



National Certificate of Educational Achievement
TAUMATA MĀTAURANGA Ā-MOTU KUA TAEA

Exemplar for Internal Achievement Standard

English Level 3

This exemplar supports assessment against:

Achievement Standard 91479

Develop an informed understanding of literature and/or language using
critical texts

An annotated exemplar is an extract of student evidence, with a commentary, to explain key aspects of the standard. It assists teachers to make assessment judgements at the grade boundaries.

New Zealand Qualifications Authority

To support internal assessment

	Grade Boundary: Low Excellence
1.	<p>For Excellence, the student needs to develop an informed and perceptive understanding of language and/or literature using critical texts.</p> <p>This involves demonstrating understandings that are sophisticated and insightful and/or original.</p> <p>This student has developed an understanding of <i>Othello</i>, informed by critical texts by AC Bradley, L Rabkin and J Brown, and S Wood. The investigation is framed by a hypothesis about Iago's motivation, and the synthesis of information underpins the student's sophisticated understandings about that hypothesis.</p> <p>Specific details and examples from the critical texts are synthesised (1) and used to inform the student's own understanding. The student's commentary on Wood's viewpoint shows insight into the way a society's values can undermine relationships (2). The critical viewpoints are summarised, (3) and the comments made about the validity of the student's own conclusions (4) begin to show a perceptive understanding.</p> <p>For a more secure Excellence, the student could develop insightful and/or original understandings more consistently.</p>

Hypothesis: Iago sabotages Othello's relationship with Desdemona because he is jealous of him.

After reading and studying William Shakespeare's classic story of Othello, I have concluded that Iago sabotaged Othello's relationship with Desdemona because he was jealous of him. While analysing different critics opinions and views on Iago's motives, I found many contrasting ideas and discovered that not all aligned with my initial hypothesis. Critics' opinions varied depending on time period. The three main critics and time periods I studied were A.C Bradley (1904), Leslie Y Rabkin & Jeffrey Brown (1997) and Sam Wood (2009). **These three critics all showed different views on Iago's motives and Othello and Desdemona's relationship in turn.**

①

Sam Wood (2009) stated that the relationship between Othello and Desdemona may have been tainted from the very beginning because of the differences in their race and social stature when they married, saying that marriage is a "fiction that can be manipulated". Othello himself states, "Haply, for I am black and have not those soft parts of conversation" (Act III, Scene III) symbolising the perceived lack he felt as a result of his different race. The marriage also was also tainted with dislike from both sides of the families with Desdemona's father Brabantio especially stating when first told of the nuptials: "I pray you, hear me speak: /If she confess that she was half the wooer, /Destruction on my head, if my bad blame/ Light on the man!" (Act III, Scene iii). **This shows just a small sliver of the sort of abuse and discrimination that Othello and Desdemona faced when choosing to defy the unwritten laws of society at the time and wed. I believe that the strain from racial differences in this marriage could absolutely have affected its heinous undoing and that in the 16th century there was a lot more unwritten laws and expectations on what a person should be or who they should love than there are today. This is a very believable and logical explanation from Wood and I strongly agree that this affected how quickly mistrust and rumours impacted on Othello and Desdemona's marriage.**

①

②

Further into the main body of the play it is obvious that Othello begins to distrust his wife Desdemona. **Wood states, "It is Othello's anxiety that Desdemona does not belong to him, or that the marital bond has been violated, that is the play's main theme".** Iago, Othello's jealous companion, does not help the situation with his sly comments and manipulative nature while convincing Othello that Desdemona may not have stayed loyal to him throughout their marriage, saying: She did deceive her father marrying you;/ And when she seem'd to shake and fear your looks,/ She lov'd them most. (Act III, Scene iii) **The argument Wood poses as to why Iago would want to break up the marriage between Othello and Desdemona was that he was a mainly motiveless villain and had no discernible reason for his actions.** This is a viewpoint not only held by Wood in the year 2009, but by many notable critics throughout history, showing that, in this instance, **era does not really matter when discussing Iago's motives.** He says that Iago "revels in his ability manipulate his victims" and that most people who study the play either deliberately avoid or just ignore the question of Iago's motives because it's such a grey area filled with speculation. Another point he makes concerning Iago's nature is that **he is full of self hate, and does not have a clear grip on the sense of hierarchy or personality of many of the other characters in the play.** Wood states "the suggestion [is] that Iago wants to put Othello and others in a similar position to his own while considering himself better than they". **This shows he is falsely believing himself 'above' Othello and considers it right to make him suffer.**

①

①

①

③

Personally, although I agreed with his initial statement regarding the role of races in the play Othello, **I find it hard to agree with Wood (and many other well regarded critics) in this instance. I find it incomprehensible that a person would want to tear a happy marriage apart just for their own demise or because they contained a large amount of 'self hate'.** Iago had to have had some sort of logical explanation for getting inside Othello's head and convincing him that his 'faithful' wife Desdemona was having an affair with one of Othello's closest companions; the honourable Cassio. I believe he was greatly jealous of Othello, and his marriage to Desdemona, and this is why he committed these unforgivable acts.

④

[Due to space restrictions, the content of the following five paragraphs has not been included]

Another view on Iago's reasoning is that he was blatantly a sadist ...

Their report goes on to state that Othello believes Iago easily because it is implied that Othello loves himself more than his wife Desdemona, ...

There is evidence within Rabkin and Brown's report to suggest that even though they believe that Iago is a sadist, there is proof that jealousy and sadism often go hand in hand ...

The most renowned and respected critic I looked at throughout this research was **A.C Bradley who wrote a critical analysis of Othello in 1904 stating that indeed Iago was jealous of Othello's life and felt the need to ruin many aspects of it because he wanted a sense of "power and superiority" over Othello.** This could be apparent because he had always worked and been under Othello in the social hierarchy. ...

①

One of the first things Bradley references when beginning his article is the dramatic irony apparent in one of the lines from Act III, Scene iii ...

Bradley says that many renowned critics speak of Othello and accuse him for not suspecting Iago in the first place, but he believes there is no way that Othello could have ever know Iago's great jealousy claiming Othello "put entire confidence in the honesty of Iago, who had not only been his companion in arms, but, as he believed, had just proved his faithfulness in the matter of the marriage", expanding that Othello has no form of "stupidity" as many other critics may claim and that he saw Iago the same way "everyone else" in Venice at the time did (ibid).

①

4 Out of all the motives that I have researched, I agree with A.C Bradley that Iago ruined Othello's marriage and life because he was undoubtedly jealous of him. After being looked over for the role of Othello's lieutenant and overshadowed by his friend Cassio I find it understandable that Iago would want to cause Othello pain and that this reason was the source of his jealousy. Although I believe that he was over the top with his methods and that the scale on which he hurt Othello was exaggerated, after reading Bradley's views and opinions on Iago I am able to feel some form of empathy towards him and find the initial idea of getting 'revenge' reasonable and plausible.

3 After summarising three critiques relating to the motives of Iago I have concluded that irrespective of time period, whether it be 1904 or 2009, there can be similarities found between critics views on character revelations. Sam Wood (2009) had views on race related anger felt by Othello that killed his marriage and allowed for Iago to easily intervene within his life. Leslie Y Rabkin and Jeffery Brown (1997) wrote of how Iago was an evil sadist and wanted Othello to suffer, while A.C Bradley said he was jealous of Othello and was angry about always being 'under' Othello in the social hierarchy. Interestingly the article from 1904 had a lot more in common with both the 2009 and 1997 ones than either of them did with each other, which shows that in this instance time period did not have a huge factor on the way Iago's motives are viewed and analysed. Bradley's article aligned the best with my hypothesis so from that I can conclude that I made a logical, plausible statement and that the reasoning behind Iago sabotaging Othello's relationship with Desdemona could very well have been because he was jealous of Othello.

