

## A Level Literature Paper One – Othello - Knowledge Organiser

Assessment: Essay on a critical view of love in *Othello* supported by an extract.

Possible topics: Attitudes to love of the key characters (Othello, Desdemona, Emilia, Iago, Brabantio, Roderigo, Cassio,), father/daughter love, love and marriage, female attitudes to love, male attitudes to love, love and race, sex and desire, love and control, jealousy, love and honour, love and class.

"I am not what I am" – Iago (1.1)	"An old black ram is tupping your white ewe" – Iago (1.1)
"she shunned the wealthy curled darlings of our nation... run from her guardage to the sooty bosom of such a thing as thou" – Brabantio (1.2)	"for your sake, jewel, I am glad at soul I have no other child" "she has deceived her father and may thee" Brabantio (1.3)
"moth of peace" – Desdemona (1.3)	"she gave me for my pains a world of sighs", "she loved me for the dangers I had passed" – Othello about him and Desdemona's love (1.3)
"twixt my sheets, he's done my office" – Iago's suspicions (1.3)	"I will incontinently drown myself" Roderigo as Petrarchan lover (1.3)
"My fair warrior" – Othello (2.1)	"to suckle fools and chronicle small beer" – Iago (2.1)
"the divine Desdemona" – Cassio (2.1)	"The riches of the ship is come onshore" – Cassio (2.1)
"I do suspect the lusty Moor, hath leap'd into my seat" – Iago 2.1	"most fresh and delicate creature" – Cassio Versus "full of game" – Iago (2.3)
"Are we turned Turk?" – Othello 2.3	"His soul is so enfeathered to her love" – Iago (2.3)
"Out of her own goodness make the net that shall enmesh them all" – Iago 2.3	"And when I love thee not, chaos is come again." – Othello (3.3)
"beware my lord of jealousy: It is the green-eyed monster" – Iago (3.3)	"Haply for I am black and have not those soft parts of conversation that chamberers have" – Othello (3.3)
Othello would rather be a "toad" than "keep a corner in the thing I love for others' uses" (3.3)	"You have a thing for me? It is a common thing!" (3.3) Iago to Emilia
"I had been happy if the general camp, pioneers and all, had tasted her sweet body – So I had nothing known." Othello (3)	"Her name, that was as fresh as Dian's visage is now begrimed and black as mine own face" – Othello (3.3)
"tear her all to pieces" and he calls her a "lewd minx" Othello (3.3)	"did an Egyptian to my mother give" and "while she kept it twould make her amiable and subdue my father". Othello (3.4)
"They are all but stomachs and we all but food.. they belch us" – Emilia (3.4)	"you are welcome sir to Cyprus – goats and monkeys" – Othello (4.1)
"She will sing the savageness out of a bear" – Othello (4.1)	"this would not be believed in Venice" – Lodovico (4.1)
Dost thou in conscience think that there be women do abuse their husbands In such gross kind?... Desdemona (4.3)	"have not we affections, Desires for sport, and frailty, as men have?" Emilia (4.3)
"Who would not make her husband a cuckold to make him a monarch" – Emilia (4.3)	"He hath a daily beauty in his life that makes me ugly" Iago on Cassio (5.1)
"She must die, else she'll betray more men" – Othello (5.2)	"the more angel she, and you the blacker devil" – Emilia (5.2)
"Nobody – I myself. Farewell. commend me to my kind lord" – Desdemona (5.2)	Tis proper I obey him but not now"; "So speaking as I think, alas, I die." Emilia (5.2)
"Demand me nothing. What you know, you know." Iago (5.2)	"Of one that loved not wisely but too well" – Othello (5.2)
"threw a pearl away" – Othello on Desdemona (5.2)	"the base Indian", "the Arabian trees", "a malignant and turbaned Turk", - Othello (5.2)

History, Typicality and Performances (A03 and A04)	Shakespeare's use of language and drama (A02)
<p>Typicality – Aaron in Titus Andronicus, Kate in the Taming of the Shrew, femininity in King Lear Santiago the Moor Slayer Source material – Cinthio's Moorish Captain (shortened time frame) Ottoman wars/Islamic fear Expectations of a woman in (not) making a love match Reputation of Venice Attitudes to race – visit of the Moorish ambassador Jesus's betrayal (1.2) Satan represented as Moorish; Wedding sheets Performance – white actor wearing "black-face" Royal Shakespeare Company 2015 (Quarshie-Msamati, both black) National Theatre 2013 (Lester-Kinnear) Othello (Film – 1995, Fishburne-Branagh)</p>	<p>Iago's soliloquies Dramatic irony <i>In Media Res</i> Short time frame [rushed love] Locations (Cyprus versus Venice) Hamartia, Catharsis, Peripeteia Beginning (Roderigo and Iago) Use of comedic elements Blank Verse (especially Othello) breakdown of Othello's lexis and syntax Iago's prose versus blank verse Symbolism of the handkerchief Oxymoron Imagery of: poison, hell and the devil, animals and insects, the sea, wars and soldiers, race and otherness (black and white), jewels and possessions, physical pain.</p>

Critical Views
<p><i>Views of Desdemona</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• She is the "perfect wife" Camden</li> <li>• "sweetness" AC Bradley</li> <li>• "this pathetic, girlish, nearly-blank-sheet Desdemona". AP Rossiter</li> <li>• Marilyn French: "accepts that she must be obedient"</li> <li>• Desdemona proves to be "too-knowing, too independent" – she is punished by patriarchy (Jardine) and yet shows "exemplary passivity in adversity"</li> <li>• Tennenhouse: silencing of female political voice</li> </ul> <p><i>Views of Othello</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He is to "trustful, open, passionate... so noble he inspires a passion of mingled love and pity" (AC Bradley)</li> <li>• Othello is a "terrible exposure of human weakness" (TS Eliot)</li> <li>• Othello is unfit for marriage: "the stuff of which he is made begins at once to deteriorate". Othello "has a propensity to jealousy and possesses a weak character"(Leavis)</li> </ul> <p><i>Views of Iago</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Iago – "motiveless malignity" (Coleridge)</li> <li>• Iago and his male wisdom destroy the feminine world (e.g. Emilia, Desdemona, Othello, Roderigo) (French)</li> <li>• Iago is in love with Othello/jealous of Cassio</li> <li>• 'Psychologically Iago is a slighted man powerfully possessed by hatred against a master who (as he thinks) has kept him down, and by envy for a man he despises who has been promoted over him.' (Coghill)</li> <li>• 'He is monstrous because, faced with the manifold richness of experience, his only reaction is calculation and the desire to manipulate ....' (Gardner)</li> <li>• We no longer feel... the ubiquity of Satan, but... Iago is still alive and kicking and filling migrants' letterboxes with excrement.' (Greer)</li> <li>• 'The audience becomes complicit in Iago's intention and... is soon involved in his vengeful plotting. ... the audience... share Iago's delight in his own powers of evil invention.' (McEvoy)</li> </ul> <p><i>Othello and Race</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "critique of racial and sexual injustice" (Ryan)</li> <li>• "I am left with a nagging doubt: if a black actor plays Othello does he not risk making racial stereotypes seem legitimate and even true." (Quarshie)</li> </ul>