

# Othello

## Act 4

- ★ Summarise the main action of Act Four.
- ★ Act Four starts with Othello and Iago mid-conversation. What do you think came before the start of the scene? What is Iago's purpose on page 89/91?
- ★ Explain how Iago manufactures the scene to further Othello's jealousy and his anger towards Cassio (92/93).
- ★ How is Othello given the "ocular proof" that he demanded in III.iii (95)? Quote and explain the line that confirms Othello is completely convinced of the affair.
- ★ What happens to Othello's speech on page 96/98? What function do Iago's short interjections perform?
- ★ How is Iago's complete power and control over Othello demonstrated on 98? Quote and explain.
- ★ Quote and explain how Othello's jealousy has skewed the rational views he had earlier in the play (98).
- ★ The threat of violence becomes the act of violence on page 100. What response does Desdemona's reaction elicit from the audience? Quote and explain.



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- ★ Again, we join Scene 2 in the middle of a conversation. What are Othello and Emilia discussing? What is the *tragedy* of this conversation? (102/103)
- ★ What words does Othello use to describe both Emilia and Desdemona? (103/105) Who would you expect to use such language concerning women? Significance?
- ★ Having been called “whore” and “strumpet” by her husband, tragically and ironically, to whom does Desdemona turn? Explain.
- ★ Quote and explain how Emilia inadvertently and unknowingly identifies **exactly** what has happened to Othello (108). How does Iago fail to recognise his own eventual downfall here?
- ★ Explain why Desdemona tells Emilia the story of her Mother’s maid (113). Look in the notes and explain why the Willow is an important symbol.
- ★ On page 115/117 a clear contrast is demonstrated between Desdemona and Emilia. Explain what that contrast is (quoting if necessary) and explain the significance of this scene to **the audience** given what will take place in Act Five.