Bibliography:

A.C Bradley (1904), Title: Lecture V: 'Othello,' and 'Lecture VI: 'Othello', 'Shakespearean Tragedy: Lectures on 'Hamlet', 'Othello', 'King Lear', 'Macbeth'.' Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1904. p175-206.
 Source: [Shakespearean Criticism](#). Ed. Mark W. Scott. Vol. 4. Detroit: Gale Research, 1987.
 Leslie Y Rabkin & Jeffery Brown (1997), 'Some Monster In His Thoughts: Sadism and Tragedy in Othello' Source: [Shakespearean Criticism](#). Ed. Dana Ramel Barnes. Vol. 35. Detroit: Gale Research, 1997. Publication Details: Literature and Psychology 23.2 (1973): p59-66.
 Wood, Sam (2009), Where Iago Lies: Home, Honesty and the Turk in Othello, Manchester Metropolitan University Source: [Early Modern Literary Studies](#). 14.3 (Jan. 2009)

Data evaluation chart [Note the data chart is an extract of the full chart]		
Source	Hypothesis: Iago sabotages Othello's relationship with Desdemona because he is jealous of him.	Evaluation
Wood, Sam (2009), Where Iago Lies: Home, Honesty and the Turk in Othello	"the question of his motivation has been either ignored or deliberately avoided. Such an approach risks stripping Iago of his humanity, and presents him as an improviser who "revels in his ability to manipulate his victims" for no discernible reason (Greenblatt 233) or a supernatural and diabolical force beyond the realms of humanity. In contrast to these arguments, this essay draws attention to the theme of home and honesty that runs through the play to suggest that Iago is, in fact, profoundly discomfited by his ability to manipulate his victims, and that we are able to find a motivation in this discomfort."	Relevance: High Reliable: Wood padded out his report with many other renowned critics opinions and views, quite reliable. Contradicted/Supported: Contradicted, believed Othello was motiveless. Contradicted other sources too. Contrasted time wise: Was good time gap between 1904 but only 9 years from 1997
Leslie Y Rabkin & Jeffery Brown (1997), 'Some Monster In His Thoughts: Sadism and Tragedy in Othello'	"Just as he may project his self-contempt onto others, the sadist can find relief from his conflicts by projecting his feelings of hopelessness, thus destroying the peace of others and killing their joys. ¹⁷ For seeing them as miserable as himself, by bringing others into his own world of suffering and self-contempt, his pain is assuaged. This is why Iago is driven to cause Othello to suffer through making <i>him</i> realize the discrepancies between <i>his</i> own false and true selves."	Relevance: Medium Reliable: Quite good, two different critics placing their opinions into one article, referenced others too. Contradicted/Supported: Both, supported and contradicted in aspects, slightly supported A.C Bradley too. Contrasted time wise: Yes with 1904, not as much with 1997.
A.C Bradley (1904), Title: Lecture V: 'Othello,' and 'Lecture VI: 'Othello',	Bradley argues that Iago is impelled, not by a love of evil for its own sake, but to satisfy his "sense of power and superiority. Othello, we have seen, was trustful, and thorough in his trust. He put entire confidence in the honesty of Iago, who had not only been his companion in arms, but, as he believed, had just proved his faithfulness in the matter of the marriage. This confidence was misplaced, and we happen to know it; but it was no sign of stupidity in Othello. For his opinion of Iago was the opinion of practically everyone who knew him: and that opinion was that Iago was before all things 'honest,' his very faults being those of excess in honesty.	Relevance: High Reliable: High, A.C Bradley is a very well known critic that has a lot of respect and accuracy. Contrasted/Supported: Supported hypothesis fully Contrasting time wise: Yes, 1904 was well before 1997 and 2009.

