

**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**

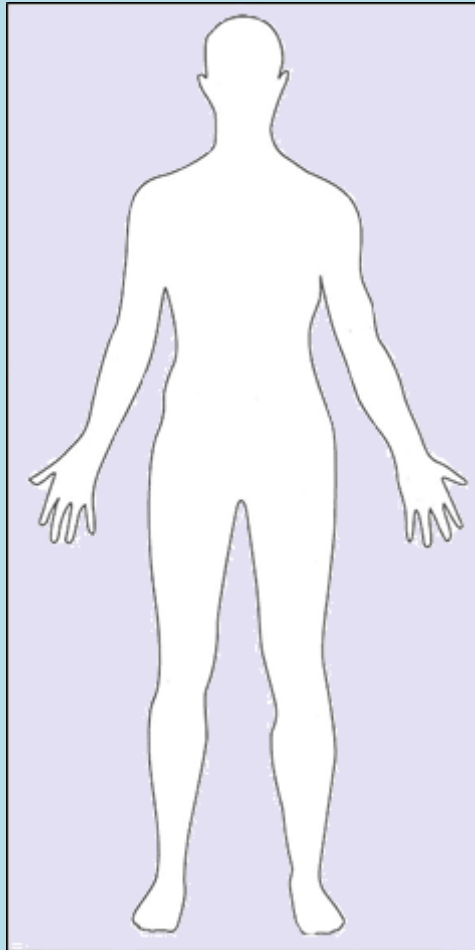
4. Write out the quotation below from Iago's speech (lines 7-23) in modern English. *The first two lines have been done for you.*

**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 1<sup>st</sup> 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.*