DEAR TEACHERS,

Our STUDY GUIDE is a resource for you to use both before and after you work with our teaching artists and visit our theatre. It’s packed full of information about Shakespeare, his language, the play, and our production of the play.

Feel free to photocopy pages for your students!

We’ve also included bonus lessons that correspond with each of our workshops. These are simple activities that you can facilitate with your students to expand on the work they’ve done with our teaching artists. We’ve listed the Common Core Anchor Standards for English Language Arts as well as the NYC Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in the Arts; all activities align with at least one standard in each category.

We love hearing from you, and welcome your feedback. We also encourage you to share your students’ work with us. We’d love to feature it!

EMAIL student work to: kathleen.dorman@classicstage.org

or MAIL it to us:
Classic Stage Company
ATTN: Kathleen Dorman
136 East 13th Street
New York, NY 10003

Our TUMBLR is updated weekly with cast interviews and other behind-the-scenes goodies, generated by members of our teen leadership program, CSC NextGen. Follow along with their experiences going behind the scenes on OTHELLO! Check it out at cscnextgen.tumblr.com.

And for all the latest updates, we encourage you and your students to follow CSC NextGen on Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook: @CSCNextGen.

We hope you enjoy OTHELLO!

Sincerely,
Kathleen Dorman
Director of Education
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## PART ONE: SHAKESPEARE’S LIFE AND THEATRE
- William Shakespeare: An Illustrated Biography ................................................................. 4
- Elizabethan England .......................................................................................................... 5
- Growing Up Shakespeare ................................................................................................. 6
- London City Living ........................................................................................................... 7
- The Globe Theatre ............................................................................................................ 9

## PART TWO: THE PLAY
- Illustrated Plot Synopsis ............................................................................................... 11
- Who’s Who? ..................................................................................................................... 13
- Notes on the Play ............................................................................................................. 14
- Quiz: Who are you in OTHELLO? .................................................................................... 17
- Table Work: How Actors Unpack Shakespeare’s Language ............................................ 18

## PART THREE: BEHIND THE SCENES
- What’s Different About TYC’s Production? ................................................................. 23
- An Interview with OTHELLO Director Tyne Rafaeli ..................................................... 26
- What to Watch For ......................................................................................................... 28

## PART FOUR: POST-WORKSHOP ACTIVITIES (For Teachers)
- Curriculum Connections: Learning Standards ............................................................. 30
- Activities ......................................................................................................................... 31
- Student Resources .......................................................................................................... 35
- Sources ......................................................................................................................... Inside back cover
PART ONE:
SHAKESPEARE’S LIFE
AND THEATRE
WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE—AN ILLUSTRATED BIOGRAPHY

William is born.

April 23, 1564

William attends grammar school.

1571–1578

William marries Anne Hathaway and starts a family.

1582–1585

William moves to London and begins his theatrical career.

1594

William’s only son, Hamnet, dies at the age of eleven.

1595

William’s acting company builds the famous Globe theater.

1596

William becomes a founding member of the Lord Chamberlain’s men acting company.

1599

William’s acting company changes its name to the King’s Men.

1600–1606

William writes his most famous tragedies.

1603

“Tis unmanly grief...”

1609–1611

William writes his final plays as a solo playwright.

1612

William moves back to his birthplace, Stratford-upon-Avon.

April 23, 1616

William’s plays are published in the First Folio.

1623

Out, out, brief candle!

1,000 copies printed, 238 survive today.

EXACTLY 62 YEARS AFTER HIS BIRTH!

William dies.
IN 16TH CENTURY ENGLAND, religion and politics were one in the same. People believed in the “divine right of kings”—that is, monarchs were given their right to rule directly from God and were subject to no earthly authority. In 1534, King Henry VIII famously broke from the Catholic Church when it denied him the right to divorce his first wife, Catherine of Aragon, who had not produced a male heir. He declared himself head of the new Anglican Church, which eventually became part of the Protestant Reformation. His actions resulted in a time of bitter and violent religious disputes in England, and the crown changed hands frequently over a short period of time.

BY THE TIME SHAKESPEARE WAS BORN IN 1564, Queen Elizabeth—Henry VIII’s second eldest daughter, born to his second wife, Anne Boleyn—was in power. Her 44 years on the throne provided the kingdom with more stability than the previous short-lived reigns of her two half-siblings, Edward VI (crowned at age 9 and dead by age 16) and Mary Tudor (nicknamed “Bloody Mary” for the nearly 300 Protestants she had burned at the stake).

QUEEN ELIZABETH’S REIGN WAS A TIME OF THRIVING CULTURE. English citizens loved her, nicknaming her “Good Queen Bess.” Because she remained unmarried throughout her rule and did not give birth to an heir, a distant relative, King James VI of Scotland, was named as her successor. Both Elizabeth and James were great patrons of the theatre and enjoyed Shakespeare’s plays. In fact, King James honored Shakespeare’s company of actors with the title of “The King’s Men,” and they performed at court regularly.
BOYS AND GIRLS began “petty school” around the age of four in order to learn how to read. Girls left school at age six to be taught at home by their mothers, or if they were rich, a private tutor. If boys belonged to a middle class or wealthy family, they could continue on to “grammar school” after leaving petty school, or they were sent to work in some sort of trade, such as farming. At grammar school boys would study Latin, drama, poetry, and history for long hours with no desks. Learning Latin was important for any boy wanting to enter a career in law, medicine, or the Church. Because Shakespeare’s father made a sustainable living in public and government jobs, Shakespeare was able to attend grammar school where he likely picked up his love of drama and writing.

FOOTBALL—or soccer, as we know it—was a popular sport for people in the countryside around Shakespeare’s hometown. The balls were made from inflated pigs’ bladders! Shakespeare makes mention of this sport in THE COMEDY OF ERRORS: “Am I so round with you as you with me, that like a football you do spurn me thus?” Other popular sports of the day Shakespeare mentions in his works include tennis, bowling, wrestling, rugby, billiards, and archery.

FESTIVALS occurred at various times of the year. One of the most popular was on May 1st—May Day, the celebration of the arrival of summer! Columns were erected (maypoles) and adorned with ribbons and flowers, traditionally as part of a dance. This tradition is referenced in A MIDSUMMER NIGHT’S DREAM: “They rose early to observe the rite of May.”

RIGHT: Children learned to read using “hornbooks” like these—pieces of wood covered with printed-paper, protected by transparent sheets of horn.
IF YOU LIVED IN LONDON during Shakespeare's time, you would have encountered overly crowded streets, heaps of trash on the sidewalk, and the heads of executed criminals placed on poles for all to see. But amidst the grime, there were also beautiful churches and large mansions filled with nobles and wealthy merchants. Most items you needed would have been purchased from street vendors, including vegetables, fruits, toys, books and clothing.

ABOVE: Like New York City today, space was tight. Many buildings were designed with vertical living in mind, as London quickly became the epicenter of culture for England.

The first theatre was built in 1576. Its shape—like The Globe (ABOVE)—was influenced by bear fighting-rings, which were popular in London at the time. Shakespeare referenced this Elizabethan sport in MACBETH when Macbeth states, “They have tied me to the stake. I cannot fly, But bear-like I must stay and fight the course.” (RIGHT)

SHAKESPEARE MOVED TO LONDON to work in the theatre. But theatre wasn’t the only cultural event happening in London. You could also view bloody tournaments between animals and public executions! Gambling was also popular.
OUTBREAKS OF THE PLAGUE were common in Elizabethan London. Many Londoners believed the plague was caused by the various smells throughout the city, so they carried containers filled with herbs to combat the stench. What they didn’t know was that the plague was actually spread by fleas that lived on rats, which were rampant on the dirty streets.

In 1592, the plague forced London theatres to shut their doors for two whole years. 12,000 Londoners lost their lives. With no playhouses to produce his works, Shakespeare focused his attention on writing narrative poems and sonnets.

CLOTHING WAS A SIGN OF ONE’S RANK, so there were strict rules dictating what citizens could and could not wear. Those dressing above their status could be arrested! Exceptions were made for actors as they often played nobles on stage.

