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Get 1 free answer with LitCharts AI New The play opens at night, with Roderigo and Iago arguing in a Venetian street; Roderigo has been paying Iago regularly to help him begin a relationship with Desdemona, but he has learnt that she has recently married Othello, Iago's commander. Iago however reveals that he hates Othello, as his commander recently overlooked him for the position of lieutenant, instead choosing Cassio despite the latter's lack of experience and recommendations of Iago for the post from the 'three great ones' of the city. As a result Iago is only feigning loyalty to Othello, until circumstances allow him to further his own plans. "I follow him I follow but myself/ Heaven is my judge, not I for love and duty./ But seeming so for my peculiar end... I am not what I am." Due to his close ties to Othello Iago knows (and reveals) that Desdemona has left her family home so as to enter into marriage. Iago brings Roderigo to the home of Brabantio, a Venetian senator and father of Desdemona, so as to turn her family against Othello and ruin the joyous time at the beginning of the marriage. Hidden by the darkness they get the senator's attention and inform him that he has been robbed by 'thieves', however Brabantio initially disresgards unidentified cries in the night. However his attention soon grows when Iago crudely refers to Othello and his daughter engaging in sexual activity, "making the beast with two backs"; he goes to seek out his daughter, during which time Iago departs the scene so as to prevent anyone knowing his part in the betrayal of his commander. Brabantio returns soon after his departure, incensed as he believes his daughter has been lured away from her home by the 'charms' of Othello. The scene concludes with the Venetian senator beginning the search for his daughter. Themes Deception: When a character is deceptive in a Shakespearean text they are usually evil, and this is the case with Iago as he admits he will deceive Othello. This confession presents him as villainous as he reveals his loyalty to Othello is false, designed so as to eventually create a situation where he can betray his commander for his own advantage; he will only 'follow him to serve my turn upon him'. Deception is linked to evil elsewhere in the scene, as Roderigo is growing wary of Iago's promise to form a union between him and Desdemona; this is later revealed as part of Iago's plan to bring about the downfall of Macbeth. Appearance and reality: Othello is described in a racist fashion, suggested to be a rapist, "an old black ram/ Its topping your white ewe". He is linked to the devil due to his distance from society, living in 'The Moor', and there is heavy emphasis of his race with comments such as 'thick-lips' and a comparison to 'barbary horse'. It is significant that Brabantio responds to the claims when such terminology is used, indicating that racism is rife in the world, and of note is that when Othello appears in the next scene that such suggestions will prove to be wide of the mark; rather there are Christ-like allusions and he is presented as a calming influence rather than a figure of excess which individuals such as rapists are often characterised by. Elsewhere, things appearing differently to how they actually are is seen in the aforementioned relationship of Iago and Roderigo, as Iago appears to be helping Roderigo, which will later be revealed as part of an overarching plan to cause Macbeth's downfall. Love: Two relationships are already introduced (Othello and Desdemona/ Desdemona and Roderigo), both of which reveal various issues about love. Iago and Roderigo view love differently, with the former considering it as lust (evidenced in his remark to Brabantio about sexual activity between his daughter and Othello) while the latter prizes it, evident in his paying for Iago to form a relationship for him. In addition, both relationships already having obstacles indicates that love is not prioritized in the world of the text. Jealousy: The scene illustrates one type of jealousy, envy of what others have. Roderigo is jealous of Othello having Desdemona, Iago is envious of Cassio attaining the post he desired; both of these jealousies set the play into motion and therefore it is important to keep these in mind as events play out. Reputation and honor: Iago shows how reputation and honor, which are usually linked, can be separated (this links to appearance and reality). Iago has a good reputation (his military post and Roderigo seeking him out for advice and assistance prove this) but in reality he has little honor, as he plans to bring about his commander's downfall, which involves deceiving Othello and Roderigo. Imagery: The darkness of the scene symbolizes the disorder and chaos that is already present in the world of the play, as many characters are not in the know, while deception and evil are already lurking. Brabantio's desire for light can be read as symbolic of his desire for knowledge, to learn who is talking to him (Iago and Brabantio) and what has come of his daughter. The darkness is also highly symbolic