	Grade Boundary: High Merit
2.	<p>For Merit, the student needs to develop an informed and convincing understanding of language and/or literature using critical texts.</p> <p>This involves demonstrating understandings that are discerning.</p> <p>This student has developed an understanding of how <i>The Hunger Games</i> film version can be interpreted through the critical lens of feminist literary theory, including écriture feminine, referring to critical texts by Evans and Markaryk. The investigation is framed by a hypothesis about the depiction of the character Katniss, and the synthesis of information underpins the student’s discerning understandings about that hypothesis.</p> <p>Specific details and information from a feminist theoretical perspective are synthesised (1) and used to inform the student’s own understanding. A discerning understanding of the text in relation to the critical theory is developed (2). These comments regarding language shaping identity and reinforcing gender perception begin to show insightful understanding. The links made to contemporary and future societal and political contexts are convincing (3).</p> <p>To reach Excellence, the student could provide further discussion of the link between the theory and the text so that their understandings of <i>The Hunger Games</i> becomes perceptive.</p>

Feminist analysis of *The Hunger Games*

While a cursory examination of *The Hunger Games* will suggest messages of gender equality and equal opportunity for females, a deeper analysis will yield that the film, while set in the future, serves to reinforce the current patriarchal society. The film establishes there are 12 poor districts in the country of Panem surrounding the Capitol, characterised by their own exports and exist only to fulfil the needs of the hegemonic Capitol. Katniss Everdeen, the female protagonist, is an oppressed citizen residing in District 12, the coal-mining district.

The film was adapted from the novel of the same name, written by female author Suzanne Collins. It can be considered a work of *écriture féminine*, a term coined by French theorist Helene Cixous to describe the concept that language is written by men for men. It is therefore difficult for female authors to use language as a tool to narrate a story from a female perspective and the literature therefore contains highly masculine language and themes. *The Hunger Games* reinforces this concept as it portrays the role of males as those in positions of power, and the skills associated with power; strength, athleticism and prowess at hunting, are all skills which the heroine possess. Even though Collins deliberately chose to have a female protagonist, Katniss' skills are still traditionally masculine, reinforcing the concept of *écriture féminine*.

①

In many Hollywood action films, such as *Tomb Raider* or *Catwoman*, the heroine is often sexualised and objectified, however Katniss Everdeen is not. The reason is, Katniss' father dies. The patriarchy has therefore failed and as a result, Katniss is forced to step in as the provider for the household, a male position, developing her skills at hunting and archery. To allow an audience to empathise with the protagonist, male orientated language and themes like arson, violence and gore must be employed to the point that if Katniss were a male, the basic story line would not be that much different. This is an example of how a writer using a female protagonist is faced with the issue of *écriture féminine*. Even if Suzanne Collins had wanted to avoid stereotyped roles, to be able to tell a story the audience can relate to, she needs to conform to the male model of the world.

②

Katniss also acts as the protector for her younger sister, Primrose Everdeen, again the fulfilling role of the father. She fulfils this role to the extent of volunteering to compete in the Hunger Games in lieu of her sister who was first elected. She felt a duty to protect her sister as she was the provider and protector of the household. When Katniss is taken away she is isolated in a room and given 3 minutes to speak with her family and friends. When she is talking to her mother about caring for Primrose, she speaks very emphatically. Her tone and language is not consistent with a conversation between daughter and mother. Cixous claims that it is our sexuality that is directly tied to how we communicate in society. Katniss' manner of speaking is more consistent with a conversation between husband and wife, she is telling her mother to look after Primrose, "No matter what you feel, you have to be there for her, do you understand? Don't cry. Don't."

①

②

This process of being cut off from her family and friends, and kept in isolation before she is transported to the Capitol is a form of social castration. She leaves behind all that is meaningful to her and is identified as the girl on fire from District 12, or the girl from District 12 for the majority of the Hunger Games. This is a reflection on the idea that girls do not actually know their own names until they are married. The tradition of the patriarch is for female to take their husband's name. When Katniss first enters the room where she is assessed on her abilities as a hunter and a fighter, the Gamemakers show her no attention at all. They act as if she does not exist. She has to prove to them, by spearing the apple in the pig's mouth at the buffet table with one of her arrows, that she is worth recognition. This feat is similar to that displayed by Robin Hood, a male. This is another reflection of how a female must perform acts usually associated with masculine behaviours in order to be worthy of respect, and reinforces the *écriture féminine* idea of how meaning is created from a male viewpoint, reinforcing ultimate male power. When Katniss and the others from District 12

