

Othello

William Shakespeare

A Before Reading

1 Shakespeare is one of the most famous English writers. What do you know about him?

When and where did he live?

Can you name any plays that he wrote?

What were theatres like in Shakespeare's time?

Now read *A Note About The Author* at the beginning of the book and compare your ideas.

2 Othello is a general in the Venetian army who becomes very jealous of his wife. Which of the following words do you think you will find in the story? Check any words which you do not know in your Macmillan Dictionary.

airport bicycle brave business coffee fool honour kiss liar
love Manchester proof reputation shopping centre train trick trust
victory whisper

As you start reading the story, look out for the words.

3 Look at the pictures 1–5 from the play. Match the pictures to the lines from the play a–e.

a 'My leg is cut in two'.

b 'Tell me how this fight began and who started it.'

c 'Oh, my beautiful soldier!'

d 'I would not want to kill you unless you were ready to die.'

e 'This was the first present Othello gave to Desdemona.'

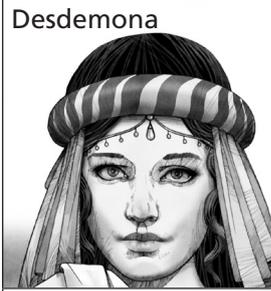
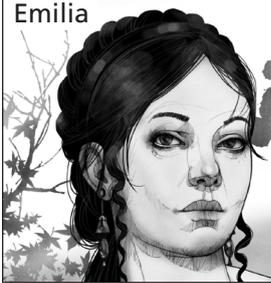


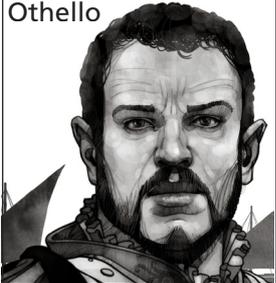
B While Reading

- 4 There are many important choices made by the characters in the play. As you read, number the choices below in the order that they happen in the story (1=first, 6=last) and say what results from each choice.

Choice	Order (1-6)	Result(s)
Roderigo agrees to kill Cassio for Iago.		
Desdemona decides to go to Cyprus with Othello.		
Emilia agrees to give Desdemona's handkerchief to Iago.		
Othello decides to make Cassio his lieutenant.		
Iago tells Brabantio about his daughter's marriage.		
Cassio decides to drink some more wine.		

- 5 a Four people are killed in Othello. Who killed who, and how?

Who dies	Who kills them and how do they die?
Roderigo 	
Desdemona 	
Emilia 	

Who dies	Who kills them and how do they die?
Othello 	

- 5 b What will happen to Iago? Write a paragraph explaining what happens to Iago after the end of the play.

C After Reading

- 6 Othello is a black man from North Africa. Do you think Iago's actions are the result of racism? Can you see racism in the way other characters in the play speak about Othello? Do you think a black person in Europe today meets the same racism? Write a paragraph explaining your view.
- 7 In Act 5, Scene 2, Montano says this: 'We found a letter from Iago to Roderigo.' Write two or three paragraphs from this letter.
- 8 The following are all sayings about revenge. Which one do you agree with most and why?

'He that is not jealous is not in love.'

Saint Augustine

'In jealousy there is more of self-love than love.'

François de la Rochefoucault

'Jealousy and love are sisters.'

Russian proverb

'Jealousy is a disease, love is a healthy condition.'

Robert A. Heinlein

'Jealousy is a strange transformer of characters.'

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle