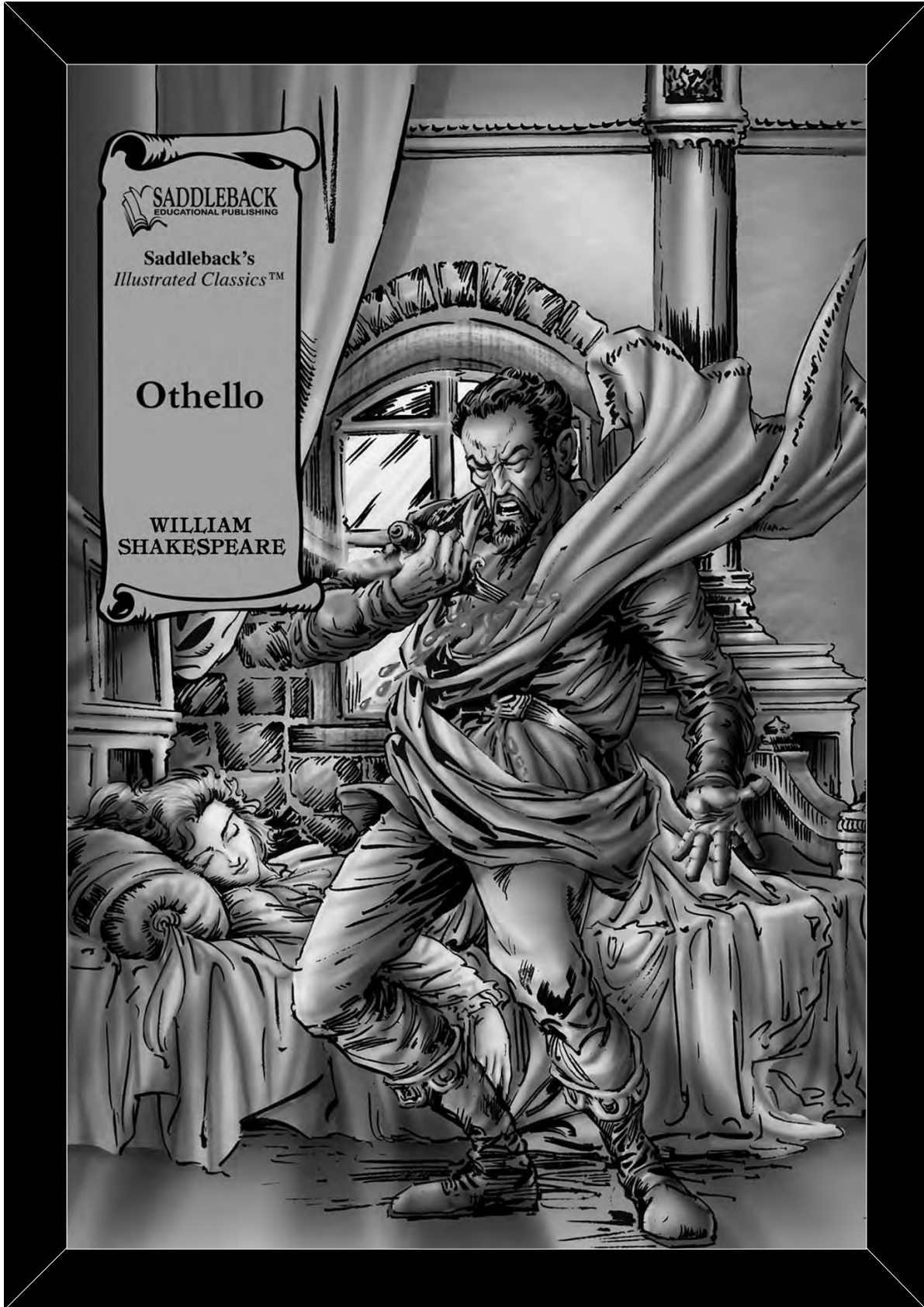


STUDY GUIDE



OTHELLO
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NOTES TO THE TEACHER

SADDLEBACK'S ILLUSTRATED CLASSICS™ SERIES

What better way could there be to motivate struggling readers? Here are 45 of the world's all-time greatest stories—in the form of full-color graphic novels, no less! (Check the copyright page in this guide for a complete list of titles.)

