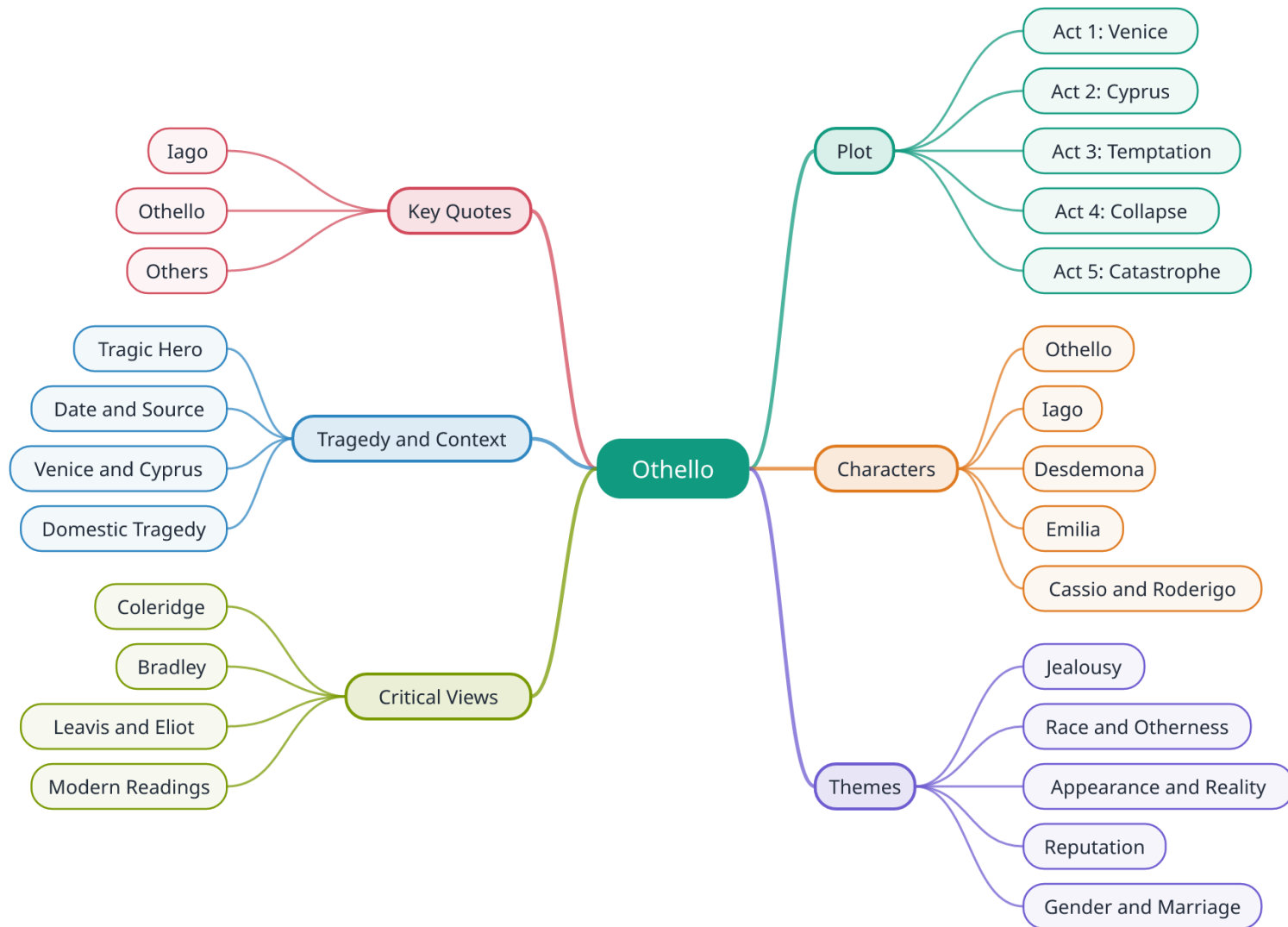


Othello Mind Map (A Level)

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Othello mind map explained

Plot

Five acts, moving from Venice to Cyprus.

Act 1: Venice

Iago resents Othello for promoting Cassio over him. Othello has secretly married Desdemona; her father Brabantio accuses him of witchcraft, but the Senate accepts the marriage and sends Othello to defend Cyprus.

Act 2: Cyprus

A storm destroys the Turkish fleet. Iago gets Cassio drunk and into a fight, and Othello dismisses him.

