

Introductory acts of othello and long day's journey into night



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Introductory acts are normally a very crucial part of plays in drama. They serve as a foundation, introducing main characters and the plot, and they also capture the audience's attention making them anticipate what is to come in later acts. An effective introduction is one that presents its main features, such as characters, plot and themes, in a compelling manner that impacts the audience. Although the plays *Othello* and *Long Day's Journey into Night* have very different introductory acts, they are both still effective.

To begin with, the introductory act in *Long Day's Journey into Night* serves as an effective basis for the play, enticingly introducing the main aspects. The four family members and main characters are presented to the audience, just as in *Othello* primary characters, as well as a few secondary characters, are revealed in the first act. In the beginning of *A Long Day's Journey into Night*, it almost seems as though the play centers on a happy, normal family. It begins just after the family breakfast, which is a significant daily ritual when families come together to connect. However, as the first act progresses, the audience begins to realize that this is not so, especially after the major quarrel between James Tyrone and his son Jamie. This argument introduces one of the main themes in the play, and that is James Tyrone's miserliness and the effects it has on his family. Jamie and his father have a very tense relationship and often gets into arguments, with Jamie blaming his father for most of the problems occurring in the family, such as Edmund's illness, "It might never have happened if you'd sent him to a real doctor when he first got sick," and the initiation of Mary's morphine addiction "...he was another cheap quack like Hardy! You wouldn't pay for a first-rate-". The family seems to be on a downward spiral, and Mary, therefore, sinks back

into her old ways, revealing another major theme, whereby the characters are stuck and do not want to move forward.

Much like Long Day's Journey into Night, the first act in Othello effectively captures the audience's attention with a compelling introduction. This play begins in the middle of a conversation between Iago and Rodrigo which quickly reveals the first plot of the play. We learn that Iago is the antagonist, willing to do anything to get revenge on Othello for choosing Cassio for a promotion instead of him, "I know my price, I am worth no worse a place". Soon after, we are introduced to Barbantio, Desdemona's father, who has just learned of his daughter's elopement to Othello and is enraged. Although Othello is a respected man in Venice, the marriage is unacceptable because of his different racial background. This brings about the prevailing theme of racism in the play and betrayal in the play. Murray Carlin alleges, "Othello is about colour, and nothing but colour." Although Othello, as the protagonist, is not introduced in this first act, his importance is made clear. The playwright of Othello introduces major characters and themes, as well as the plot in the introductory act, just as the playwright of Long Day's Journey into Night does. It is done effectively, even though both playwrights have a different style of writing.

Furthermore, the introductory acts in both plays are proved to be effective because of the impact they have on audiences. Long Day's Journey into Night is a modern play, thus is intended for a modern audience, while Othello is a classic play written in the Elizabethan era and was intended for an Elizabethan audience. Nonetheless, the first act of both plays impacted their audience. The conflict in Act 1 of Long Day's Journey into Night between <https://assignbuster.com/introductory-acts-of-othello-and-long-days-journey-into-night/>

James Tyrone and Jamie excites the audience as they learn more information about the dysfunctional family members. They learn about Edmund's illness as well as Mary's addiction. The audience was also shocked when they found out about Mary's use of morphine again at the end of the act, " Her long fingers, warped and knotted by rheumatism, drum on the arms of the chair, driven by an insistent life of their own, without her consent." According to critic Lewis Gannett, " No play Eugene O'Neill ever wrote speaks more eloquently to the reader..." Moreover, in Othello, the protagonist who bears the same name as the play is notably absent in the first act. This actually impacts the audience as they are anticipating his reveal in the next act. They await the confrontation between him and Barbantio on his marriage, and they are also anticipating Iago's plans for revenge and how it would be executed in later acts. Critic Edward Pechter said, " Othello has become the tragedy of choice for the present generation."

Although both plays Othello and Long Day's Journey into Night are different in many ways, the plays share a common aspect in a compelling introductory act. They both introduced main characters effectively and presented a few major themes and the plot. This, along with their style of writing, made audiences excited for more and left them in anticipation and suspense for what is to come.