audience at the start of the play
- The contrast raised between seeming and being

Extension: Research the first performance of *Othello*, to include accurate historical details in your diary entry about performances in the Banqueting House.

Glossary

- **Coin** – (*verb; of language*) to invent a new word or phrase
- **Colonial** – describing a system of rule where a country is under the full or partial political control of another country, and is occupied by settlers from that country.
e.g. In the nineteenth century, Britain enacted colonial rule in India, exploiting people and holding power by force.
- **Spinster** – an older unmarried woman
- **Topical** – relating to current affairs
e.g. This film covers several topical subjects.
- **Fawning** – displaying exaggerated flattery
- **Devilment** – mischief
- **Complicit** – being responsible for, or involved in, an action which is morally wrong
e.g. As the driver of the getaway car, you are complicit in the bank robbery.