

Othello – Act V Discussion Questions

1. Why does Iago believe he can only benefit from the encounter between Roderigo and Cassio (5.1.11–22)?
2. How do you explain Iago's treatment of Bianca in Act V, scene i (5.1.78–125)?
3. "It is the cause, it is the cause, my soul..." (5.2.1–3). What does Othello mean by "the cause," and why does he repeat the phrase?
4. "Put out the light, and then put out the light" (5.2.7). How does Othello distinguish between the two kinds of "light"?
5. Why does Othello refuse Desdemona time to say one final prayer before killing her (5.2.76–83)?
6. What does Emilia mean when she says, "I thought so then.—I'll kill myself for grief.—O villany, villany!" (5.2.185; compare with 4.2.153-169)?
7. How many times is Othello disarmed in the final scene, and under what circumstances (5.2.233–284)?
8. What is the significance of Iago's remark to Othello, "I bleed, sir, but not killed" (5.2.340)?
9. In his final speech, why does Othello refer to the incident in Aleppo (5.2.413)? Provide more than one possible interpretation.