



Mini Series on William Shakespeare's Plays

Othello A Tragedy

Reading Level : 12 years and up

Grade Range	Reading Level Ready	Emotionally Ready
High School	C	B
College	C	A

Themes

1. Love for Othello has a variety of obstacles.
2. What appears to be isn't always reality.
3. Trust of those who earn it can be replaced by suspicion when communication is lacking and fear is fed.
4. How are the Christian values of honesty and fidelity best depicted?
5. Jealousy can distort our perception until suspicion feels more believable than truth.
6. One can control and manipulate another by planting doubts leading them to draw false conclusions.
7. Racial prejudice can shape how others see us and can eventually affect how we see ourselves.

GRADING SCALE : A- Independent B- Use Cliffnotes C- With an Adult F- Not Yet

What Your High School Teacher Might Not Have Told You

- ~ Othello doesn't become jealous immediately. His enemy is invisible and makes him ruminate.
- ~ Othello begins the play elegant, confident and an articulate storyteller. By the end of the play he transforms and has deteriorated into having fragmented speech and allowing his emotions to take over.
- ~ Iago is honest with the audience. He effectively manipulates others to draw false conclusions.
- ~ Iago isn't some mastermind with a plan. His motives do not add up and he is improving.
- ~ Cassio's biggest problem is his obsession with his reputation and the loss of his identity because of it.
- ~ The handkerchief symbolizes love, fidelity, sexuality, trust, identity, and superstition.
- ~ Desdemona's intelligence is on par with Othello, but she is never able to show it.
- ~ Emilia is modern for the times, extremely intelligent, cautious, honest. She exposes the truth.
- ~ Desdemona and Emilia's love in friendship is pure. We see the inner thoughts and desires of women.
- ~ Can love survive when trust is tested?