ABOVE: As a rule, the less practical the outfit, the higher the rank of its wearer. Wealthy men often wore hats with ostrich feathers for decoration and huge “ruff” collars. Wealthy women wore wide padded dresses with puffy sleeves.

RIGHT: The less wealthy wore practical clothing conducive to labor. While the wealthy were wearing luxurious fabrics such as silk and velvet, the lower-status citizens often wore rough wool.
WELCOME TO
THE GLOBE THEATRE

LEONARDO: WELCOME TO THE GLOBE THEATRE.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: LET ME TELL YOU A LITTLE ABOUT "THIS WOODEN O."

LEONARDO: THE COMPANY WAS HAVING DIFFICULTY RENEWING THE LEASE ON OUR FIRST THEATER, SO IN 1599 WE TOOK IT DOWN AND MOVED ITS TIMBERS ACROSS THE THAMES RIVER TO THE BANKSIDE AND BUILT THE GLOBE.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: THE BANKSIDE IS GREAT - IT'S JUST OUTSIDE THE JURISDICTION OF THE CITY OF LONDON, SO WE'RE SAFE FROM CITY OFFICIALS WHO THINK THAT THE THEATER IS IMMORAL AND WANT TO ABOLISH IT.

LEONARDO: THE ORIGINAL GLOBE BURNED DOWN IN 1613 WHEN CANNON FIRE - PART OF A PERFORMANCE OF HENRY VIII - ACCIDENTALLY SET THE THATCHED ROOF AFRAILME! OOPS!

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: WE BUILT A SECOND, MORE ELABORATE GLOBE ON THE SAME SITE, AND IT REMAINED IN USE UNTIL CIVIL WAR BROKE OUT IN ENGLAND IN 1642.

LEONARDO: THE FLAG IS FLYING! THAT MEANS WE'VE GOT A PERFORMANCE TODAY.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: THE STAGE ROOF PROTECTS THE ACTORS FROM THE WEATHER, AND ALSO ACTS AS A SET PIECE WE CALL THE "HEAVENS." SEE THE STARRY SKY WE PAINTED?

LEONARDO: THIS IS A "THRUST" STAGE, MEANING WE HAVE AUDIENCE MEMBERS ON THREE SIDES. JUST LIKE AT CSC!

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: THIS TRAP DOOR LEADS TO "HELL," THE SPACE BENEATH THE STAGE. IT MAKES A GREAT GRAVE, TOO!

LEONARDO: DID YOU KNOW JULIET WAS PLAYED BY A BOY? NO GIRLS ALLOWED!

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: MY TICKET COST TWICE AS MUCH AS WHAT THAT GENTLEMAN PAID FOR HIS CUSHIONED SEAT. I'M RIGHT ABOVE ALL THE ACTION! EVERYONE CAN SEE THAT I'M A VIP.

LEONARDO: CHEAPEST SEAT IN THE HOUSE! WELL, IT'S NOT A SEAT, EXACTLY. AT LEAST I GET TO SEE THE SHOW!

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: THE GLOBE CAN ACCOMMODATE NEARLY 3,000 AUDIENCE MEMBERS. CSC'S HOUSE ONLY SEATS ABOUT 200.

LEONARDO: MY TICKET COST TWICE AS MUCH AS WHAT THOSE "GROUNDLINGS" PAID TO STAND IN THE YARD BELOW AND FOR AN EXTRA PENCE, I GET TO SIT ON A CUSHION!

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: ALAS, POOR YORICK. I KNEW HIM...

LEONARDO: THE "GROUNDLINGS" SOMETIMES THREW FRUIT AT THE ACTORS IF THEY DIDN'T LIKE A PERFORMANCE!
PART TWO:
THE PLAY
A MOHRISH PRINCE AND GENERAL IN THE VENETIAN ARMY
HAS FALLEN IN LOVE WITH
DESDEMONA
THE DAUGHTER OF A VENETIAN SENATOR

AS A TOKEN OF HIS LOVE, HE GAVE HER A HANKERCHIEF SPOTTED WITH STRAWBERRIES THAT HAD ONCE BELONGED TO HIS MOTHER. SHE TREASURES THE KEEPSAKE.

AS AN OUTSIDER IN VENICE, MANY HOLE PREJUDICES AGAINST OTHHELLO THE LOVERS KNOW THAT DESDEMONA’S FATHER BRABANTIO WILL NOT APPROVE OF THE MATCH, SO THEY MARRY IN SECRET.

WHEN THEY ARE DISCOVERED, HER FATHER BRINGS A COMPLAINT AGAINST OTHHELLO BEFORE THE DUKE OF VENICE.

0, MY DAUGHTER! SHE IS STOLEN FROM ME, AND CORRUPTED.

BUT THE DUKE IS SYMPATHETIC TOWARD OTHHELLO, SO BRABANTIO RELUCTANTLY APPROVES THE MATCH.

THE SENATE MOVES ON TO MORE PRESSING MATTERS: OTHHELLO’S HELP IS NEEDED IN CYPRUS TO DEFEND AGAINST A TURKISH INVASION.

YOU MUST AWAY TONIGHT!

WITH ALL MY HEART.

LET ME GO WITH HIM.

LOOK TO HER, MOTHER... SHE HAS DECEIVED HER FATHER, AND MAY THEE.

MEANWHILE, IAGO, OTHHELLO’S TRUSTED ADVISOR, IS HATCHING A DEVIOUS PLAN. HAVING RECENTLY BEEN PASSED OVER FOR PROMOTION BY OTHHELLO IN FAVOR OF CASTIO, AN INEXPERIENCED SOLDIER, HE LOOKS TO TAKE REVENGE.

I HATE THE MOOR.

HE ALSO SUSPECTS THAT OTHHELLO HAS HAD AN AFFAIR WITH HIS WIFE, EMILIA.

PESTILENT KNAVE! FOOLISH WIFE!

IAGO TAKES ADVANTAGE OF A WEALTHY AND LOVESICK SUITOR TO DESDEMONA NAMED RODERIGO, CONVINCING HIM THAT THEY SHOULD WORK TOGETHER TO UNDO OTHHELLO.

TO LIVE IS TOILMENT.

LET US BE CONJUNCTIVE IN OUR REVENGE AGAINST HIM.

OTHELLO’S FLEET SETS SAIL FOR CYPRUS. WHEN THEY ARRIVE, THEY ARE PLEASANTLY SURPRISED WITH NEWS THAT THE TURKISH FLEET HAS BEEN WRECKED IN A STORM AT SEA!

NEWS, FRIENDS. OUR WARS ARE DONE, THE TURKS ARE DROWNED.

AT A CELEBRATION THAT EVENING, IAGO SETS HIS SCHEME IN MOTION. HE GETS CASSIO DRUNK, THEN SENDS RODERIGO TO START A FIGHT WITH HIM.

SOME WINE, HID! TO THE HEALTH OF OUR GENERAL!

RODERIGO, AFTER THE LIEUTENANT, GO.

MONTANO, THE GOVERNOR OF CYPRUS, ATTEMPTS TO BREAK UP THE FIGHT.

IN THE SCUFFLE, CASSIO STARS HIM. OTHHELLO IS SUMMONED, AND STRIPS CASSIO OF HIS LIEUTENANT RANK.

I AM HURT TO DANGER.

CASSIO, NEVER MORE BE OFFICER OF MINE.

IAGO ADVISES A DEVASTATED CASSIO THAT THE WAY BACK INTO OTHHELLO’S GOOD GRACES IS THROUGH DESDEMONA.

IMPORTANT HER NEED.

YOU ADVISE ME WEL!
DESMODINA IS SYMPATHETIC TO CASSIO’S REQUEST, AND BEGS OTHELLO TO RECONSIDER.

MOVED BY LOVE FOR HIS WIFE, OTHELLO ORIGINES... UNTIL IAGO BEGINS TO QUESTION DESMONA’S MOTIVES. COULD CASSIO AND DESMONA BE HAVING AN AFFAIR? OTHELLO REFUSES TO BELIEVE IT WITHOUT PROOF.

SHE DID RECEHE HER FATHER, MARRYING YOU... I’LL HAY SOME PROOF!

