



English: Year 13 A Level Autumn 1



Unit 2B: *Othello* by William Shakespeare

You are studying AQA English Literature and Language A Level. The course comprises of two exams sat state in May or June 2026:

Component 1: Telling Tales (Section A: Remembered Places; Section B: Imagined Worlds; Section C: Poetic Voices)

Component 2: Exploring Conflict (Section A: Writing About Society; Section B: Dramatic Encounters)

Component 3: Making Connections (Non-Examined Assessment)

For further information, past papers and examiners reports, visit: <https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/english/as-and-a-level/english-language-and-literature-7707>

Autumn 1 – 9 lessons per fortnight. Miss Cooper and Miss Reals

Key topics include:

This topic, students will complete a close reading of the play exploring character, context, theme and language considering ideas at the time it was written and in the present day. They will consider the ways that dramatists recreate naturalistic spoken language and the language levels that suggest naturalistic speech. They will also consider and closely explore the ways that characters relate to each other, create and resolve conflict.

- Shared reading of the play with annotation that is directed and investigative.
- Focus on creation of character through language and dramatization.
- Tracking of themes in relation to context and exploration through discussion as to how these themes operated for audiences at different times.
- Application of wider understanding such as feminism/racism, presentation of abstract concepts such as love or jealousy through language.
- Consideration of gender theories of language and application of these theories.
- Considering different elements of dramatic text through performative analysis.

Assessment:

1. Feedback provided on analytical essay.
2. Paper 2 Othello essay response with marks and grade.

Specialist key terms for this unit:

- GCSE language terminology used as a springboard to more sophisticated language levels.
- Phonetics, phonology and prosodics – for example, the sounds of real speech and the patterns of sound symbolism (rhyme, alliteration, onomatopoeia) that some writers employ
- Lexis and semantics – for example, the connotations of words and phrases, metaphor and idiomatic language
- Grammar – for example, how the use of pronouns can shape narrative viewpoints
- Pragmatics – for example, the assumptions made about listeners/readers by the speaker's/writer's language choices
- Discourse – for example, the way different text types use particular features or routines, including aspects of visual design and layout.

Additional building of language level terminology to apply to text, i.e. lexis, grammar and semantics, for example higher/lower frequency, minor and elliptical sentences, emphatic positioning, syntactic parallelism, phonetics, phonology and prosodics, discourse, graphology, etc.

Key Theorists/theories:

David Crystal language theory, Labov, Chomsky, Feminist theory

Subject reading/further support:

Weekly Listening task - Lexis
Podcast on all available
podcast apps

<https://open.spotify.com/show/0EPs83hWYk0XX8cKkJplbI>

Weekly Reading Task
<https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/english-today>

Suggested enrichment/wider reading activities:

Watch the following YouTube playlist:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZB3rWRrUHAo&list=PL2bcCa8xQuS9RSG7besNKqU4O4vH05sTS>

Read the following article <https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/book-review-between-the-me-and-the-mass-mean-time-carol-ann-duffy-anvil-6-95-pounds-1487148.html>

Watch film versions of Othello to critique how layers of meaning from the text are represented on screen.

Read articles on racism and misogyny in Othello. <https://www.folger.edu/explore/shakespeares-works/othello/othello-a-modern-perspective/> and <https://www.bu.edu/writingprogram/journal/past-issues/issue-10/rooney/>