



OTHELLO

THEME ACTIVITIES

Activities to develop themes and issues

Read the essay '**Women in Othello**' which is on the '**Language**' page on the website. Think about whether the issue of the place of women in the play might be something that would interest young people and make them want to see the play.

Imagine you have been asked to write an article for a website encouraging young people to see the play. Focus on the women in the play in your piece. You could try inventing strong headlines summarising each of the women.

Click on the '**Interviews**' page on the website. Watch to the interview with the director of the play Bill Buckhurst entitled '**Bringing Othello to a Younger Audience**' where he explains that he feels that the play is one that can appeal to younger people.

Bill gives a powerful summary of the plot and says that he feels the plot feels quite '*relevant*' and '*modern*' and that '*jealousy is as powerful now as it was 400 years ago*'.

Imagine you have been asked to persuade young people who are less keen on seeing the play that it would be of interest to them. Write the text for a blog or an online advert using some of the ideas in Bill's interview as a starting point.

In '**Teacher's Mode**' on the website, click on the '**Cinthio**' download and read the original story on which Shakespeare based *Othello*.

List the main differences between this original version of the story and the play *Othello*, such as the way that in the original story both Iago and Othello work together to kill Desdemona. You will see that in the original version the story was more complicated. How does Shakespeare's decision to leave out some of the events from *Cinthio* make the play more powerful?

Read the essay '**What You Know You Know**' which is on the '**Language**' page on the website. Gwen Adshead considers Iago's motives for his destruction of Othello.

She describes the way people often seem to be fascinated by evil. She mentions TV series like *Breaking Bad* as examples.

Focus on **Act 1, Scene 3, lines 298-373** where Iago develops his evil plan to make Roderigo seek revenge on Othello and so become Iago's accomplice. Explain what aspects of this scene fascinate an audience as they watch Iago's evil tricking of the simple Roderigo.