THE REPRODUCIBLE EXERCISES

The eleven reproducible exercises that support each Illustrated Classics title are ideal for use in the academically diverse classroom. All written at a sub-5.0 reading level, they are designed to be “moderately challenging” for all learners—be they on-level recreational readers, older, struggling readers in need of skills reinforcement, or native speakers of other languages who are working to improve their command of language structure.

As a whole, the exercises focus on developing the traditional skillsets that underpin reading competence. The overall goal is to reinforce and extend basic reading comprehension while using the text as a springboard for acquisition of important language arts competencies. Specific skills and concepts targeted in the exercises include: following directions, vocabulary development, recall, cause and effect, recognizing details, generalization, inference, interpreting figurative language, understanding idioms and multiple-meaning words, etc.

All students—regardless of their range of exceptionalities and markedly different experiential backgrounds—can benefit from, and even enjoy, the experience of successfully “showing what they know” via the reproducible exercises.

DIFFERENTIATING INSTRUCTION: OPTIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Responsive teachers have always used a variety of methods and strategies to tailor instruction to the needs of specific students. To this end, the reproducible exercises lend themselves to a variety of presentation modes. Following are some suggestions for varying your approach:

- ▶ **Pre-reading:** Before students begin to read the story, hand out copies of the *Previewing the Story* and *About the Author* exercises. You, or student volunteers, might read them aloud before eliciting answers from the class. The *Interpreting Visual Clues* exercise also lends itself to introducing the story through class discussion.
- ▶ **Assign reading buddies or small reading groups.** Students not yet able to work independently can be paired off as reading buddies who consult with and reinforce each other as they answer questions or solve the puzzles. Small groups can also be formed to cooperatively complete the exercises. If appropriate, groups can compete as teams. (“Winners” might finish first or have the most correct answers.)
- ▶ **When possible, give your students a choice of response modes.** As an alternative to working independently, allowing students to respond orally to the exercise questions may give some students a better chance to demonstrate their grasp of the material. Many students can greatly benefit by “listening to how other people think” as they explain their answers. Choice also increases the struggling student’s sense of autonomy and engagement—which in turn enhances his or her sense of competence and self-esteem.
- ▶ **Native speakers of other languages** will especially benefit from the combination of the pictorial representations in the book and the follow-up printed matter in the exercises. While maintaining different performance expectations for students at different levels, use the vocabulary exercises to help these students add to their stock of English words and phrases. Students at the intermediate to advanced levels are ideal candidates for the *Word Study* and *Language Study* exercises that deal with idioms, figures of speech, and multiple-meaning words.
- ▶ **Suggestions for lesson extensions:**
 - Write a paragraph about your favorite character.
 - Do Internet research on the author or the story’s setting.
 - Write a three-paragraph book report.
 - Use the vocabulary words as the basis for a spelling test.
 - Have students rewrite lines of dialogue in their own words.
 - Ask students to write a new title for the book.



OTHELLO
PREVIEWING THE STORY

1

What's the story about? Read the summary before answering the questions.
 Hint: There are no right or wrong answers. Use your imagination!



How disappointed would you be if a fellow worker got a promotion you were counting on for yourself? In *Othello*, a beautiful love story turns to tragedy when jealousy takes root. A soldier named Iago is enraged when he's passed over for promotion to lieutenant. To get back at the general, Iago sets off a terrible chain of events that robs the noble Othello of the one person he loves most in the world—his wife, Desdemona.

1. Have you ever disliked someone who had something you really wanted? At one time or another, all of us struggle with feelings of envy. One of the best ways to combat envy is to make a list of the good things you *do* have. Name at least three things that make you feel grateful for the life you have.

