**Othello Work Booklet**  (160) (160) Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Due dates for various tasks will be given throughout the booklet. Use your time wisely and do not procrastinate.

**General Tasks:**

**Hotseat**: At the end of certain scenes, several students will be asked to volunteer into the role of a character within that scene. (If no one volunteers, Ms. Proch may assign, but it is not nearly as fun, and everyone has to do it at least once.) Ms. Proch and other students ask questions to the selected students about what’s going on in the scene just read. These students must answer the questions in the persona of whichever character they have been assigned. In other words, the students must speak “in the shoes” of the selected character.

For example, at the end of I.i.: Roderigo, do you really think you can win Desdemona’s love by ratting on her to her father? What do you think of his initial hostility to you? Do you really think you can win him over?

Hotseat is an excellent technique for delving into the characters and plot, and it is also a way to deal with specific lines and to explore varying interpretations. For example, I.i.66: Iago, what do you mean when you say to Roderigo, I am not what I am? How much do you actually want Roderigo to know? At this point, how much do you actually know of your plan and how it will unfold? (10 marks for being in the hot seat)

**Video**: As well, the class will be split up into groups of 5. Each group will be responsible for re enacting an entire act from the play. The group has options of filming their video and creating a video, or memorizing a script and performing it in front of the class. For those who do not like acting, I am assuming you will have a smaller role OR you will be more heavily involved in another portion of the project i.e. filming, editing, scripting, etc. Your group will set the due date for your video, keeping in mind that all of the due dates will differentiate. I will give you a basic timeline, and your group’s video will be due on the day you set within reason.

40 Marks for the video. Please see rubric.

As you read, look for these recurring images and motifs:

- spiders, webs, ensnaring  
- honesty and loyalty  
- what seems versus what is - jealousy  
- proof versus suspicion  
- women as whores  
- men as users

**Act One and Act Two Projects**

**Three projects for Act One and Two: All must be completed by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, but I suggest you budget your time well.**

1. Othello claims to have one won Desdomona with his stories of great adventure. Choose one of the following poems. Print this poem off, annotate it, and summarize the adventure that takes place within the poem. Hand this in please. (10)

* -“The Highwayman” – Alfred Noyes
* -“Kubla Khan”- Samuel Taylor Coleridge
* “The Lady of Shallot” – Alfred Lord Tennyson
* “Rime of the Ancient Mariner” – Samuel Taylor Coleridge
* “Ulysses”- Alfred Lord Tennyson

1. Iago has multiple soliloquies where he addresses “no one” but the audience. In this activity, you will choose one of his soliloquies. (end of Scene 1.3, 2.1 and 2.3.) Once you have chosen this soliloquy, answer the following questions. These questions must be typed. (20) 10 for the questions, and 10 for the soliloquy.

* What is he saying?
* Any figurative language being used? If so, list it.
* How is his rheotoirc? His tone?
* What is he revealing about himself?

Copy and paste his soliloquy on one side on the page, and on the other side of the page create your own “No Fear Shakespeare” of the chosen soliloquy. In other words, but the soliloquy into your own words. If the soliloquy uses any figurative language, or literary devices, you should attempt to use literary devices in your own version. Once you have done this, answer the following questions:

* what did you include and why?
* What did you choose to omit and cut out and why?
* What tone did you use?
* Did you use any literary devices? If so, what?

If you are in need of a template, you may use and modify the one made on the blog entitled No fear Shakespeare Activity. You may use No Fear Shakespeare to help your translation, but you may not copy and paste it.

1. Iago on Trail. (20) Marks to be done by Peer Editing/Self Editing and everyone must speak at least ONCE during the debate.

Choose what side you would like to be on:

Iago Defense

Iago Prosecution

You must decide on an argument that proves Iago’s guilty or innocent. Upon your decision, the class will be split and a debate will take place. Ms. Proch will act as the facilitator and there will be an outside judge. If there are two many people on one side, you may be forced to choose a side you do not necessarily agree with just so the debate may take place.

Upon selection, your group must find textual evidence to prove your point. Consider his motives, his actions, and his relationships.

This will be a structured debate. The blog will have an example of what the debate will look like, and it should take approximately 40-60 minutes. You will need an opening statement, closing arguments, and strong, textual evidence. You will also be put on the spot to defend or prosecute Iago.