BUT BECAUSE OTHELLO BELIEVES IAGO TO BE EXCEEDINGLY HONEST, HE CAN’T HELP BUT CONSIDER THE POSSIBILITY, AND HIS THOUGHTS BEGIN TO TORTURE HIM.

HONEST THOUGHTS IF SHE BE FALSE... O MURDEROUS!

IAGO ASKS EMILIA TO BRING HIM DESMONA’S BELOVED HANKERCHER.

WHAT HE WILL DO WITH IT, HE NEVER KNOWS, NOT!

HE PLANTS THE HANKERCHER IN CASSIO’S ROOM AS PROOF OF THE AFFAIR, THEN STAGES A FAKE CONFESSION FROM HIM AS OTHELLO WATCHES FROM A DISTANCE.

ALAS, POOR RAGUE! I THINK, IT FAITH, SHE LOVES ME.

TO MAKE MATTERS WORSE, WHEN CASSIO FOUND THE HANKERCHER IN HIS ROOM, HE GAVE IT TO DINA, A PROSTITUTE. SHE RETURNS IT TO HIM DURING THE STAGED CONFESSION.

THIS IS SOME MINX’S TOKEN!

BY HEAVEN, THAT SHOULD BE MY HANKERCHER!

IAGO CALLS UPON RODERIGO TO KILL CASSIO THAT NIGHT, BUT THE AMBUSH GOES AWAY TO COVER HIS TRACKS. IAGO PRETENDS TO DEFEND CASSIO, AND STABS RODERIGO TO DEATH.

O MURDEROUS SLAVE! O VILLAIN!

O JMNDO! IAGO! O INHUMAN DOG!

MEANWHILE, OTHELLO CONFRONTS DESMONDA IN THEIR BED. HE ACCUSES HER OF BEING A WHORE, AND THOUGH SHE ASSETS HER INNOCENCE, HE SPIRITS HER TO DEATH.

O, BANISH ME, MY LORD, BUT KILL ME NOT!

IT IS TOO LATE.

EMILIA INTERRUPTS WITH NEWS OF RODERIGO’S DEATH, AND DISCOVERS DESMONDA DYING. SHE DEMANDES AN EXPLANATION FROM OTHELLO, WHO TELLS HER OF IAGO’S DISCOVERY OF THE AFFAIR. PUTTING THE PIECES TOGETHER, EMILIA CRIS ES OUT.

THE MOOD MUFFLED MY MISTRESS’ MURDER! O VILE ARY VILLAIN!

IAGO AND THE OTHERS COME RUNNING, AND ARE CONFRONTED WITH EMILIA’S ACCUSATION THAT IAGO IS TO BLAME. IN A DESPERATE MOVE TO SILENCE HER, IAGO STABS HIS WIFE AND TRIES TO FLEE, BUT HE IS CAUGHT.

A THD DULL, MURDER HANKERCHER THOUGHTS’T BE FOUND BY FORTUNE; AND DID SUE MY WIFE, O THOU LIEST!

DEVASTATED BY THE REALIZATION THAT DESMONDA WAS INNOCENT, OTHELLO WOUNDS IAGO AND STABS HIMSELF. CASSIO IS LEFT TO RULE IN CYPRUS, AND CHARGED WITH FINDING SUITABLE PUNISHMENT FOR THE VILENDUS IAGO.

THE END

Illustrated Plot Synopsis by David Heatley
These cast members play a variety of roles in the show. Some also act as understudies, which means that they learn and rehearse parts that are not their own and are ready to perform at a moment's notice, just in case another cast member suddenly falls ill or has an emergency.
Othello, the Outsider

The term “Moor” is an ambiguous term, especially in Shakespeare. In 711, a group of North African Muslims (who were probably a mix of Black Africans and Arabs) invaded the Iberian Peninsula and settled there. These darker-skinned Muslims living in Spain and Portugal became known as Moors, and for the next 700 years, the white European Christians fought to regain control of the Iberian Peninsula, succeeding with the Fall of Granada, in 1492. A small group of Moors remained in Spain until their final expulsion in 1609, a few years after OTHELLO was written.

Some academics like to debate whether Othello was meant to be of African or Arabic descent, since the term “Moor” can refer to either case, but it doesn’t really matter. What matters in this play is that Othello is not Venetian, nor is he even Italian. Othello is an outsider in Venice, and even those who like and respect him don’t ever really seem to let him forget it. The Duke, who is one of Othello’s greatest champions, tells Brabantio “If virtue no delighted beauty lack, your son-in-law is far more fair than black.” Even Othello speaks of Africans as savages, cannibals, and freaks (Act I, Sc. 3), trying to distance himself from his own ancestry and align himself with Venetians.

OTHELLO is a difficult play for modern theaters to produce because it was written during a time when most people never traveled more than a few miles from home, knew very little about strangers, and developed a lot of unfounded prejudices. Shakespeare, unfortunately, pandered to his audiences who thought that way. Even his attempts to elevate Othello to a “noble savage” imply that there is something wrong with Othello to begin with.

As theater makers, we have two choices: 1) we can ignore plays with problematic ideas written by great playwrights, or 2) we can dig deeper into the plays to find ways to highlight the problems to find new meaning in the play. Every time OTHELLO is staged, we learn something new about the play, and about ourselves, and each creative team has a responsibility to lean into the problems of the play and try to solve them.

Look out for each time somebody says “The Moor” instead of “Othello” or “The General”. What is the effect of this language on Othello, and on other characters?

Why Cyprus?

The full title of the play is “THE TRAGEDY OF OTHELLO, THE MOOR OF VENICE” but the entire play, except for Act 1, takes place in Cyprus, an island 1,300 miles away. Most of the major characters are Venetian (with the exception of Michael Cassio, who is from the nearby city-state of Florence). Why would Shakespeare bother to tell a story about Venetians outside of Venice?

Shakespeare’s England was obsessed with Renaissance Italy. Look at how many of his plays take place there: ROMEO & JULIET, MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING, THE MERCHANT OF VENICE, TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA, and the list goes on. Italy was the cool kid, thanks to the Borgias and the Medicis and all their intrigue and murdering, and the city-states like Venice and Florence were world powers in trade and culture.
When you watch the play, look for the ways in which the design (set, props, costumes, lights, sound) designates the differences between “Venice” and “Cyprus”. What locations did the director choose to be the modern day versions of these cities?

The Technicalities of Truthiness

Othello calls Iago “honest” 12 times over the course of the play. Cassio uses the word twice to describe Iago, and even Desdemona calls Iago an “honest fellow” in her plan to help Cassio regain Othello’s favor. There’s no doubt about it: people think of Iago as an honest and trustworthy fellow. By the time we meet Iago, he’s been a soldier for years, and has clearly proved himself in battle over and over. He’s got a reputation for being able to take charge and solve problems: Roderigo enlists his help to woo Desdemona, Othello trusts Iago with his new wife, and even Cassio asks for Iago’s advice after Othello banishes him.

Iago’s got a reputation as an honest man, and as we have learned from Cassio, reputation is “the immortal part of myself” (Act 2, Scene 3). So when Iago feels wronged, he uses the truth (or half truths) to help him get his revenge. Take a look at Act 3, Scene 3:

IAGO
Did Michael Cassio, when you woo’d my lady, 
Know of your love?

OTHELLO
He did, from first to last: why dost thou ask?

IAGO
But for a satisfaction of my thought; 
No further harm.

OTHELLO
Why of thy thought, Iago?

IAGO
I did not think he had been acquainted with her.

OTHELLO
O, yes; and went between us very oft.

IAGO
Indeed!
What's a Dramaturg?

Did you know that almost every production of Shakespeare modifies the play that we read in the classroom for performance? For example, to get our OTHELLO down to an hour-and-a-half (we couldn't keep you out of school too much longer than that!), we cut several scenes, a lot of lines, and even a few characters! A dramaturg on a Shakespeare production is someone who helps to make these kinds of decisions about cuts and changes to the play, and then helps the director and the actors to understand everything they are saying. In general, a dramaturg can serve many different roles in the theatre, from working with contemporary playwrights on new plays to giving feedback to a director about how a production could be stronger. Dramaturgy requires a lot of research and being an expert on the play. The dramaturg also makes sure the play stays true to the playwright's intentions.