2. In this story, Othello and Desdemona misplace their trust in Iago. Have you ever trusted someone who turned out to be untrustworthy? Explain what happened and tell what you learned from that experience.

3. Gossip and rumors play a large part in the tragedy of *Othello*. Do you think that gossiping is a bad habit or a harmless one? Give reasons for your opinion.

4. *Othello* was written more than 400 years ago. Do you think human nature has changed very much since then? Do you imagine that human nature will be much different 400 years in the future? Give an example to support your opinion.

5. Iago is known as one of the most evil characters in all of English literature. List three or four characteristics of a truly *evil* person.



OTHELLO
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

2

A. Read about the author's life on the page before the story starts. After reviewing what you have read, study the statements below. Then write **T** for *true*, **F** for *false*, or **NM** for *not mentioned* next to each statement.

1. _____ Shakespeare studied several languages as a schoolboy.
2. _____ Shakespeare married Anne Hathaway when he was 28 years old.
3. _____ Shakespeare's acting company was called the Stratford Players.
4. _____ Audiences in Shakespeare's time thought he was more gifted as an actor than as a playwright.
5. _____ Shakespeare was born in the 15th century and died in the 16th century.
6. _____ Susanna, Hamnet, and Judith were the grandchildren of Mary Arden and John Shakespeare.
7. _____ Shakespeare is believed to have been 53 years old when he died.
8. _____ Shakespeare's plays were performed at the Globe Theater in London.
9. _____ Shakespeare's comedies are more highly regarded than his tragedies.
10. _____ Shakespeare was born in Stratford-on-Avon, England, on April 26, 1564.

B. Circle a letter to show the meaning of the **boldface** word from the reading.
 Hint: Check a dictionary if you need help.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Shakespeare's father was a merchant. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. one who buys and sells goods for profit b. soldier hired to fight for a foreign country c. one who lends money for profit 2. Someone who lives as a country gentleman <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. never visits the city. b. raises chickens and pigs. c. has retired from the working world. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Shakespeare wrote a number of sonnets. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. 14-line poems rhymed in a certain pattern b. very short biographies c. plays with many sound effects 4. Today, a grammar school is called <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. a junior college. b. a prep school. c. an elementary school. |
|---|---|



OTHELLO

INTERPRETING VISUAL CLUES**3**

The drawings in illustrated novels can often give you as much information as the words. Pictures not only show what the characters are doing, but also how they feel about it.

In your book, turn to the referenced page and look closely at the picture. Then circle a letter to answer the question or complete the sentence.

- Page 14—top of page.** In this drawing of the duke and his advisors, how does the artist indicate which man is the Duke of Venice?
 - He wears a green robe.
 - He sits on a throne.
 - He has a long beard.
- Page 20—top of page.** Study the picture closely. Are Othello and Desdemona saying hello or saying goodbye? How can you tell that the ship is arriving rather than departing?
 - Passengers are boarding.
 - The ship is headed north.
 - Passengers are getting off the ship.
- Page 25—top righthand side.** How does Cassio's position in the illustration suggest that he is asking a favor of Desdemona?
 - He is kneeling before her.
 - He is holding her hand.
 - He is smiling sweetly.
- Page 27—bottom righthand side.** The reason Iago doesn't respond to Othello's question, "Why did I marry?" is that Othello
 - is talking to someone else.
 - is thinking rather than saying those words.
 - doesn't expect an answer.
- Page 36—bottom of page.** Study the picture closely. You can tell that Othello doesn't wish to be seen by the two men talking because he is
 - hiding behind some bushes.
 - silently sneaking away.
 - approaching them very slowly.
- Page 31—top of page.** In this drawing of Iago and Othello, which details does the artist use to show Othello's reaction to what Iago has just told him?
 - his harsh words, his angry voice
 - his slumping posture, his closed eyes
 - his clenched fists, his unhappy face
- Page 54—bottom righthand side.** Study the expression on Desdemona's face. Upon hearing of Cassio's death, she feels
 - mildly disappointed.
 - shocked and horrified.
 - glad it's all over.