**Act Three** (5) Everyone must contribute to the conversation

Act 3 is a turning point in the play.  It is where we see Iago do some of his best work.  We can discuss the changes in the characters, what is going on in the scenes, etc., and it allows us to break down the scenes and figure out what's going on easier than reading it would do. Therefore, we are going to have a class discussion regarding the Act Three questions, and the following questions:

* What is Iago doing to Othello?
* What is Iago convincing Othello, and how is he doing it? (his language, rhetoric, etc.)
* What is Iago using as proof?
* How do we begin to see Othello changing?
* Come up with a concluding sentence that sums up this scene.

**Act Four**

Songs are often overlooked in Shakespeare's plays; this lack of attention will be addressed by having students dramatize Desdemona's "Willow Song." Creating a choral reading, singing and performing the song, or staging a music video helps students recognize how music and lyrics contribute to the mood and meaning of a scene. The students' creativity and active participation in whatever form the dramatization takes will make both the song and scene more memorable.

Recall any plays you have seen, or movies that have music in them. We are going to create a performance of the song Othello. Go back and look at Act Four Scene 3 Lines 38-54.

You will be split up into groups 3-5, and you will prepare a dramatization of Desdemona’s song. Each group will "script" the song, parceling out lines and phrases to different students, or perhaps saying or singing certain lines all together. Each person in the group must contribute either by reading, singing, acting out a part, or adding sound effects. Please be creative in scripting your choral reading. You may also choose to set the words to a modern tune or write you own music for the song.

15 marks to be done by personal response sheet in accordance to the song being performed and submitted.

Act Five

Fishbowl activity. The chance for 4 people to go up into the hot seat, and say their piece and allow others the same opportunity. Last chance to gain any marks for the “hot seat” position.

Timed Essay Writing: (40 Marks. Please see the rubric)

Take a look at the essay topics on SparkNotes.

<http://www.sparknotes.com/shakespeare/othello/study.html>

Choose one topic. Why did you choose that topic to write your essay on?

Remember, you are not writing an essay for this question, I am simply asking you to think about what question you would choose and why.

Find a minimum of 5 quotations or proof that proves what it is you are trying to prove in this essay. (That was a weird sentence). You will be allowed these quotations and the book in class. On \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ you will have 60 minutes and only 60 minutes to write your completed essay on this topic.

**Act One Scene One (20)**

1. What, precisely, are Iago's complaints against Othello? (8-32). (2)
2. How does he characterize his own soldier ship and service against that of Cassio? (2)
3. Look carefully at ll. 41-58. Iago describes two sorts of followers. What types of followers are they? What do these indicate about Iago’s type of “service”? What do they suggest about Iago’s character and about a possible theme for the play? (3)
4. Iago is "determined" to play the villain; when Brabantio calls him a villain, Iago does not deny the name (119). What seems to be his primary motivation to play the villain? (2)
5. The directly racist slurs against Othello begin at line 66. List them and their speakers and analyze what they signify about each character's racial concerns and anxieties. How do racial stereotypes relate to stereotypes based on class? (135-137, 166-174). How does Iago arouse Brabantio emotionally and physically? (4)
6. What, according to Iago, will be the Senate's reaction to this elopement (148-154)? What would they like to do? What will they feel obliged to do? (2)
7. Cite four images that Iago uses. What do they tell us about his character? (5)

**Act One Scene Two (4)**

1. How does Iago put into effect his plans of scene 1 in lines 1 – 17 of this scene? What does he say to Othello concerning Brabantio?
2. What is Othello's estimation of himself? (20-24, 30-32). What characteristics of Othello are evident in his first speeches? Note especially lines 59 – 60.
3. On exactly what charge does Brabantio try to arrest Othello (78-80)? Why does he cite this charge? What does such a charge imply about his daughter and her motivations? (2)