①

②

arrive in the Capitol, they are greeted with a glimpse of the skyline. Many testaments to the wealth of the Capitol populate the area, however one building in what appears to be the harbour is worthy of particular mention. It extends out in to the water and appears for about 4 seconds in the centre of the screen. It is a building built by men, and resembles a phallic symbol. The purpose of feminist literary criticism is to expose “the mechanisms upon which patriarchal society rests and by which it is maintained” (Makaryk). This phallic symbol is a figurative representation of the power and wealth that the Capitol holds, furthermore the ultimate symbol of power in the country, the President of Panem, is a male. The ultimate symbol of power in our western world currently is the President of the United States, the fact that The Hunger Games is set in the future is a concern. It suggests that even in this post-apocalyptic world, we still have not moved past the notion that the President must be a male.

1

2

3

The suggestion that the ultimate power in the country of Panem rests on a man’s shoulders indicates that they deem women incapable of such power and responsibility. The fact that we there is still a disparity of income and roles at the top for females compared with males shows us that while many may think that feminism is all a bit over the top and exaggerated, that we all have equal rights and opportunities it is not necessarily true. The New Zealand Stock exchange’s recent criticism of the under-representation of women as company directors (Women hold 9.57% of directorships, unchanged since 2008) shows the reality is that popular culture and society wants us to be sexist and wants to maintain the current patriarchal system. Bertolt Brecht once said, “Art is not a mirror to reflect reality, but a hammer to shape it.” The Hunger Games is set in the future and still maintains all the current patriarchal societal structures. I am frightened for the future, as The Hunger Games, on the surface, appears to be a tale of empowerment and how one girl can set out to defeat any man or woman who stands in the way of her goal. As a result, the premiere of the film saw a 60% female audiences in the 16-25 age bracket. What audiences and parents alike worldwide don’t realise is that The Hunger Games is subtly reinforcing the patriarchal system in which we live. Makaryk explains: “...feminist critics have been particularly interested in deconstructing texts in order to make explicit the relations of power”, but Suzanne Collins still creates a world where ultimate power is shown by masculine behaviour and symbolism. Art is a hammer to shape reality. The Hunger Games is a precursor to where we are heading in terms of gender equality, and the future doesn’t look good.

3

2

1

3

Research references:

Primary source: *The Hunger Games*. Directed by Gary Ross, based on the book by Suzanne Collins

Secondary sources: *The Literary Looking Glass*. Sian Evans, chapter 5, Feminist criticism. ‘A Radical Feminist’

Feminist criticism: Anglo-American & French. P.39-50. In *Encyclopedia of Contemporary Literary Theory: Approaches, Scholars, Terms*. Irene Rima Makaryk. Univeristy of Toronto Press Inc, Canada. 1993.

(The student’s data evaluation chart was completed, but not included with this exemplar.)

	Grade Boundary: Low Merit
3.	<p>For Merit, the student needs to develop an informed and convincing understanding of language and/or literature using critical texts.</p> <p>This involves demonstrating understandings that are discerning.</p> <p>This student has developed an understanding of <i>Othello</i>, informed by critical texts by Adams, Bartels, Garner and Tiffany. The investigation is framed by a hypothesis about Othello's responsibility for Desdemona's murder (1), and synthesis of information underpins an understanding that is just sufficiently discerning.</p> <p>Specific details and examples from the critical texts are selected (2) and synthesised (3). The student expresses their own point of view about the hypothesis, beginning to develop a discerning understanding of it (4).</p> <p>For a more secure Merit, the student could make a more discerning selection of critical viewpoints so that the commentary develops their own understanding convincingly.</p>

Hypothesis: Othello was the puppet of Iago's cruel plot but he was equally responsible for Desdemona's murder as Iago was. Desdemona was the innocent victim.