of and attached to Iago's evil, as it allows him to retain his hidden position of servant to Othello while plotting his downfall; he is allowed to sway Brabantio against the titular character without being identified, and then slip away into the night before anyone can spot him. Characters Iago: Iago is a 'Machiavellian villain', someone who is intent on realising his desires at all costs and seeks to achieve this in a deceptive manner. To do so he will use 'tool villains', individuals who are used to carry out his plan without being aware that they are assisting the Machiavellian villain. The opening scene establishes that Iago is such as he is revealed to be deceptively plotting against his commander (this is introduced with the declaration that 'I will wear my heart on my sleeve'); he will not only bring about Othello's downfall to further his own ends but will also do so in an underhanded manner, presenting himself as loyal but in fact being the opposite, so as to bring about a moment where he can 'serve my turn upon him'. Already in this scene we are given an insight into how and why Iago will become such a powerful presence in the play; he is elusive and difficult to tie down, evidenced in his already holding multiple roles (servant to Othello, facilitator for Roderigo) meaning that his fellow characters will struggle to identify him in any form and thus realise his villainous ways. His remark 'I am not what I am' epitomizes Iago, who ironically is closest to sincerity and the truth when admitting that falsities and deception dictate his character. Elsewhere, his manipulation of the scene presents him as a puppet-master, a Machiavellian trait who controls others to act as he requires; he easily has Roderigo and Brabantio interact so as to lead to a potentially troublesome situation for Othello. Finally, the opening scene also reveals that Iago is fundamentally evil, as he says some 'fellows... have some soul' but that 'In following I follow but myself', which indicates that while most are governed by conscience and morality Iago acts primarily according to desire and preference. This reveals him as evil due to this detachment from morality, but also as the desires which dictate his actions are immoral and corrupt, such as plotting to overthrow Othello. Othello: We do not meet the titular character in the opening scene but hear descriptions of him such as 'the thick-lips' and 'a Barbary horse', which imply he is dark-skinned. As mentioned earlier he is suggested to be barbaric by Iago, which shall be shown to be false in the next scene. Roderigo: Roderigo is a pathetic character, longing for Desdemona where there is little to suggest a relationship between the two is possible. Aside from her recent marriage, there is no indication that she even knows who he is, while it is revealed that Brabantio refused his marriage-request, an important relationship factor in world of the play (even though this is not acceded to by Othello it was still taken as a societal ritual). Roderigo appears cowardly in enlisting Iago to form a relationship for him, and foolhardy in paying Iago when the results are uncertain (he admits Iago 'has had purse as if the strings were thine') and not suspecting that he might be deceived after Iago openly admits his plan to bring about his commander's downfall. We're getting everything ready for you. The page is loading, and you'll be on your way in just a few moments. Thanks for your patience! The scene opens on a Venetian street with Roderigo, Desdemona's suitor, having an argument with Iago. The audience learns that Roderigo has paid Iago to help him (Roderigo) marry Desdemona, who has eloped with Othello, the Christian Moor. Iago is Othello's ensign. Roderigo accuses Iago of swindling money from him. He believes Iago had known about Desdemona's affair with Othello all along. Iago tells Roderigo that he detests Othello—who has promoted Michael Cassio, not Iago, to the lieutenant rank—and admits that his liking for Othello is just pretense. Iago then comes up with a wicked plan; he advises Roderigo to let Brabantio—a Venetian senator and Desdemona's father—know that his daughter has eloped with Othello. Outside Brabantio's house, the two men start crying loudly and allege that Brabantio has been robbed. Brabantio, who had previously instructed Roderigo to stay away from Desdemona, doesn't believe this allegation at first. He thinks Roderigo is pulling tricks in a bid to see Desdemona. Iago then makes lewd remarks about Othello and Desdemona's sexual relationship. Brabantio decides to investigate the matter and proceeds indoors to look for Desdemona. Iago, realizing that he has succeeded in his evil plot, takes leave from Roderigo to go and attend to Othello. As soon as he leaves, Brabantio, having realized what has transpired, comes out and accuses Othello of using magic and "charms" to steal Desdemona. Along with his men, he and Roderigo proceed to confront Othello. The scene introduces the audience to Othello. Though he is only referred to in the council chamber, the senators and the council members are made aware of a Turkish fleet advancing toward