Take a look at Iago's speeches- how often does he use the truth and his own reputation as an honest man to make someone believe a lie?

OTHELLO
Indeed! ay, indeed: discern'st thou aught in that?
Is he not honest?

IAGO
Honest, my lord!

OTHELLO
Honest! ay, honest.

IAGO
My lord, for aught I know.

To plant the seeds of jealousy, Iago simply asks a few questions, and then TELLS THE TRUTH. He says that as far as he knows, Cassio is an honest man. In fact, he says it a few times – three, to be exact. Makes me think of another Shakespeare line: “The lady doth protest too much!” (from Hamlet).

A little later, Iago uses the same trick to cast doubt on Desdemona's character – he repeatedly states that he thinks she is an honest woman, but also reminds Othello that she deceived her father when she eloped. Iago picks those words very carefully – they echo Brabantio's own curse in 1.3: “Look to her, Moor, if thou hast eyes to see: She has deceived her father, and may thee.”
**QUIZ: WHO ARE YOU IN OTHELLO?**

1. **YOUR FRIENDS MIGHT DESCRIBE YOU AS:**
   - A. Cunning
   - B. Loyal
   - C. Charming
   - D. Exotic
   - E. Practical
   - F. Melodramatic

2. **IF YOU WERE AN ANIMAL, YOU’D BE A:**
   - A. Fox
   - B. Swan
   - C. Puppy
   - D. Panther
   - E. Horse
   - F. Turkey

3. **YOUR FAVORITE HOLIDAY IS:**
   - A. April Fool’s day
   - B. Valentine’s day
   - C. My birthday!
   - D. Super Bowl Sunday
   - E. Earth Day
   - F. Any holiday when I get presents

4. **THE ONE APP YOU COULDN’T LIVE WITHOUT IS:**
   - A. Chess
   - B. Instagram
   - C. Tinder
   - D. Zombies, Run!
   - E. Pinterest
   - F. Snapchat

5. **YOUR FRIENDS THROW YOU A SURPRISE PARTY; YOU:**
   - A. Smile knowingly; this was really your idea all along.
   - B. Are beside yourself! You have the best friends in the world!
   - C. Scout out the ladies!
   - D. Are shocked! You had no idea this was going on.
   - E. Rush straight to the kitchen and start organizing the hors d’oeuvres.
   - F. Are disappointed that there aren’t more people there!

6. **YOUR GUILTY PLEASURE TV SHOW IS:**
   - A. House of Cards
   - B. The Bachelor
   - C. Jersey Shore
   - D. Man vs. Wild
   - E. Anything on HGTV
   - F. Days of Our Lives

7. **YOUR DREAM VACATION IS:**
   - A. One where I’m waited on hand and foot
   - B. A couples island resort
   - C. Disneyland
   - D. A rock climbing get away
   - E. The Hamptons
   - F. Paris

8. **YOUR FAVORITE PLACE TO COOL DOWN IN THE SUMMER IS:**
   - A. The movies
   - B. A museum
   - C. The beach
   - D. I don’t mind the heat
   - E. The park
   - F. A coffee shop

**IF YOU ANSWERED MOSTLY:**

- A. You are Iago
- B. You are Desdemona
- C. You are Cassio
- D. You are Othello
- E. You are Emilia
- F. You are Roderigo
TABLE WORK:
How Actors Unpack Shakespeare’s Language

IS THIS REALLY WRITTEN IN ENGLISH? Yes, it is! But it’s also poetry. Elizabethans used poetry for the same reason we still use it today: to express heightened states of emotion. So the language may be more densely packed with all those great rhetorical devices you learned in English class—metaphors, alliteration, irony—but it’s definitely still English.

DID PEOPLE IN SHAKESPEARE’S DAY SPEAK IN VERSE? No, no more than we speak in rap today. But people both then and now enjoy the rhythm and rhyme of verse. It helps us tune in more immediately, more completely to the feelings and choices of the characters.

IS SHAKESPEARE HARDER FOR ACTORS TO PERFORM THAN REGULAR PLAYS? Actually, for most actors, Shakespeare is easier! The rhythm of the language makes it easy to memorize. (You know how song lyrics get stuck in your head, or how you can remember silly little rhymes from when you were a kid? It’s like that.) And all those rhetorical devices act as clues to tell the actors how their character feels.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, “CLUES”? At the start of the rehearsal process, actors do what’s called table work. They sit down with each other and with the director and talk about all the discoveries they’ve made while studying their scenes. They use this information to make choices as they move forward with rehearsals. Here are some of the “clues” they look for:

Shakespeare invented many words and phrases that we use on a regular basis today. Above are some examples.
Verse or Prose?
All of Shakespeare's language falls into one of two categories: verse or prose. Prose is what we think of as everyday speech, without specific rules regarding rhyme or rhythm. Verse, then, can be defined as giving order or form to the random stress patterns of prose.

A quick way to tell verse from prose: lines of verse begin with capital letters, while prose will appear in paragraph form.

Blank Verse
Blank Verse is the standard poetic form Shakespeare uses in his plays. It can also be defined as unrhymed iambic pentameter—that is, a line of poetry containing five (“penta” from the Greek prefix meaning five) iambic feet, not rhyming with any adjacent line. That's ten syllables all together. The pattern flows easily for speakers of English, because the stresses match the human heart beat:

ta DUM, ta DUM, ta DUM, ta DUM, ta DUM
or, a good way to remember the word “iamb” is to think of it as:

i AM, i AM, i AM, i AM, i AM

If you say, “The Yankees and the Mets are New York’s teams” with natural inflection, you will have spoken a line of iambic pentameter.

The YANK | ees AND | the METS | are NEW | York's TEAMS

Here are two more:

I TAKE | the SUB | way EV | ery DAY | to SCHOOL
I CAN'T | go OUT | be CAUSE | my HOME | work's LATE

Now say a line from OTHELLO:

OTHELLO
Away at once with love or jealousy!

a | WAY | at | ONCE | with | LOVE | or | JEA | lou | SY!

A repeating combination of stressed and unstressed syllables is known as a foot, which is the basic unit of verse. An iamb is a foot of poetry containing two syllables, with an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable: ta DUM.

Prose
Prose is the everyday language used then and now. Since verse was the conventional method of writing in Elizabethan England, Shakespeare was actually pushing the literary boundaries by including prose in his plays.

At first glance, it may seem that Shakespeare used verse and prose to indicate a character's status (rich, powerful, educated characters speak in verse; poor, common, fools speak in prose) but upon closer look, you’ll find that many characters go back and forth between verse and prose, and they do so at very specific moments in the play.

Actors pay close attention to when characters speak in verse and when they speak in prose because Shakespeare made these choices on purpose, and they can tell the actor a lot about how their character thinks and feels.

Iago is very strategic with his choice of words. When in conversation with OTHELLO, he tends to use verse; when speaking to Roderigo, he often uses prose:
IAGO
I have told thee often, and I re-tell thee again and again, I hate the Moor: my cause is hearted; thine hath no less reason. Let us be conjunctive in our revenge against him: if thou canst cuckold him, thou dost thyself a pleasure, me a sport.

Another interesting example of switching between verse and prose comes from Iago’s wife, Emilia. During a conversation with Desdemona, her tone suddenly changes:

DESDEMONA
I do not think there is any such woman.

EMILIA
Yes, a dozen: and as many to th’vantage as would store the world they played for. But I do think it is their husbands’ faults if wives do fall.

Irregular Verse
Shakespeare doesn’t always write verse in perfect iambic pentameter. The rhythmic patterns change and so does the number of syllables. This was pretty innovative stuff in Shakespeare’s day. He was one of the first writers to break form. Just like a change from prose to verse is a clue for the actor, so is a variation in the verse pattern. Here are some of the most common variations found in OTHELLO.

Shared Lines & Split Lines
Shakespeare sometimes splits a line of verse, so that two characters share the ten syllables. This is called a shared line or a split line, and it helps to show quick thinking or strong emotion, as well as creating a sense of accelerated action. Thus we have both the effect of poetry AND of natural speech.

Have a look at these lines shared by Othello and Desdemona when he confronts her about Cassio:

DESDEMONA
Let him confess a truth.

