

# ***Othello* by William Shakespeare (Published by Washington Square Press)**

## **Approved for use in Honors Communication Arts II**

### **Summary**

As the play opens, Venice is threatened by war with the Turks for control of the island of Cyprus. Othello, a Moor, is employed to command the Venetian troops and is housed at the home of a leading senator, Brabantio. There he falls in love with the senator's daughter, Desdemona, who returns his love. In the meantime, Othello names Cassio lieutenant instead of Iago who feels he should have been the appointee. The rest of the play is concerned with Iago's plot to destroy the Moor and in so doing, he plants seeds of suspicion in Othello that cause him to believe that his beloved wife has been unfaithful.

### **Connection to the Curriculum**

The play is a piece of classical literature that is a part of the collective knowledge of the educated public. The plot, which involves love, jealousy, and revenge, is appealing to sophomores while the play itself serves as an excellent vehicle for textual analysis and examination of poetic devices, prerequisites for Advanced Placement students

## **Standards**

### **Course Objectives (Benchmarks)**

**Reading:** 1.2- The students read fluently. 1.3- The students expand vocabulary. 1.4- The students comprehend a variety of texts.

**Literature:** 2.1-The students use literary concepts to interpret and respond to text. 2.2- The students understand the significance of literature and its contributions to various cultures.

**Writing:** 3.9- The students use a variety of modes of writing for different purposes and audiences.

### **Possible Skills Taught (Indicators)**

#### **Reading:**

1.2.1- The student adjusts reading rate to support comprehension when reading narrative texts.

1.3.2- The student discriminates between connotative and denotative meanings and interprets the connotative power of words.

1.3.5- The student identifies, interprets, and analyzes the use of figurative language including similes, metaphors, analogies, hyperbole, and symbolism.

1.4.3- The student uses prior knowledge, content, and text type features to make, revise, and confirm predictions.

1.4.10- The student generates and responds logically to literal, inferential, evaluative, and critical thinking questions during and after reading the text.

1.4.11- The student uses information from the text to make inferences and draw conclusions.

1.4.13- The student compares/contrasts varying aspects in one or more age-appropriate level texts.

1.4.14- The student explains and analyzes cause-effect relationships in appropriate-level narrative, expository, technical, and persuasive texts.

1.4.15- The student uses paraphrasing and organizational skills to summarize information.

#### **Literature:**

2.1.1- The student identifies and describes different types of characters.

2.1.2- The student analyzes the historical, social, and cultural contextual aspects of the setting and its influence on characters and events in the story.

2.1.3- The student analyzes and evaluates how the author uses various plot elements.

2.1.4- The student analyzes themes, tone, and author's point of view.

2.1.5- The student identifies, analyzes, and evaluates the use of literary devices.

2.1.6- The student recognizes ways that literature from different cultures presents similar themes.

2.2.2- The student compares and contrasts works of literature that deal with similar topics and problems.

#### **Writing:**

3.1.5 and 3.2.5- The student writes personal, persuasive, narrative, and expository pieces.

**A Note on the Text:** (The best way to evaluate and understand a novel is to personally read the book in its entirety.)

*Othello deals with the issue of inter-racial marriage. The plot explores the rages of jealousy and revenge that result in murder and suicide. Shakespeare's violence is not explicit, and the compilation of the negative events result in the ultimate tragedy of the play.*

### **AP Connections**

Students benefit from a broad reading base of Shakespeare's works for both the study of syntax at the AP III level and literature at the AP IV level.

### **Additional Unit Design Connections**

Coming soon:

To be completed during future curriculum development activities