Cyprus with the intent of challenging Venice's authority on the island. A battle seems inevitable. Othello, Iago, Brabantio, Cassio, and others enter the stage. The Duke immediately appoints Othello to lead the battle in Cyprus. In the meantime, Brabantio accuses Othello of having used black magic to seduce his daughter, Desdemona. Notably, the use of black magic in Venice is a capital offense. Eloquenty, Othello lets the council know that he has indeed won over Desdemona, but not with magic. He has won her heart with stories, he says. The Duke calls for Desdemona, who verifies Othello's narrative. The Duke dismisses the allegations against Othello and allows the couple to live together. Since Othello is on his way to battle the Turks in Cyprus, he pleads with the Duke to allow Desdemona to accompany him. They haven't spent a lot of time together, Othello argues. Their appeal is granted, and Desdemona is to stay with Iago till she can leave for Cyprus. Roderigo is, expectedly, unhappy with this verdict. The scheming Iago reassures Roderigo that this marriage will not last long and that Desdemona will be united with Roderigo. Iago then reveals that Othello has had an affair with Emilia, Iago's wife. He does so in a bid to justify his hatred of Othello. Iago, however, merely plans to use Roderigo as a pawn in his efforts to create discord between Othello and Desdemona. The scene shows that Cyprus is of special importance to Venice. As a result, Othello, the most important Venetian General, is appointed to lead the battle in the island. Othello is confident that his marriage to Desdemona will not be challenged or revoked. Firstly, he is honest; he did not use magic to woo Desdemona. Secondly, he knows that the city of Venice will require his leadership to defeat the Turks; which means the senators will likely be bound to absolve him of the charges brought forth by Brabantio. Othello's remarkably eloquent speech also shows that he is extremely proud of his achievements, and this pride, as the audience will find out, eventually leads to his downfall. His speech helps the audience understand why Desdemona has fallen in love with him; he is an honorable and successful soldier. Although the characters on stage seem convinced about Desdemona's love for Othello, Brabantio fails to understand why his "jewel" has fallen for a Moor. Iago is an extremely observant and intelligent person, with the knack to manipulate people. Through Iago's character, Shakespeare suggests that intelligence and ability do not automatically make a good person; after all, people can apply their intelligence to achieve evil ends. The scene opens on a Venetian street with Roderigo, Desdemona's suitor, having an argument with Iago. The audience learns that Roderigo has paid Iago to help him (Roderigo) marry Desdemona, who has eloped with Othello, the Christian Moor. Iago is Othello's ensign. Roderigo accuses Iago of swindling money from him. He believes Iago had known about Desdemona's affair with Othello all along. Iago tells Roderigo that he detests Othello—who has promoted Michael Cassio, not Iago, to the lieutenant rank—and admits that his liking for Othello is just pretense. Iago then comes up with a wicked plan; he advises Roderigo to let Brabantio—a Venetian senator and Desdemona's father—know that his daughter has eloped with Othello. Outside Brabantio's house, the two men start crying loudly and allege that Brabantio has been robbed. Brabantio, who had previously instructed Roderigo to stay away from Desdemona, doesn't believe this allegation at first. He thinks Roderigo is pulling tricks in a bid to see Desdemona. Iago then makes lewd remarks about Othello and Desdemona's sexual relationship. Brabantio decides to investigate the matter and proceeds indoors to look for Desdemona. Iago, realizing that he has succeeded in his evil plot, takes leave from Roderigo to go and attend to Othello. As soon as he leaves, Brabantio, having realized what has transpired, comes out and accuses Othello of using magic and "charms" to steal Desdemona. Along with his men, he and Roderigo proceed to confront Othello. The scene introduces the audience to Othello. Though he is only referred to in passing and rather ambiguously as "the Moor," "the thick-lips," and "a Barbary horse," these names indicate his racial identity. They tell the audience that Othello is dark-skinned. Seemingly, Iago's hatred for Othello doesn't only stem from having been passed over for promotion; he likely harbors a deep-seated racial hatred of Othello. The squabble between Iago and Roderigo also reveals much. It provides the audience key information about incidents not included in the scene—that is, about incidents leading up to the play's first act. It reveals the traits of Iago and Roderigo. Iago, from the first scene itself, can be recognized as a shrewd, wily character. He appears to be exploiting Roderigo for monetary benefits. On the other hand, Roderigo appears gullible, as his manipulation and exploitation by Iago show. Notably, Roderigo fails to see through Iago's evilness; he is also humiliated by Brabantio. The scene opens with Iago, Othello's