**Act One Scene Three (25)**

1. The Turks and Ottomites, it seems, are bound for Cyprus. Jews, Moors, Turks, and Tartars - all are "strangers" by race and religion to the Venetians. According to the racist assumptions of Venice, "Valiant Othello" should be more allied to Ottomites and Turks than to the Venetian "signory." Yet Othello calls them his "good masters" (77). Why? (2)
2. Like a "brother" of the state, the Duke was ready to decide in Brabantio's favor before he knew the accused was Othello (65-69). Why does the Duke change his mind? Why is his estimation of Othello’s race different than Brabantio’s? (Brabantio, it seems, "loved" Othello, and encouraged his rhetorical "sorceries" (127-144). What did he love about Othello? (3)
3. What is the precise nature of Desdemona's affection for Othello (according to his account, 144-168)? What did she find attractive?
4. What is the Duke‟s attitude towards the marriage? Explain what Desdemona means by divided "duty" (180). Look closely at the Duke's list of proverbs in 201-208. How is he going to allow the marriage? What does Brabantio imply about the Duke's attitude? (2)
5. Why does Desdemona want to go with Othello to war? What does she acknowledge about her behavior in this affair? (247-248). Why does Othello say he is no longer troubled by the sexual appetites of youth? (260-63) Why is that an issue? How does Othello prioritize marriage and career? (265-274) (4)
6. What is Brabantio’s opinion of Desdemona’s departure? How do his parting words prove ominous? (2)
7. Why does he put Iago in charge of his new wife? What do his actions suggest about his character and his ability to judge others? What does he mean by lines 297-299? (2)
8. Pay careful attention to all the details of Iago's speeches to Roderigo (316-375).  
   Explain what the following speeches indicate about Iago’s character. Indicate the importance of any imagery Iago uses.

a) ll. 313-322 b) ll. 346-351 c) ll. 359-380

What are his assumptions? What is his analysis of human desire (both male and female)? What motivates this speech? What reasons does he give for his revenge on Othello? (4)

1. What further reasons does Iago give in his soliloquy for his revenge on Othello? What, in general, is his plan? What weaknesses has he identified in Othello? Cite specific lines. (5)

**General Questions on Act 1 (DO NOT DO, but think about)**

1. Act One provides an effective introduction to the play in many respects. What does it show about each of the main characters, Othello and Iago? Give specific evidence to support the dominant characteristics of each that the act develops. What are the possible weaknesses suggested in Othello’s character?
2. What is the significance of each of the following characters in this act – Roderigo, Desdemona, Brabantio?
3. What are the main sources of conflict established between Iago and Othello? In view of what has happened to Iago are his motives for action valid? Is the extent of his plans against Othello suited to his motives? That is, does he have just cause for revenge or is he simply doing evil for the sake of doing evil?
4. What is the importance of the setting in Venice in relation to the action in Act One and in relation to Iago’s attempts to get back at Othello?
5. Explain how the act suggests importance of each of the following: love, jealousy, honour, trust.

**Act Two Scene One (20)**

1. How do the Cypriots differ from the Venetians? At line 202, Othello says he has found much love amongst the Cypriots. What is the significance of this statement in relation to Othello’s previous experiences in Venice? (2)
2. What does Iago’s conversation with Desdemona and Emilia tell us about his character? What does he feel about his wife? (103-11). About women in general? (112-115) About Desdemona? (128-33). About various sorts of women? (135-161) How is Iago's character developed even further through the imagery he uses and through his justification for his plans? Is he simply evil and searching for motives or does he have valid reasons for his plans? Look at these speeches:
3. his aside (164-74)
4. his conversation with Roderigo (211 - 276)
5. his soliloquy (278-304). In his soliloquy, Iago confesses to jealousy that he likens to "a poisonous mineral" (284). Why this image for jealousy? Why does it recall the charges Brabantio brought against Othello? Is there any coordinating logic between sexual jealousy, career jealousy, and racism? (10)
6. What is the significance of the speech in which Othello is reunified with Desdemona? (180-210). Note the imagery Othello uses. (2)
7. Look carefully at the conversation between Iago and Roderigo (211- 276). Explain specifically at least four of the arguments that Iago uses to convince Roderigo that Desdemona will soon leave Othello and that Desdemona may be having an affair with Cassio. What plan does Iago suggest to convince Roderigo that will help him (Roderigo) to win the hand of Desdemona? (6)

**Act Two Scene Three (20)**

1. Iago's cleverness and deceit and his use of masks are developed in this scene. Discuss each of his "masks" he uses to deceive and manipulate people. That is, what role does he pretend to assume in each conversation listed below. Look at the masks in each of these sub-scenes:

a) Iago with Cassio (12-105)  
b) Iago with Montano (106-149)

c) Iago with Othello (150-242) d) Iago with Cassio (243-313) e) Iago with Roderigo (341-365)

