

Othello - iago's deception of roderigo

[Literature](#), [Character](#)



IB English SL Homework Passage commentary — Othello Act 1 Scene iii:

Lines 348 — 399 In this passage, Iago is trying to persuade Roderigo that they both have a common enemy, Othello, and that they should work together in their revenge against him. Iago wants revenge because Othello gave the promotion of lieutenant to Cassio instead of him. Roderigo wants revenge because Othello is married to Desdemona, the woman Roderigo is madly in love with. The passage then ends with Roderigo leaving the stage, leaving Iago alone to recite a soliloquy, revealing his true emotions to the audience for the first time. In his first speech, Iago seems very controlling over Roderigo; he starts his speech by two consecutive gestures implicating that he is the superior character in the scenario. He starts by telling Roderigo how he feels towards Iago, "Thou art sure of me", leaving no room for Roderigo to question him. This boldly tells the audience that Iago is the decision maker in this duo, as he is making an important decision for Roderigo, whether to trust Iago or not. Roderigo's indecision has made him 'weak'. Iago then immediately orders Roderigo to go 'make money', which further emphasizes Iago's superiority. Iago then goes on to trying to comfort Roderigo with the orders and decisions Iago is making for him, in a sense, by showing him how they are both in common and want the same final outcome (that they both hate Othello and want him to suffer). "I have told thee often, and I retell thee again and again, I hate the moor", Iago uses the words 'again and again' to emphasize and make clear and definite how much he loathes Othello, and then says 'my cause is hearted' to express how important it is for him to have revenge on Othello (he craves it deep down in his heart, hence it is hearted). Iago then proposes that he and Roderigo

should work together in an accumulative effort to avenge against Othello, and continues to try and persuade him to trust him. He says ' if thou canst cuckold him, thou dost thyself a pleasure, me a sport' to ensure Roderigo that he can help him in sleeping with Desdemona, which will bring great pleasure to Roderigo, and will be easy to accomplish for Iago, much like a ' sport'. The word ' sport' is particularly interesting as, in my opinion, it makes Iago seem very wicked because it seems as if sabotaging relationships is a sport to him, an act that brings him joy and others sorrow. ' For I mine own gained.... But for my sport and profit', this sentence which Iago says in his soliloquy, suggests to the audience that Iago is a selfish or self-empowering person, meaning that he would not spend time or waste knowledge unless it somehow benefited him. In Iago's soliloquy, it is the first time the audience gets to see how he processes the events of the play and how he thinks and plans his revenge against Othello. He reveals how he plans to turn Othello and Cassio against one another and, by doing so, ' eliminating two birds with one stone. This also stimulates a sense of suspense, as the audience is aware of the damage that will happen in the future but are not aware of how it will happen. During the soliloquy, Iago presents his two-faced character, which the audience by now will have suspected he has. After Roderigo leaves, Iago immediately starts his soliloquy by expressing how much of a fool Roderigo is, and how Iago is only using him as a sort of personal piggy bank. " Thus do I ever make my fool my purse". This immediately makes it clear and obvious to the audience that Iago is not what he seems and what the other characters believe him to be, honest and loyal. This bluntly imprints Iago's true personality into the minds of the audience.