ensign, reporting to Othello about Roderigo's betrayal and his role in letting Brabantio know about his marriage to Desdemona. He warns Othello about Brabantio's attempt to foil their marriage. Just then Cassio enters, accompanied by others, bearing urgent news from Cyprus. Cassio has been sent by the Duke to bring Othello to the council. Brabantio enters along with his men and accuses Othello of using magic to lure Desdemona, who otherwise, Brabantio contends, would not have married Othello. Brabantio wants Othello arrested, but is forced to relent for the time being on account of the urgent meeting summoned by the Duke. The scene sheds light on Iago's wife, too. Iago swears to kill Roderigo for his betrayal, though he is the one who manipulates Roderigo into letting Brabantio know of his daughter's elopement. Iago's wife and evilness seem to loom above everyone in the play. While talking to Othello, he alludes to Janus, the two-faced god. Incidentally, Iago himself could most amply be described as two-faced. Later in the scene, during Brabantio's accusations, the racial question resurfaces. Brabantio is determined that his daughter would never have chosen a Moor for her husband had she not been enchanted. Black magic is generally associated with Africans for their animistic faith. Hence, Brabantio, too, ignores Othello's goodness and credibility. Though Othello is a General, Brabantio is unable to look past Othello's race. In the council chamber, the senators and the council members are made aware of a Turkish fleet advancing toward Cyprus with the intent of challenging Venice's authority on the island. A battle seems inevitable. Othello, Iago, Brabantio, Cassio, and others enter the stage. The Duke immediately appoints Othello to lead the battle in Cyprus. In the meantime, Brabantio accuses Othello of having used black magic to seduce his daughter, Desdemona. Notably, the use of black magic in Venice is a capital offense. Eloquenty, Othello lets the council know that he has indeed won over Desdemona, but not with magic. He has won her heart with stories, he says. The Duke calls for Desdemona, who verifies Othello's narrative. The Duke dismisses the allegations against Othello and allows the couple to live together. Since Othello is on his way to battle the Turks in Cyprus, he pleads with the Duke to allow Desdemona to accompany him. They haven't spent a lot of time together, Othello argues. Their appeal is granted, and Desdemona is to stay with Iago till she can leave for Cyprus. Roderigo is, expectedly, unhappy with this verdict. The scheming Iago reassures Roderigo that this marriage will not last long and that Desdemona will be united with Roderigo. Iago then reveals that Othello has had an affair with Emilia, Iago's wife. He does so in a bid to justify his hatred of Othello. Iago, however, merely plans to use Roderigo as a pawn in his efforts to create discord between Othello and Desdemona. The scene shows that Cyprus is of special importance to Venice. As a result, Othello, the most important Venetian General, is appointed to lead the battle in the island. Othello is confident that his marriage to Desdemona will not be challenged or revoked. Firstly, he is honest; he did not use magic to woo Desdemona. Secondly, he knows that the city of Venice will require his leadership to defeat the Turks; which means the senators will likely be bound to absolve him of the charges brought forth by Brabantio. Othello's remarkably eloquent speech also shows that he is extremely proud of his achievements, and this pride, as the audience will find out, eventually leads to his downfall. His speech helps the audience understand why Desdemona has fallen in love with him; he is an honorable and successful soldier. Although the characters on stage seem convinced about Desdemona's love for Othello, Brabantio fails to understand why his "jewel" has fallen for a Moor. Iago is an extremely observant and intelligent person, with the knack to manipulate people. Through Iago's character, Shakespeare suggests that intelligence and ability do not automatically make a good person; after all, people can apply their intelligence to achieve evil ends. IAGO! I don't hate him, you can hate me. Three noblemen of the city tipped their hats to him, making a personal plea for him to make me his lieutenant. And, truly, I know my value, and I'm worthy of that position. But of course Othello is too proud to listen and wants to do things his own way, so he speaks in circles with empty talk about war-related titles. And in the end he declines their proposal and says, "Certainly, I have already chosen my lieutenant." And who did he choose? A guy who's basically a mathematician, some Michael Cassio, from Florence. A man practically cursed with a wife too beautiful (whom he can't control). A man who has never commanded a squadron on the battlefield, who knows no more about battle than an old lady. He knows only theory from books, full of the talk of old geezers in togas. His military experience is all ideas, with no real action! But, sir, Othello chose this Cassio for lieutenant, not me—even though he's seen