OTHELLO
He hath confessed.

They scan as:

Let HIM | con FESS | a TRUTH | he HATH | con FESSED

This scene – an argument – contains many shared lines, which create a realistic pattern of speech when emotions run especially high. Where else in the play might you expect to find a lot of shared lines?
Feminine Endings
A “feminine ending” is a line of verse that ends with an unstressed extra syllable. The result is that the rhythm of the verse is thrown off just enough to indicate that the characters feel unsettled about something. Not surprisingly, Desdemona uses feminine endings when she learns that Othello intends to kill her:

DESMONDA
That death’s unnatural that kills for loving.

First DESMONDA
That DEATH’S | un NAT | ur AL | that KILLS | for LOV | ing

Other Types of Poetry
A trochee is another type of poetic foot. Its pattern of a stressed syllable followed by an unstressed syllable is the exact opposite of an iamb: TA dum. Compared to an iamb, this feels surprisingly unnatural to speakers of the English language, so Shakespeare often uses trochees for his supernatural characters.

When Emilia speaks of jealousy as a monster, Desdemona utters a short prayer that is entirely made up of trochees AND has a feminine ending, making it stand out as almost otherworldly.

DESMONDA
Heaven keep that monster from Othello’s mind.

First DESMONDA
HEA ven | KEEP that | MONS ter | FROM o | THELL o’s | MiND

Missing Feet and Silence
Shakespeare writes in iambic pentameter, which means there are five poetic feet per line: ta DUM, ta DUM, ta DUM, ta DUM, ta DUM. If a line is short, we say it is “missing feet”. This interrupts the flow of the poetry, and forces the actors to find meaning in a moment of silence. Iago uses missing feet and silence to pique Othello’s interest:

IAGO
Think my lord?
THINK | my LORD | - - | - - | - - |

OThELLO
Think, my lord! By heaven, he echoes me.
THINK | my LORD | by HEAV’N | he ECH | oes ME

Rhyming Couplets
When two lines of poetry rhyme, it creates a sense of finality for the listener. Characters will often speak in rhyme when it’s the end of an act or they’ve made a decision. For example, after Iago comes up with his master plan, he says:

IAGO
I have’t. It is engender’ed. Hell and night
Must bring this monstrous birth to the world’s light.

There is not a lot of rhyme in this play, so when you hear a rhyming couplet, it should really stick out. Listen for them when you see the show and think about why Shakespeare might have chosen to use them when he did!
WHAT’S DIFFERENT ABOUT TYC’S PRODUCTION?

The Young Company’s production of OTHELLO has been cut down to 90 minutes. Below you will find some examples of cuts we have made to the script, and a full list of the differences between Shakespeare’s original version and our production.

OTHELLO: Original Text Vs. TYC Cut

Characters
Othello
Desdemona
Cassio
Iago
Emilia
Bianca
Roderigo
The Duke Of Venice (female)
Brabantio
Gratiano (female)
Lodovico (female)
Montano

Example of TYC’s Cut Script:

RODERIGO
What, ho, Brabantio! Signior Brabantio, ho!

IAGO
Are your doors lock’d?

BRABANTIO
Why, wherefore ask you this?

IAGO
'Zounds, sir, you’re robb’d, for shame, put on your gown;
Your heart is burst, you have lost half your soul;
Even now, now, very now, an old black ram
Is topping your white ewe. Arise, arise;
Awake the snorting citizens with the bell;
Or else the devil will make a grandsire of you:
Arise, I say.

BRABANTIO
What, have you lost your wits?
RODERIGO
Most reverend signior, do you know my voice?

BRABANTIO
Not I: what are you?

RODERIGO
My name is Roderigo.

BRABANTIO
The worser welcome:
I have charged thee not to haunt about my doors: In honest plainness thou hast heard me say My daughter is not for thee; and now, in madness, Being full of supper and distempering draughts, Upon malicious bravery, dost thou come To start my quiet.

RODERIGO
Sir, sir, sir,--

BRABANTIO
But thou must needs be sure My spirit and my place have in them power To make this bitter to thee.

RODERIGO
Patience, good sir.

BRABANTIO
What tell'st thou me of robbing? this is Venice; My house is not a grange.

RODERIGO
Most grave Brabantio; In simple and pure soul I come to you.

IAGO
‘Zounds, sir, you are one of those that will not serve God, if the devil bid you. Because we come to do you service and you think we are ruffians, you’ll have your daughter covered with a Barbary horse; you’ll have your nephews neigh to you; you’ll have coursers for cousins and gennets for germans.

BRABANTIO
What profane wretch art thou?

IAGO
I am one, sir, that comes to tell you your daughter and the Moor are now making the beast with two backs.

BRABANTIO
Thou art a villain.

NOTES:
It was not an easy task to cut OTHELLO. It is a very long play – most productions run close to three hours! Fortunately for us, Shakespeare’s characters tend to repeat themselves a lot (they didn’t have microphones in 1604, so repetition helped the audience follow the story when they had trouble hearing). In this example of how we cut down Act 1, Scene 1, you can still follow the story, but it’s only half as long!
**WHAT’S DIFFERENT ABOUT TYC’S PRODUCTION?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ORIGINAL PLAY</th>
<th>TYC’S CUT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The original production takes place in an army.</td>
<td>We set our production in a high school, with the soldiers becoming members of the ROTC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In Shakespeare’s London, the entire cast would have been played by white English actors.</td>
<td>Our cast comes from all over the world! That means Othello is no longer the only black character in a play about race. Since Venice and Cyprus were both trading communities with diverse populations, we decided to explore how other black citizens of Venice and Cyprus might react to the events of the play, especially some of the more problematic racist elements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Duke of Venice, Gratiano, and Lodovico are usually played by men.</td>
<td>In our production, these characters will all be played by women, so all personal pronouns (“he”, “his”, “him” etc.) will be changed to the feminine (“she”, “hers” etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extraneous lines cut from the show.</td>
<td>As noted before, many bits of scenes were cut to fit the play to the time constraints, or the make the text more understandable.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
AN INTERVIEW WITH DIRECTOR
TYNE RAFAELI

How did you become a director?

When I was [a teenager], I was not a theatre kid… I was actually a very serious gymnast… I was the best at the “floor” because it was, like, innately performance. So, as soon as I was injured, my parents thought, “oh, maybe she would be interested in theatre or something like that,” because I had already shown a passion for some kind of performance in my sports. But what that’s lead to in my directing is that a lot of my work is very physical. And I think that that is one of the things about our OTHELLO that might surprise you or might be different from what you expected is that our OTHELLO is going to be very very physical… Othello is a military leader. There are a lot of soldiers. There’s a lot of military formations, which might lead into spontaneous dance offs, who knows?

Last year you directed A MIDSUMMER NIGHT’S DREAM for the Young Company. What did you take away from that experience?

The relationship we had with the audience. It was such a beautiful partnership, and surprising, and wonderful, and alive, the way I believe theatre should be. I think at the very heart, if someone were to ask “what is your theatrical philosophy?” I’d say theatre should be alive and not dead. As simple as that.

What excites you, as a director, about working on OTHELLO?

It opens up a whole dimension of human psychology that I just hadn’t thought about before. What is the nature of jealousy? What is the nature of obsession? How does that lead us, human beings, to violent acts? All of those questions have come up because I’m directing OTHELLO and I don’t know if I would have asked myself those questions otherwise.

When you start to work on a classic play like OTHELLO, what is the first thing you do?

The first question I ask myself when I’m doing a classic is “why are we doing it?” Why bother? Why not just write a new play? What is it about the classics that comes back to us when we need it most, and what is it telling us about the way we live now? It’s very important to me to make it feel as new and as relevant for your age living in 2016 in New York [as it did when it was written]… That is the sign of a good classic. Now that doesn’t mean that the poetry [in OTHELLO] isn’t going to be honored by the actors and by myself, it is. But there’s somehow a mix between honoring the ancient poetry of it and bringing it to a new world, which feels very exciting to me.

What can you tell us about this production of OTHELLO?

