

Brief Description of Subject:

English Literature is a well-established and highly popular subject at Weymouth College. The area is taught through literary analysis of texts across all forms and throughout history.

Task:

- Read the attached extract and answer the following question:

- **Othello – William Shakespeare**

‘Typically, texts about husbands and wives present marriage from a male point of view.’

In the light of this view, discuss how Shakespeare presents the relationship between Othello and Desdemona in this extract and elsewhere in the play.

500 – 700 words

Resources needed:

- *You will be advised as to the books needed early in the course*
- **Please also purchase a folder for your work with file dividers and buy pens, highlighters and paper**

OTHELLO

I do not think but Desdemona's honest.

IAGO

Long live she so! And long live you to think so!

OTHELLO

And yet, how nature erring from itself –

IAGO

Ay, there's the point: as, to be bold with you,
Not to affect many proposèd matches
Of her own clime, complexion, and degree,
Whereto we see in all things nature tends,
Foh! One may smell in such a will most rank,
Foul disproportion, thoughts unnatural.
But, pardon me, I do not in position
Distinctly speak of her, though I may fear
Her will, recoiling to her better judgment,
May fall to match you with her country forms,
And happily repent.

OTHELLO

Farewell, farewell.

If more thou dost perceive, let me know more.

Set on thy wife to observe. Leave me, Iago.

IAGO

(going) My lord, I take my leave.

OTHELLO

Why did I marry? This honest creature doubtless

Sees and knows more, much more than he unfolds.

IAGO

(returning) My lord, I would I might entreat your honour
To scan this thing no farther. Leave it to time.
Although 'tis fit that Cassio have his place,
For sure he fills it up with great ability,
Yet, if you please to hold him off a while,
You shall by that perceive him and his means;
Note if your lady strain his entertainment
With any strong or vehement importunity –

Much will be seen in that. In the meantime,
Let me be thought too busy in my fears,
As worthy cause I have to fear I am,
And hold her free, I do beseech your honour.

OTHELLO

Fear not my government.

IAGO

I once more take my leave. *Exit.*

OTHELLO

This fellow's of exceeding honesty,
And knows all qualities with a learned spirit
Of human dealings. If I do prove her haggard,
Though that her jesses were my dear heart-strings,
I'd whistle her off, and let her down the wind
To prey at fortune. Haply, for I am black
And have not those soft parts of conversation
That chamberers have; or for I am declined
Into the vale of years – yet that's not much –
She's gone: I am abused, and my relief
Must be to loathe her. O, curse of marriage!
That we can call these delicate creatures ours
And not their appetites! I had rather be a toad
And live upon the vapour of a dungeon
Than keep a corner in the thing I love
For others' uses. Yet 'tis the plague of great ones;
Prerogated are they less than the base.
'Tis destiny unshunnable, like death:
Even then this forkèd plague is fated to us
When we do quicken. Desdemona comes:
Enter Desdemona and Emilia.
If she be false, O, then heaven mocks itself!
I'll not believe't.

(Act 3, Scene 3)