proof of my military prowess with his own eyes at Rhodes, at Cyprus, and on all sorts of battlefields in Christian and Pagan lands. Now, my career's stalled and I'm overtaken by some number cruncher—an accountant! That bean-counter will be his lieutenant before too long, and meanwhile I'll be carrying around his Moorship's flag, thank you very much. Act 1 Scene 1 Quotes Roderigo: "Tush, never tell me!" The play begins with a mild expletive, already advertising themes of innocence vs sin. It also foreshadows the very end of the play - Iago never in fact 'tells' Roderigo or any other character about his true incentives. Iago: "Michael Cassio, a Florentine". This demonstrates Iago's awareness of outsiders and foreigners, ironic due to the Spanish heritage of his own name. Jacobean audiences would've been aware of the Venetian practice of employing mercenary officers, and might have identified Iago as a Spaniard, particularly as is name recalls Spain's patron saint, known as Sant'Iago Matamoros (St James, Hammer of the Moors). Giraldi Cinthio's "Heccatomitthi" (the source of 'Othello') identifies Iago as a foreigner when, as the end, he has him "return to his country." Shakespeare's choices of names for 2 Venetians with bigoted resentments towards strangers is surely a deliberate irony. Iago: "a fellow almost damned in a fair way". This Italian proverb connotes misogyny and Iago's sexual envy of Cassio. This also perhaps gives truth to Iago's claim that Cassio committed adultery, whilst asserting women's place as hellish and demonic. The spaces they inhabit are inevitably tainted by male hegemonic patriarchy and Christian tradition. Iago: "Tis the curse of service. Preferment goes by letter and affection." Iago's class envy. Injustice and corrupt hierarchies in Venice, a city ripe with wealth and status. Iago: "I follow him to serve my turn upon him." Connotations of this being a game to Iago, who gambles his actions and motives, implying truth in Coleridge's interpretation of motiveless malignity. Iago: "Whip me such honest knaves!" Oxymoron prefiguring "Honest Iago" and connoting him as a knave/ villain. Trick imagery enforces him as a Machiavellian villain. Iago: "Were I the Moor, I would not be Iago." Discussion flitting between 1st and 3rd person, with Iago removing himself from his own identity and ironically uniting the two characters. Iago: "The native act and figure of my heart." Meta-theatrical, playing on themes of truth and appearance, and Iago reflecting the playwright (Shakespeare himself) due to his manipulation of characters and the world. Iago: "I am not what I am". Iago is parodying God with his statement, alluding to Exodus's declaration, "I am that I am" in the Bible. This directly juxtaposes Iago against God, enforcing him as a Satan-like figure and preying on the severe Christianity of Shakespeare's audience. Roderigo: "thick-lips" proclaims Othello's racial otherness. Iago: "Rouse him... poison his delight, proclaim him in the streets, incense her kingmen... Plague him with flies." Despite insistence that Othello is the one "bewitching", Iago displays connotations of witch-like changing using imperative verbs. 1604 Witchcraft Act. Iago: "Look to your house, your daughter, and your bags!" Iago aligns Desdemona with commodities and objects, an item belonging to Brabantio that isn't even prioritised above his house. Marxist interpretation in a city of wealth and status? Iago: "Even now, now, very now, an old black ram is tupping your white ewe." This phrase alludes to the very world around them is affected by their coupling, representing the merging of political and personal worlds preceding Cyprus. Brabantio: "Where didst thou see her? - O, unhappy girl! - With the Moor sayst thou? - Who would be a father? - How didst thou know 'twas she? - O, she deceives me." The use of extended dashes and punctuations alludes to Othello's madness in Act 4 Scene 1 – they both think they have lost Desdemona to another man, descending into madness based on societal expectations of women's roles. Brabantio: "O treason of the blood!" His exclamation plays on several senses of blood. Desdemona's elopement is a violation of her noble nature and lineage (blood); a betrayal of duty to her family (blood); and an instance of treacherous rebellion against the sovereign reason by rebellious passion blood). The father's authority was analogous to that of a Monarch's, which is perhaps ironic as Queen Elizabeth had only just died and James VI was preparing for the English throne. Get 1 free answer with LitCharts AI New In our Othello Act 1 Scene 1 analysis, you will learn about Iago's manipulative nature and his deep resentment toward Othello. Paying special attention to the complex dynamics between Iago, Roderigo, and Brabantio is crucial, as this opening scene establishes the groundwork for the exploration of manipulation, jealousy, and betrayal. Here, we will provide a detailed Act 1 Scene 1 Othello analysis with quotes and annotations to help you understand the scene's nuanced themes and character interactions. Alongside this, we will examine the broader implications of Othello Act 1 