The spine of the play OTHELLO is a psychological drama about love, and about sex, and about greed, and about jealousy, and about obsession, and about violence. So really if you switch on your TV, and you’re watching the news or House of Cards, it’s a very very contemporary play in the things that it tackles and the things it addresses. So I’m really celebrating for this particular audience how contemporary it can be. I’m proposing to you that it’s at this moment in history Shakespeare’s most contemporary play. So it’s going to be a 21st Century production. And also it’s going to be a young production,
because all of those things, love, sex, greed, ambition, are all things that young people, I think, feel, almost more viscerally than older people, who have more wisdom and more perspective.

[It’s also] about multiculturalism. And it’s about “others” in our society, so it’s also going to feel relatively urban. What is the Venice of the 21st Century, if not New York City? Venice was a trading post. It was the channel between North Africa and Europe. People just flooded into Venice, and I grew up in a multicultural city [London], so I know what that feels like… So it’s going to feel urban in that sense.

**Do you have any advice for someone who wants to study directing?**

Yes I do. Do you really want to hear it? Save up as much money as you can, and go out and see the world. Travel and reading are the two things I wish I had done more of, and I did quite a lot of that as a seventeen year old, but not enough. Travel and reading. Those are things at seventeen that will change your perception of the world. And really, directing is only shaping your perspective of the world. See as much theatre as you can, all over the world.

**WHAT IS CSC NEXTGEN?**

CSC NextGen gives motivated students who are passionate about the theatre a stepping-stone to further engage with CSC and with the greater world of professional theatre. Members have the opportunity to see performances, meet CSC artists, go behind the scenes of CSC productions, learn new skills in the theatre, plan and lead special events for their peers, and contribute to CSC’s social media outlets.

**INTERESTED IN JOINING?** See page 35 for more information on the program and instructions on how to apply!

CONNECT with @cscnextgen 📸 Facebook 🐦 Twitter 📝 LinkedIn

*Members of CSC NextGen talk with Tyne Rafaeli, Director of OTHELLO.*
WHAT TO WATCH FOR...
Questions and themes to consider

REPUTATION, REPUTATION, REPUTATION!
Loyalty, Honor, Identity, and Military Culture
• Cassio calls reputation “the immortal part of oneself”. What sort of reputation does each of the main characters have, and how does that affect the play?
• Othello has been a soldier almost his entire life. How does his military training affect the way he behaves when Iago starts to poison his mind?

GREEN-EYED MONSTER
Jealousy, Trust, and Betrayal
• The word “jealous” is said over twenty times in this play and is most recognizably described as a monster. What is it about this emotion that is so transformative? Have you ever been blinded by jealousy?
• How many characters are jealous in this play? In what ways can you see this emotion looming over the entire production?
• The famous phrase “green-eyed monster” originates from this play. Why do you think Shakespeare associated the color green with this emotion?

HONEST IAGO
Manipulation, Lies, and Honesty
• Iago directly addresses the audience and makes us feel like he is telling us the truth… but is he actually manipulating us, too?
• How often does Iago use the truth and his own reputation as an honest man to make someone believe a lie?

WHEN I LOVE THEE NOT, CHAOS IS COME AGAIN
Love and Domestic Issues
• Is anyone in this play in a healthy relationship? Does this lack of good examples contribute to the eventual fall out between Othello and Desdemona?
• People always talk about the racism in this play, but is another “ism” – sexism – just as destructive here? What assumptions do men make about the women in this play and what are the consequences?

FAR MORE FAIR THAN BLACK
Race, Otherness, and Being the Outsider
• Race is a very important theme in this play, and affects the relationship each character has with Othello. What do the main characters say about Othello? Do they support this with their actions?
• At the beginning of the play, Othello says he was once a slave, but was saved, presumably by the Venetians, and he is now incredibly loyal to his adopted home and their customs. How often does Othello promote his loyalty to Venice and his desire to be seen as a true Venetian?
• Othello is not the only outsider in the play. Iago is a Florentine in an army of Venetians. Desdemona and Emilia are women in the middle of an army. How many other characters are outsiders in one way or another, and how does it affect them?

For more ideas on what to watch for, see NOTES ON THE PLAY on page 14.
NYC Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in the Arts: Theatre

1. **Theatre Making:** Acting, Playwriting/Play Making, Design and Technical Theatre, and Directing: Students learn to use their minds, bodies, voices and emotions to examine the world and its meaning.

2. **Developing Theatre Literacy:** Students explore theatre history, use theatre vocabulary, and develop critical, analytical and writing skills through observing, discussing and responding to live theatre and dramatic literature.

3. **Making Connections:** Students make connections to theatre by developing an understanding of self. They respond to theatre by identifying personal issues, and apply learning in other disciplines to their inclusive understanding of theatre.

4. **Working with Community and Cultural Resources:** Community resources that support Theatre Making, theatre literacy, theatre connections and career exploration expand students’ opportunities for learning.

5. **Exploring Careers and Life Long Learning:** Students develop audience skills and a connection to theatre that allows them to value theatre throughout their lives. They explore the scope and variety of theatre careers.

Common Core ELA Standards (College and Career Rediness Anchor Standards)

**READING**
- Key Ideas and Details (Strands 1-3)
- Craft and Structure (Strands 4-6)
- Integration of Knowledge and Ideas (Strands 7-9)
- Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity (Strand 10)

**WRITING**
- Text Types and Purposes (Strands 1-3)
- Production and Distribution of Writing (Strands 4-6)
- Research to Build and Present Knowledge (Strands 7-9)
- Range of Writing (Strand 10)

**SPEAKING AND LISTENING**
- Comprehension and Collaboration (Strands 1-3)
- Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas (Strands 4-6)

**LANGUAGE:**
- Conventions of Standard English (Strands 1-2)
- Knowledge of Language (Strand 3)
- Vocabulary Acquisition and Use (Strands 4-6)
After Workshop 1: CELEBRITY CASTING

Based on what your students know about the characters in OTHELLO from the story WOOSH, have your class choose their own celebrity cast (actors, singers, politicians, television stars, etc.) for the play. Put up a list of all the characters and/or hand out lists to the class:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OTHELLO</th>
<th>RODERIGO</th>
<th>DUKE OF VENICE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DESDEMONA</td>
<td>CASSIO</td>
<td>LODOVICO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IAGO</td>
<td>BIANCA</td>
<td>MONTANO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMILIA</td>
<td>BRABANTIO</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Go through the characters one at a time and talk about who they are and what celebrity could be cast as that character.

Example: IAGO seems honest and like he’s a good friend, but he’s actually conniving and manipulative. Oscar Isaac would make a good IAGO because he’s played characters that are good people, but he also plays characters that you don’t trust.

Blueprint Strand 3: Making Connections
Common Core Strands: R.1 & W.9 (have your students cite specific passages from the play to support their choices); SL.1 (have your students work in pairs or small groups); SL.4 (have students present their casting choices to the class—you can even do this in role, as a casting director making a pitch to the artistic director!)

After Workshop 2: “SHAKESPEARE” IT!

Today your students worked on paraphrasing Shakespeare into modern speech. Altering Shakespeare’s words—the very thing that makes Shakespeare “Shakespeare”—may have felt irreverent, but the truth is: Shakespeare LOVED word-play, inventing new words, and paraphrasing well-known stories into his own works!

Shakespeare hyphenated words, added prefixes (un-, be-, en-, de-, dis-), turned adjectives into verbs, and made up new words entirely. Come up with your own list of words with the class. (Examples: unstaple, belight, ensleep, destart, dismark)

When you have a variety of examples, have your students step into role as Shakespeare writing his next play. Give them ten minutes to write the first few lines of a story—or even a play! (Example: I belit the room to unstaple my paper—he was ensleep’d and I woke him up...)

Then have a few volunteers read their work aloud. If doing a scene, students can cast their play within “the ensemble” (the class) and do a reading of the scene.

Blueprint Strand 1: Theatre Making: Playwriting
Common Core Strands: R.4 (pair and share: have students evaluate each other’s work); W.3, W.4, W.5 (particularly if you have time to make this assignment into a longer story/scene); SL.4 & SL.6 (have the class listen to and evaluate the structure and clarity of the story/scenes); L.1 & L.2 (a strong command on language structure will provide context clues for the newly invented words; understanding of prefixes and suffixes also important!); L.4, L.5, L.6 (more pair and share evaluation)
ACTIVITIES

After Workshop 3: COLLAGE SONNETS

Today your class learned about sonnet structure; they also created a collage (a “mood board”) to get a visual idea of the play, and compiled a list of ideas/themes/elements from that collage. Ask students to choose five-ten words from the list and use them to write a sonnet on their own, in small groups, or as a class.

