Guided Notes: Othello

Unit 3: Rebirth and Revenge—The English Renaissance

THE THEMES

* Hypocrisy
* J
* Passion
* P
* Revenge

THE PLOT

* Othello is a general, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ hundreds of years ago.
* But he is an \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ because he is from another \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_--and of another \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* When Othello \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the young, beautiful, and noble Desdemona:
  + Her \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, Brabantio, wants Othello to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
  + But Desdemona \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and doesn’t care that he is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* At the same time, the men in the army under Othello \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* Cassio means well, but is open to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* Iago pretends to be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, but secretly resents him for passing him over for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* Iago is determined to get \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_!
  + So he decides to attack Othello in his \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ . . .
  + His \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* Will Othello be able to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_???
* OR will jealousy and revenge turn to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_?

SHAKESPEARE’S TRAGIC HERO: OTHELLO

* Tragedy—a drama of solemn and dignified quality that typically depicts the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ between the protagonist and a superior force, such as fate, circumstance, or society, and reaches a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* Othello is a Shakespearean Tragedy
  + It ends with the death of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

* + The protagonist is admirable, but \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, with the audience able to understand and sympathize with the character.
  + The protagonist is capable of both \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
  + \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is insisted upon—the protagonist must always be able to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_--but always towards their inevitable doom.
* Tragic Flaw—a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in the protagonist that brings about \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* Hubris—derived from the Greek word hybris, means “\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_”. In Greek tragedy, hubris is often viewed as the flaw that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of the tragic hero.
* Tragic Hero—the main character of great importance to his state or culture (the higher they are, the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_) and who is conventionally of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and high social station, the ruler or an important leader in his society.
* The moral health of the state is identified with, and dependent on, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and so the tragic hero’s story is also that of his \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* Such heroes are \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ characters, neither thoroughly good or thoroughly evil, yet “better” or “greater” than the rest of us in the sense that they are of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and social significance.

THE SETTING

* Setting (Time)—Late \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ century, during the wars between \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* Setting (Place)-- \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in Act I; the island of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ thereafter.
  + Located \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of Italy, in the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Sea. It is just South of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

THE CHARACTERS

* Venetians (of Venice)
  + Most are \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Brabantio, Desdemona, Roderigo)
  + Also, there are the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Emilia)
  + Some are \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Cassio, Iago)
  + Others are part of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (the Duke)
* Moors (Othello)
  + Black, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of the northern shores of Africa, originally the inhabitants of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
  + They converted to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in the 8th century.
  + \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in 711 and dominated until the 11th century
  + Had great \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ up until 1492, when the last of their cities was conquered by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
  + Virtually \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ by Spain during the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (late 1400s-1820)
* Othello is a Moor
  + \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ against because of his race (he’s the only black character).
  + Othello has been accepted in some ways because he is a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
  + Yet his marriage to Desdemona reflects the prevailing view toward \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* Iago
  + One of Shakespeare’s most \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
  + Because of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Othello puts in him, which he betrays while maintaining his reputation of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
  + Shakespeare contrasts Iago with Othello’s \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. (FOIL)
  + Iago is a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_--he has a bitter and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of the world around him.
  + The name IAGO is a shortened version of the Spanish name “Santiago” or St. James.
    - St. James of Spain was also known as “\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_” , which seems appropriate within the play.

THE CULTURE OF THE TIME

* The Wife’s Status
  + The husband, in the accepted role as \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, gives moral direction to his wife and children—who sit \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* Evil Women!
  + Long tradition of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_--women were distrusted simply for being women.
  + It was a part of their nature to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
  + The men in Othello have differing views of women, as would the audience.
* The Cuckold
  + A man whose wife \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (without his knowledge).
  + Derives from the bird “cuckoo” known for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
  + Very undesirable because all of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ would find out and it would be a public \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
  + Often described as having \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.