and its role in setting up the tragedy. We will write a custom essay specifically for you by our professional experts Othello Act 1 starts with the argument between Rodrigo and Iago. It happens on the dark streets of Venice. Rodrigo, a wealthy nobleman, asked Iago to help him marry Desdemona. To his disappointment, there was no progress in his efforts to win her heart. He also learned that Desdemona had married Othello recently. Othello is the general whom Iago has been serving. He hates Othello and has reasons for that, as he claims. The main one is that despite Iago's exemplary service, Michael Cassio was promoted to the post of lieutenant. Another reason is Othello's race, as he is a Moore, an African. Roderigo fears that he has lost Desdemona and his money because of it. Iago suggests that to spoil Desdemona and Othello's ideal life, they have to let Desdemona's parents know. So the family will be against the general. The two come to Desdemona's father and tell him that he has been robbed. Brabantio, a prominent Venetian senator, comes out to see who is making all this noise. In the beginning, he does not believe Roderigo and Iago. Iago tells the senator again and again that Othello and Desdemona have sexual relationships. Brabantio ends up looking for his daughter and doesn't find her. Then, he starts believing them. Iago leaves Roderigo and goes to search for Othello, who does not know about his participation in the scheme. Brabantio goes to look for Othello with his men. He is convinced that the general used some magic charms to attract Desdemona. Iago, Roderigo, Brabantio The minimum time our certified writers need to deliver a 100% original paper The play starts with a quarrel between Iago and Rodrigo. This opening scene serves two main functions: it intrigues the audience and reveals Iago's manipulative nature. He promises Rodrigo to make Desdemona fall in love with him. In return, Iago gets money from the wealthy Roderigo. The audience does not know for how long this friendship persisted. However, what is clear to everyone, Iago does not respect Roderigo. For instance, he says, I am not what I am. Othello, Iago, Act 1, Scene 1 In the opening scene, Iago also explains his reasons for hating Othello. There are several different interpretations for this profoundly rooted resentment: both professional and personal. First, he wanted Othello to promote him to the rank of lieutenant. He even claims that some three influential Venetians had approached the general with this suggestion. Nevertheless, Othello preferred to promote Cassio instead. According to Iago, Cassio does not possess the needed knowledge and courage on the battlefield. He calls him "spinster," alluding to his young age and absence of sexual experience. Cassio serves a role of a victimized lieutenant in Othello. Additionally, everything Cassio knows about war is learned from the textbooks. Iago calls him a "bookish theoretic." He also notes that Cassio is not Venetian (just like Othello). This quote might suggest that race plays a role in Iago's resentment too. Another interpretation of his hatred can be rooted in his personal feelings towards Desdemona. Even though the reasons for Iago's feelings are present in the text, they are less important than the results of his evil manipulations. Race plays a vital role in the opening scene as well. The abundance of racial remarks by both Rodrigo and Iago in Act 1 Scene 1 emphasizes racist attitudes towards Othello. Rodrigo calls him "the thick lips." Iago refers to Othello as "an old black ram," "a Barbary horse," "the lascivious Moor." These animal comparisons of Othello's race continue to appear in the play. Get your first paper with Learn More Brabantio learns that his daughter, Desdemona, has eloped with Othello. It makes him furious because she married not one of the "curled darlings of her nations." It implies that Othello's race is more critical to Brabantio than Othello's achievements and social status as a general. For instance, when the father recognizes Rodrigo, he tells him that Desdemona is not a fit for him. However, when he learns that she has eloped with the Moor, Rodrigo seems like a good match. Iago successfully uses animal comparisons and Brabantio's racism to make him furious. The audience first sees Othello through the eyes of Iago, Rodrigo, and Brabantio. Only later the audience learns that he is a highly respected figure in Venetian society. Even the Duke of Venice respects him. He is also highly valued by his soldiers. Yet, at first, we only see him as a despised person of another race. When Brabantio wants to go search for the protagonist, Iago decides to join his commander. He wants Othello to trust him because, without trust, Iago's plans will not be possible to accomplish. The public should not know that he is Othello's enemy too. That is why almost an entire opening scene happens in the darkness. Before leaving, Iago says: Show out a flag and sign of love,Which is indeed but a sign. Othello, Iago, Act 1, Scene 1 Thanks for reading the summary and analysis of Act 1 Scene 1! For more information about Othello, check the articles below.