Act 3: Temptation

In the central scene (3.3), Iago plants suspicion that Desdemona is unfaithful with Cassio. Emilia gives Iago Desdemona's handkerchief, which he uses as false proof.

Act 4: Collapse

Othello's language and self-control break down. He strikes Desdemona in public.

Act 5: Catastrophe

Othello smothers Desdemona. Emilia reveals the truth, and Iago kills her. Othello stabs himself; Iago refuses to explain.

Characters

A small cast, dominated by the relationship between Othello and Iago.

Othello

A Moorish general, respected in Venice but an outsider. Noble and eloquent at first; Iago turns his trust and insecurity into destructive jealousy.

Iago

Othello's ensign, known to all as "honest Iago". A brilliant manipulator who gives several motives, none of them fully convincing.

Desdemona

Defies her father to marry Othello. Loyal and loving to the end, she is destroyed by suspicion she does not understand.

Emilia

Iago's wife and Desdemona's companion. Cynical about men, she finally exposes her husband, at the cost of her life.

Cassio and Roderigo

Cassio, the lieutenant, values his reputation above all. Roderigo, who wants Desdemona, is Iago's dupe.

Themes

The ideas the play explores.

Jealousy

Sexual jealousy drives the tragedy, but Iago's envy and resentment come first.

Race and Otherness

Othello is defined by others through his race, often in racist language. Critics debate how far he absorbs Venice's view of him.

Appearance and Reality

"Honest" Iago is the least honest character, and the play shows how easily appearances deceive.

Reputation

Cassio, Othello and Desdemona all depend on how others see them, which makes them vulnerable to Iago's lies.

Gender and Marriage

Women are judged by their chastity and treated as possessions. Emilia's speech in 4.3 challenges this double standard.

Key Quotes

Short quotations that support many essay points.

Iago

- "I am not what I am" (1.1)
- "I hate the Moor" (1.3)
- "O, beware, my lord, of jealousy; / It is the green-eyed monster" (3.3)
- "Demand me nothing. What you know, you know" (5.2)

Othello

- "She loved me for the dangers I had passed, / And I loved her that she did pity them" (1.3)
- "Put out the light, and then put out the light" (5.2)
- "one that loved not wisely but too well" (5.2)

Others

- Brabantio: "She has deceived her father, and may thee" (1.3)
- Cassio: "Reputation, reputation, reputation! O, I have lost my reputation!" (2.3)
- Emilia: "Let husbands know / Their wives have sense like them" (4.3)

Tragedy and Context

The play as a tragedy, and the world it was written in.

Tragic Hero

A great man brought down by a flaw (hamartia), whose fall brings a reversal (peripeteia), a moment of recognition (anagnorisis) and a release of pity and fear (catharsis).

Date and Source

Written around 1603 to 1604, adapted from an Italian story by Cinthio.

Venice and Cyprus

Venice was a wealthy, ordered republic; Cyprus was a frontier against the Ottoman Turks. Leaving Venice, the characters leave order behind.

Domestic Tragedy

Unlike Shakespeare's other great tragedies, the conflict is private, inside a marriage, rather than about the fate of a kingdom.

Critical Views

Interpretations to weigh in essays. Paraphrase them and test them against the play.

Coleridge

Famously described Iago's search for reasons as "the motive-hunting of a motiveless malignity".

Bradley

A. C. Bradley (1904) saw Othello as a noble hero, destroyed by Iago's cunning rather than his own nature.

Leavis and Eliot

F. R. Leavis (1937) argued Othello's jealousy grows from his own self-regard. T. S. Eliot read the final speech as Othello "cheering himself up".

Modern Readings

Postcolonial and feminist critics focus on racism, otherness and the treatment of women in the play.

How to revise with this mind map

1. Track Othello's language through the play. His grand, controlled verse in Act 1 breaks into fragments under Iago's influence, and partly recovers in his final speech. This is rich ground for analysis.
2. Learn short quotations that serve several themes, such as "I am not what I am", which works for Iago, deception and appearance and reality.
3. Engage with critics, then argue back. Use a critical view to open a debate, then test it against the text rather than just quoting it.
4. Weave in context where it sharpens your point, such as ideas about race, Venice and the Ottoman threat, or women's position in marriage.
5. Make it yours. Build your own Othello map in Mindmapi from your notes, and ask the AI about any scene or critic you are unsure of. The answer is saved into that branch's notes for next time.