Remind them that a sonnet must have:

- 14 lines
- ABAB CDCD EFEF GG rhyme scheme
- 5 iambs (unstressed STRESSED) for a total of 10 syllables in each line

Blueprint Strand 2: Developing Theatre Literacy
Common Core Strands: R.9 (compare the sonnets written by students to Shakespeare’s OTHELLO. How did these different authors explore similar themes?); W.5 & W.5 (particularly if you have time to revisit/edit); SL.2 (reference the “mood board”); SL.3 (pair and share: have students evaluate each other’s work); SL.5 (again, if you revisit this/turn it into a larger project); L.1, L.2, L.3 (the sonnet as a poetic form; knowing the rules of the English language and when/how to break them for effect in poetry)

After Workshop 4: ROLE ON THE WALL

Your students are rehearsing their scenes now—this activity will help them develop their characters!

Split students into groups based on the role they are playing (all the OTHELLO’s together, all the IAGO’s together, etc.) Pass out giant pieces of paper and have one student in the group lay down on the paper while another traces his or her outline. (Note that this activity can also be done independently on regular sheets of paper—simply have the student trace the outline of their own hand.)

Ask the groups to write things that their character thinks/feels/says about himself or herself on the INSIDE of the outline; they should write things other characters think/feel/say about their character on the OUTSIDE. Encourage groups to search through the text of OTHELLO for actual quotes!

When groups are finished brainstorming, hang your “role on the wall” and whip around to each group to allow them to share their findings. What did they learn about their character? How will they incorporate this knowledge into their scene presentations? How might actors benefit from this exercise?

Blueprint Strand 1: Developing Theater Literacy
Common Core Strands: R.1 (pulling specific quotes from the text); R.2 & R.3 (look at the relationship between two or more characters and the themes that emerge); R.4, R.5, R.6 (for a broader look at the play that can begin with this activity; potential reflection questions/essay topics to approach through the lens of this activity); W.9 (again with specific quotes); SL.1 (if working in groups or pair/share); SL.3 (determine context and a character’s tone before citing evidence); SL.4 (present to class); L.3, L.4, L.5 (when searching the text for evidence)
After Workshop 5: COMPARED TO WHOM?

Your students just performed their scenes for one another – BRAVO! Now take advantage of their knowledge of the characters in the play to analyze relationships and status – things to look for when you come to CSC to see OTHELLO!

Print out pieces of paper with character names on them or have students make the papers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OTHELLO</th>
<th>IAGO</th>
<th>BIANCA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DESDEMONA</td>
<td>EMILIA</td>
<td>LODOVICO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRABANTIO</td>
<td>RODERIGO</td>
<td>MONTANO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DUKE OF VENICE</td>
<td>CASSIO</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pass out the names to eleven students. Have them arrange themselves (in character) in order from youngest character to oldest; who knows the most about love in the play to who knows the least; highest status to lowest status; most honest to least honest; most loyal to least loyal, etc. Encourage discussion: does the class agree with the placement? If not, why not? You can alternate the participating group of students, and take category suggestions from the class.

Blueprint Strand 3: Making Connections
Common Core Strands: R.3 (how individuals interact); R.6 (points of view); W.1 (have students write about the experience afterwards); W.9 (use quotes from the text to support choices the class made); SL.1 & SL.3 (discuss as a class)

After Workshop 6: THE REVIEWS ARE IN!

You’ve just seen OTHELLO at CSC. Get feedback from your students on their experience by having them write a review of the production!

Ask students to discuss specific elements of the play in their review: the acting, the set, the costumes, the lighting, and music/sound. What elements helped them understand or relate to the characters and story? Would they recommend this production to their friends? Out of five stars, how many would they give this production?

SEND YOUR REVIEWS TO CSC! We’d love to feature them.

Email them to: kathleen.dorman@classicstage.org
OR mail them to: CSC (c/o Kate Dorman) 136 East 13th Street, New York, NY 10003

Blueprint Strand 2: Developing Theatre Literacy
Common Core Strands: R.7 (evaluate content presented in diverse media formats); W.4, W.5, W.6 (writing for publication); SL.1 & SL.2 (class discussion/group review); L.1 & L.2 (demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English)
THE REVIEWS ARE IN!
A Review of OTHELLO at Classic Stage Company

HEADLINE (A short, catchy title to grab the viewer’s eye):
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

A REVIEW WRITTEN BY (Your Name):
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

OPENER (Tell us what play you saw and where, and briefly summarize what it was about):
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

TELL US MORE ABOUT IT (Did you enjoy the actors’ performances? Were there any that stood out? Why? How did the set and costumes contribute? What did you notice about the lighting and the music/sound? Did these design elements enhance the mood of the play and help you to better understand the characters and story?):

ACTING: __________________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________________

COSTUMES/SET: _____________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________________

LIGHTING/MUSIC/SOUND: ______________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________________

FINAL VERDICT (Would you recommend this play to your friends? Sum up your opinion on the play in one or two sentences):
____________________________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________________

STAR METER (On a scale of one to five stars, how many would you give this production?)

★★★★★
New York City students! Interested in theatre? There are amazing and FREE programs all over the city you can participate in, including one at CSC called NextGen. Student rush tickets are available to most Broadway and Off-Broadway shows, and you can see shows for free at many theatres if you volunteer to usher! There are also after-school programs, playwriting competitions, classes, and more. Check it out!

**CSC NextGen**
www.classicstage.org/nextgen
Here at CSC we focus on plays from the past, but we know it’s important to keep a clear eye on the future. That’s why we’re looking for teens with strong leadership skills and a desire to learn about all aspects of professional theatre to join our newest program for teens, CSC NextGen. See plays, go behind the scenes, meet artists and theatre professionals, learn new theatre skills, and lead special events for your peers. Become an integral part of an acclaimed Off-Broadway company and experience theatre as you never have before—all for free! Interested students should plan to submit application materials by May 9, 2016 for the 2016-2017 Season. More information can be found on our website. Questions? Contact our Director of Education, Kathleen Dorman, at kathleen.dorman@classicstage.org or 212-677-4210 x21.

**BAM (Brooklyn Academy of Music)**
www.BAM.org
Free after-school programs Young Critics, Young Film Critics, Dancing Into the Future, and Arts & Justice offer opportunities for extended engagement in the arts. All programs are tailored to meet city and state learning standards as part of BAM Education’s continuing mission to support the integration of the arts into the school curriculum.

**CAT Youth Theatre**
www.creativeartsteam.org/programs/cat-youth-theatre
CAT Youth Theatre is a free, award-winning after school program for NYC middle and high school students to create original theatre. Members meet weekly, from September through May, to explore their ideas and creativity and build their skills through theatre games and exercises, improvisations and scene work, rehearsal, critical reflection, and group discussion. Each spring, the CAT Youth Theatre company (young people in high school) presents a full production of an original work in a professional venue. Twice a year, the Junior Youth Theatre company (young people in middle school) presents sharings of original work at the CAT studio.

**High 5 Tix (A program of ArtsConnection)**
www.highfivetix.org (www.artsconnection.org)
High 5 Tickets to the Arts is dedicated to making the arts affordable for teens. Through High 5, young people in middle school and high school can buy $5 tickets to the best of New York City dance, music, theater and visual arts events all year round. In order to purchase tickets, all you need is an interest in the arts, a school ID and $5. Visit the website to join their mailing list to keep up with what’s currently available. Purchase tickets online with a credit card, or with cash at the High 5 office (located at 520 8th Ave, Ste. 321, 3rd Fl.) or call 212-750-0555 to process your order over the phone.