Explain how each of the five masks contributes to the plot, characterization, and theme(s) of the play. Contrast his public appearance with what we see in his soliloquy (ll. 313-40). Use specific references. (20)

**Act Three Scene One (5)**

1. Emilia tells Cassio that Othello still likes him and is only waiting for a safe "occasion" to restore him to his office. What would a safe occasion be? What does brave Othello fear? Why did he punish Cassio so severely? Consider his motivations in terms of the Cypriots and his concern for reputation. (3)
2. What is ironic about Cassio’s request of Emilia even after she has told him of Othello’s plan? (2)

**Act Three Scene Three (15)**

1. What does Desdemona promise to Cassio? (20-28) how does she fulfill her promise in her conversation with Othello? (40-90) why does Othello not listen to her? (2)
2. Since Iago has managed to instill the poison of jealousy, the dialogues in this scene are now fraught with unintended double meanings (9, 22-28, 71-76). Desdemona stakes the credit of her "judgment in an honest face" (50) upon her suit for Cassio. How might this sound to Othello? What is the dramatic irony of Othello’s utterance, “Excellent wretch! Perdition catch my soul / But I do love thee; and when I love thee not / Chaos is come again.”? (90-92) (2)
3. Look carefully at Iago’s manipulation of Othello starting at line 34. Explain how Iago is able to win Othello’s confidence and to poison the Moor’s mind to convince him that Desdemona is unfaithful. Cite examples where Iago uses blatantly racist remarks, appeals to reputation, misogynistic views, references to jealousy and sexual suggestion. How and where does Othello show his self-doubts and self-loathing? Does he begin to agree with the Venetians that Desdemona's love for him was a kind of violent unnaturalness? (232-43). (5)
4. How does Othello begin to change in the language he uses? Cite examples. What is the importance of Othello’s demand for “ocular proof”? (361) How does Iago establish his control of Othello even further after this? What is the symbolism of the references to devils and lieutenants and of Othello’s kneeling before Iago at the end of the scene? (4)
5. What is the importance of Emilia’s finding the handkerchief and of Iago’s plan for it? (2)

**Act Three Scene Four (10)**

1. What is the irony of Desdemona’s comments on Othello’s character? (24-30). How has Othello changed when he talks to her? Why does he tell the elaborate story of the handkerchief? (53-73) (2)
2. How and why does Desdemona continue to defend Othello even after his bizarre behaviour? What does she say about his changes (120-155)? What does her reaction tell us about her character? By contrast, what significant observation does Emilia make about his behaviour? (157-160). Note the imagery she uses. (4)
3. In view of the preceding events, what is the significance of Bianca’s appearance? (2)
4. Othello loved being a bachelor soldier (1.2.25-28). He says he married not to please his lust but because Desdemona seemed worth losing his "free condition." Cassio does not want to appear "womaned" in his general's presence (189). Why not? What is the relation of his feelings to his life as a soldier and to the play’s emphasis on reputation? (2)

**Act Four Scene One (15)**

1. How is Iago able to poison Othello even further? What suggestions does Iago make? Why does Iago mock Othello's manhood (58, 63, 87) repeatedly? Paraphrase Iago’s speech in lines 65-73. Analyze how Iago is able to drive Othello into a fit of jealousy. How does Iago appeal to Othello’s misogyny or his ignorance of love? Compare this with Emilia's knowledge of men in 3.4.100-103. (8)
2. What is Iago’s plan to convince Othello even further of Cassio’s affair with Desdemona? How does the scene with Cassio and Bianca confirm Othello’s suspicions? How do Othello’s reactions show his concern more for reputation and “justice” than for love and harmony? (3)
3. Why do the letter calling Othello home and the appearance of Desdemona coincide here? (211-235). Why is it significant about Cassio’s replacement of Othello in Cyprus? Consider what Othello already believes about Cassio. How is Othello’s physical brutality a manifestation of his frustration, jealousy and descent from nobility? What is the importance of Lodovico's surprise at Othello's behaviour here? (237, 261-64). How does this reaction relate to the racist attitudes of both Brabantio and the Duke in Act 1? (4)

