

# Othello

Literature



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Othello Questions part one A. Othello: Act I, iii, 86-104 and I, iii, 142-184. In the first passage Othello shows himself as a man of action and a soldier, and he is very proud of this fact because he mentions how his arms are usually occupied in battles. He is less confident about his powers of eloquence and seems surprised that he somehow managed to conquer the heart of Desdemona. He puts this down to magic, as if their love is caused by some sort of drug, which shows his modesty and his gratitude at this surprising turn of events. In the second passage he appears as a somewhat boastful person, telling tales of his exotic past, but he is doing this to please and entertain people, not for his own glory.

B. Iago: Act I, iii, 356-382.

Iago does not hold with notions of love and fidelity. He sees the relationship between Othello and Desdemona simply in terms of passion and lust. He is judging them by the standards of his own character. He thinks that Desdemona will soon be tired of the exotic Moor, and that she is just captivated for the time being because they are both young. He is advising Roderigo not to take things so seriously, and to forget about drowning himself, and to make money and enjoy himself instead, because times will soon change.

Othello questions part two.

1. Iago is angry because Cassio has been promoted by Othello, and Iago wanted that job.
2. Brabantio is a senator of Venice and the father of Desdemona. Roderigo and Iago wake him up to tell him that his daughter has been taken away to be the wife of Othello.
3. Iago is duty bound to work for Othello, and so he cannot be seen stirring

up trouble about Othello's marriage to Desdemona. He rushes off to make it look as if he is supporting Othello.

4. Roderigo is in love with Desdemona, but her father Brabantio has already told Roderigo that Desdemona is not for him.

5. Brabantia is not happy about the marriage. He thinks it is a betrayal of him, because Othello is a Moor, and not the kind of husband he wanted for his daughter. His first instinct is to look for weapons to take revenge.

6. The Duke is having a council meeting and wants all his loyal people to be there, including Othello.

7. The Turks, also known as Ottomans, are advancing towards Venice in boats, and they have got as far as Cyprus.

8. The Duke sends for Desdemona in order to find out who is telling the truth.

9. Roderigo is in despair because he knows he has lost Desdemona to Othello, and he wants to kill himself by drowning. Iago tells him it is not worth it, and that Desdemona will soon tire of the Moor.

10. Othello is a Moor with dark skin. This means he is not a Christian, and is despised by the established courtiers in Venice. The Duke respects him because he has fought valiantly for Venice and is loyal to the Duke.

11. Brabantio tells Othello that Desdemona has betrayed her father, and so she is likely also to betray Othello.

12. They seem to love each other very much, and so it looks like they will stay together.

13. Iago says that Desdemona will not be faithful because she will soon tire of Othello. He thinks that she loves him only for reasons of lust, and it is possible also that even at this early stage he is thinking of ways to make

sure that she does not stay married to Othello.

14. Iago hates Othello for a lot of different reasons. Othello is more successful in the court than Iago, and he is also evidently more successful with the ladies. Iago resents this, and thinks Othello is a hypocrite because he puts on airs and graces as an honourable member of Venetian society. Iago thinks Othello is an outsider, and does not deserve this high status. He is jealous, and does not want to carry on serving Othello.

15. Iago is very insensitive to Othello and he shows that he is intolerant of Othello's cultural and racial origins. Usually he refers to Othello in a way that stresses his difference, for example, calling him "the Moor" and making analogies such as an old black ram, or a Barbary horse. These are disrespectful references referring to the colour of Othello's skin and suggesting that he is an animal, and not a proper human being.