**Henry Street Settlement: Urban Youth Theatre**
www.abronsartscenter.org/classes-and-summer-programs/theater.html
The Urban Youth Theater (UYT) is the Abrons Arts Center’s resident acting company for teenagers. Each year the company performs an exciting season of new plays and classics under the direction of professional directors and designers. Rehearsals and special workshops take place during Production Labs. For more information, click on the Classes & Workshops – Theatre Classes section and scroll to the bottom. Henry Street Settlement also offers a broad range of programs in other artistic disciplines.

**The Juilliard School**
www.juilliard.edu
Juilliard’s Pre-College Division offers a thorough and comprehensive program of music instruction for talented young people who show the potential to pursue a professional career in music. It meets on Saturdays for 30 weeks between September and May. The Pre-College Division accepts students on the basis of a performance audition, which is heard by the faculty of the student’s chosen major. Acceptance is based on artistic and technical merit, as well as the number of available openings in each department.

(continued)
Looking for Shakespeare
www.steinhardt.nyu.edu/music/edtheatre/programs/summer/shakespeare
High school students work with a director and graduate students from NYU to shape an original production of Shakespeare. This program is unique in that the ensemble members will work with a director and a dramaturg to discover how a Shakespearean play resonates for them within their own personal experiences. Using these connections as a source of inspiration, students and ensemble members rehearse and perform their own vision of the play. The production will be supported by designers and stage managers and will be documented by a video artist. This program runs for four weeks, five days a week, from 9:00am-3:00pm. Lunch is provided everyday. The experience will culminate in three public performances!

Manhattan Theatre Club
http://www.manhattantheatreclub.com/education/programs/students-families-and-life-long-learners
Family Matinee: Students bring an adult of their choice to a Saturday-morning workshop focusing on the MTC production they attend in the afternoon. This free program promotes family theatre going and intergenerational dialogue. To join the Family Matinee mailing list, please e-mail ed@mtc-nyc.org or call 212.399.3000 x4251

Write Now!: Highly motivated high school students learn about the art and craft of playwriting. In weekly after-school sessions conducted by master playwrights, participants develop plays by bringing in successive drafts for critique by leaders of the group. The program culminates in a reading of the participants’ work performed by professional actors for an audience of family and friends. This nine-week program runs October to December, and February to May.

MCC
www.mcctheater.org/youthcompany/index.html
The MCC Theater Youth Company is a free, after-school program for New York City high school students interested in developing their acting and dramatic writing skills. The Youth Company is split into three distinct groups: the Acting Lab, the Playwriting Lab, and the Ambassadors. Acting Lab students meet every week with professional actor/director Jen Shirley to develop skills in voice, movement, monologue and dialogue. The year culminates with the annual spring production of UnCensored. Playwriting Lab students meet every week with professional playwright Lucy Thurber to develop skills in dramatic writing. In the spring, students write individual short plays, the best of which are produced by professional actors and directors in July/August during The Fresh Play Festival. The Ambassadors meet weekly with Director of Education, Carrie Azano, to learn about how a theater runs through conversations with MCC Staff members, other theater companies, and artists involved with mainstage productions. Ambassadors assist as producers for UnCensored and On the Fly. Veteran Youth Company members also have the opportunity to work with distinguished professionals in master classes.

Naked Angels
http://nakedangels.com/3t
Naked Angels 3T is a free creative writing program for New York City public high school students. There are six cycles of the program throughout the school year, and 12-15 students are chosen on a first-come first-serve basis per cycle. During each cycle, students learn how to format their writing and gain feedback from working professional playwrights and directors. At the end of each cycle, professional actors read the new work aloud in a public presentation.

New York Public Library for the Performing Arts at Lincoln Center
www.nypl.org/locations/lpa
The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts houses one of the world’s most extensive combinations of circulating, reference, and rare archival collections in its field. These materials are available free of charge, along with a wide range of special programs, including exhibitions, seminars, and performances. An essential resource for everyone with an interest in the arts—whether professional or amateur—the Library is known particularly for its prodigious collections of non-book materials such as historic recordings, videotapes, autograph manuscripts, correspondence, sheet music, stage designs, press clippings, programs, posters and photographs.

New York Theatre Workshop: Mind the Gap
www.nytw.org/education.asp
Mind the Gap is a free workshop with half of the participants aged 60+ and the other half teenagers. Through the course of the workshop, participants work in pairs to interview each other and create a theatre piece based on their partner’s personal stories. Each session culminates with an invited presentation in which professional actors read participant’s work.

Playbill
www.playbill.com
This comprehensive website features information on all Broadway and Off-Broadway shows (and information on student rush), news updates, cast interviews and job listings.
The Possibility Project
www.the-possibility-project.org/get-involved/join-the-project
The Possibility Project brings together vastly diverse groups of teenagers who meet weekly for a year. Through a combination of issue-oriented discussions, trainings in diversity, leadership and community activism, and instruction in the full range of performing arts the youth cast writes, produces and performs an original musical based on their lives and their ideas for change. In addition, they design and lead community action projects on issues of concern to them in order to take their creative vision for change into the world.

Public Theater’s Shakespeare Initiative
www.publictheater.org
The Public Theater’s Shakespeare Initiative offers a number of programs for young Shakespeareans throughout the year. From Shakespeare Spring Break to A Midsummer Day’s Camp, young actors have an opportunity to learn about the challenges and joys of performing Shakespeare from some of the best teaching artists in New York City.

Stella Adler Studio of Acting Outreach Division
www.stellaadler.com/outreach
The Stella Adler Outreach Division provides free actor training to low-income inner-city youth. Outreach aims to empower young people through craft. This includes: 1) Adler Youth—a one year after-school acting program with an optional second year, and 2) Summer Shakespeare—a five-week summer training program that culminates with a public performance.

Theatre Development Fund/TKTS
www.tdf.org/pxp
TDF builds audiences for tomorrow with programs for today’s teenagers—from budding playwrights to students who have never even attended a play. What are teens saying about theatre—and how can you get involved? Find the answers, and much more, in Play by Play, a glossy magazine featuring student written reviews, profiles and interviews, as well as listings of shows students can see for $25 or less. Play by Play is distributed free in virtually all NYC high schools and all NYC public libraries. TDF also prepares a Teachers Guide to accompany every issue, with exercises and tips on how to get the most out of Play by Play in the classroom.

Young Playwrights Inc.
www.youngplaywrights.org
Stephen Sondheim founded Young Playwrights Inc. to encourage and cultivate young playwrights in New York City. Students 18 and under can submit original work to their annual playwriting competitions. The New York City Playwriting Competition is open to all NYC students. Plays are judged in three categories: elementary, middle, and high school. All entrants receive a Certificate of Achievement, a written evaluation of the play, and an invitation to the annual Awards Ceremony.
Classic Stage Company (CSC) is the award-winning Off-Broadway theatre committed to re-imagining the classical repertory for contemporary audiences. Founded in 1967, CSC uses works of the past as a way to engage in the issues of today. Highly respected and widely regarded as a major force in American theatre, it has become the home to New York’s finest established and emerging artists, the place where they gather to grapple with the great works of the world’s repertory.

The National Endowment for the Arts in partnership with Arts Midwest presents Shakespeare in American Communities. CSC is one of 40 professional theater companies selected to participate in bringing the finest productions of Shakespeare to middle- and high-school students in communities across the United States. This is the twelfth year of this national program, the largest tour of Shakespeare in American history.

This program is supported, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council, and is made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature. Special thanks to the Harold and Mimi Steinberg Charitable Trust for supporting Classic Stage Company.

classicstage.org/education/youngcompany

SOURCES

*Teaching Shakespeare*
by Rex Gibson

*Shakespeare for Dummies*
by John Doyle (CSC Associate Director) and Ray Lischner

*The Friendly Shakespeare*
by Norrie Epstein

*The Genius of Shakespeare*
by Jonathan Bate

*Brush Up Your Shakespeare!*
by Michael Macrone

*Essential Shakespeare Handbook*
by Leslie Dunton-Downer and Alan Riding

*William Shakespeare and The Globe*
written and illustrated by Aliki

*Eye Witness Shakespeare*
written by Peter Chrisp, photographed by Steve Teague

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special thanks to all who contributed to this guide: Braden Cleary, David Heatley, Andrea Hood, Christina Hurtado, Moriah Martel, Tyne Rafaeli, Alice Renier, 2015/2016 Season NextGen Members