**Act Four Scene Two (10)**

1. How does Othello’s physical brutality turn into a psychological one in this scene? Explain his speech (46-63). What seem to be his main concerns about Desdemona’s “infidelity” here and throughout the scene? (2)
2. What does Desdemona mean by lines 110-112? Why does she re- examine her own behavior looking for some fault? Why is she so certain she is to blame? What do her views show about her character? Emilia points out that there has hardly been time or place for any affair (138), a point that Othello seems to have missed. What other ironic comments does she make about the knavery that has undone Othello? (4)
3. What is ironic about Desdemona’s pleas to Iago for help? What is the significance of her “Comfort forswear me” speech? (159-64) (2)
4. Explain Iago’s plan to rid of Cassio and the ways in which he is able to manipulate Roderigo once again. What story does he tell Roderigo? (2)

**Act Five Scene One (10)**

1. What reasons does Iago give to justify his desires for Cassio and / or Roderigo to die? (4)
2. Why does Othello ignore the cries for help? How does his attitude contrast with his character at the beginning of the play? (2)
3. Explain how Iago takes advantage of his opportunities to appear helpful and honest, to shift the blame to others, and to get rid of potential danger for himself later. (4)

**Act Five Scene Two (15)**

1. When Othello comes to kill Desdemona, he refers to her in exalted Petrarchan imagery describing her skin as white as “snow / And smooth as monumental alabaster" (4-5)? What is the significance of his constant references to putting out the light? Why does want her to pray and why he refuse to kill her “unprepared spirit”? (31). How does he rationalize killing Desdemona? (4)
2. Why does Desdemona blame herself even for her own death? What is Emilia’s attitude to Othello and his actions? Explain how Othello finally learns the truth of what has happened between Desdemona and Cassio. (3)
3. Why does Emilia defy Iago’s attempts to silence her? What is the significance of Iago’s killing of her? (2)
4. What other information does Gratiano bring from Venice? Lodovico produces a couple of letters found in Roderigo’s pocket. What does each of them say? (2)
5. Explain Othello’s speech (258-281). How does Othello attempt to regain his nobility? Why is he unable to kill Iago? How does Iago remain evil until the end? What images does Othello insist represent him best? "The base Indian" who cannot tell the worth of a pearl? (356) An "Arabian tree"? A man who killed a Turk for beating a Venetian, or the "circumcised dog" who beat the Venetian? (4)

**General topics for Discussion: DO NOT DO**

Explain fully the initial situation with which Shakespeare confronts his audience. What elements in this situation seem bound to lead to trouble? Why?  
What are the main themes in the play?  
Compare and contrast Iago and Othello. Show how they are similar in their psychology and philosophy as well as how they mirror one another in personality. Compare and contrast Desdemona, Emilia and Bianca.  
What are the successive stages in Iago’s growing revenge-taking?  
What are the successive stages in Othello’s change in attitude from total love and devotion for Desdemona to suspicion and hatred?  
What are the points from which Iago and Othello cannot turn back?  
What part does racism play in the main plot?  
Explain the dominant patterns of imagery and their significance within the play. Major images are animal or bestial (including lower forms of life), poison, heaven, blood, war, sea, black and white.

Questions that further extend thinking that perhaps, could be on an AP test?

- Compare Brabantio and Desdemona’s conversation (I.iii.173-196) with Capulet and Juliet’s conversation (Romeo and Juliet. III.v.126-195) and with A Midsummer Night’s Dream, I.i.20-127).

- Compare Iago’s speech at the end of Act I with speeches by Macbeth (II.i.33-64) and Hamlet (III.ii.419-432).

- Compare the description of the storm in Othello (II.i) with the description of the storm in The Tempest (I.i).

- Compare the last lines of Iago’s speech in Act II with speeches by Macbeth and Lady Macbeth (I.vii) and by Hamlet (II.ii.576-634).

- Compare Bianca’s speech (III.iv.166-170) with the opening lines of A Midsummer Night’s Dream (I.i.1-10).

- Compare Othello’s speech (IV.i.250-259) with Hamlet’s speeches to Ophelia (the “Nunnery scene”, III.i) and to his mother (the “Queen’s closet” scene, III.iv).

- Compare Iago’s speech (V.i.124-129) with Macbeth’s speech (V.v.39 – 52).

- Compare Othello’s speech (V.ii.7-22) with Macbeth’s speech (V.v.17-28).