Othello and Desdemona: Innocent Victims or Dictators of their Own Demise?

Characters from Shakespeare's *Othello* have been analysed and scrutinised by critics for years since it was first written in 1603. In this particular report I aim to prove, through the study of various critical essays on Othello, whether or not Othello is just the puppet of Iago's cruel plot or whether or not he is equally if not more responsible for Desdemona's murder as Iago is. I also aim to explore whether or not Desdemona truly is the innocent victim.

After my first reading of Shakespeare's Othello, I had come to the conclusion that Iago was the main cause of Desdemona's death and Othello's suicide. I believed like a lot of 19th-century critics that "Othello was a noble figure and Iago was the ultimate in evil." (Newton:1991). There is no doubt that Iago's intentions and actions were undeniably evil, his main goal being "to destroy Othello" which he successfully managed to do. He was "determined to reveal that Othello's noble qualities are a sham, by reducing him to being a man eaten up with passion". Iago cleverly convinced Othello that his lieutenant Cassio had become too familiar with his wife Desdemona. To begin with, Othello struggled to believe and defended Iago's allegations against his wife. But very rapidly Iago managed to convince Othello "that appearances can be deceptive" and due to Othello's simple, straight forward and trust worthy nature he failed to come to the logical conclusion that this could also apply to Iago too.

However many critics disagree about whether or not Iago was the main cause of Desdemona's murder and Othello's suicide or whether he was simply the catalyst who brought "forth forces" (Newton: 1991) which already existed within Othello himself, "the essential traitor in the gates". Newton believes both Iago and Othello were "central to the tragedy" and were "jointly responsible for her [Desdemona's] death". However Hugh Macrae Richmond disagrees, and believes "that Iago is the central character in the play *Othello* and that his self awareness is the key dramatic device in the play". Lucille P. Fultz supports this idea, referring to Iago's "power in discourse" as the "power that ultimately leads to Desdemona's murder and Othello's suicide" due to Iago's "shrewd insight into the desires and fears of others" around him- mainly Othello's. Margaret Ranald observes Iago also as a "skilful opportunist who turns situations to his own account" and if it wasn't for his knowledge of his own abilities his "fascination with his own manipulation and control" his deceitful, malicious plot may not have succeeded so well it was his "desire to manipulate and destroy Othello" that ultimately lead to Othello's mental downfall. G.M. Matthews (2) comments on how Othello loses his universal human values of love and loyalty but he loses these values "...once he allows himself to become vulnerable to the irrational, un-human forces, embodied in Iago".

In *Shakespearean Criticism* the author explains that Iago lures Othello into his trap by manipulating the gaps between verbal representation and meaning, this idea is supported also by Fultz she believes "*Othello* offers an expansive view of the ways in which language works against certain speakers and is twisted and perverted in the mouth of a dishonest practitioner". (Fultz: 2004) Iago, through his "consciously selective use of language" manages to "distort reality and manipulate others so that they unwittingly play right into his hands" (ibid) he manifests and feeds on their fears, particularly Othello's.

[Due to space restrictions, four of the following paragraphs are not included]

Desdemona's elopement with Othello, Fultz explains, "provides the grounds on which Iago's vengeance operates" (ibid). ...

G.G Gervinus (2) supports the idea that Othello wouldn't have been so easily manipulated by Iago if it wasn't for "the manner of his union with Desdemona" (Gervinus: 1987) as well as the "earlier circumstances of his life" (ibid)

This Gervinus concludes is what left Othello feeling isolated, depreciated and therefore a lot more susceptible to the idea that Desdemona has been unfaithful to him. ...

I believe it was a combination of both Othello's insecurities and Iago's dark soul that caused Othello's downfall. Iago's knowledge of Othello's insecurities about his birth and race helped shape Iago's clever constructed discourse which in turn enabled his evil plot to work so well as he used it to play on Othello's insecurities to unleash the oppressed jealous, possessive and unappreciated monster inside of Othello that he had kept caged and controlled for so long.

Othello "knows himself quite free from the empty motives which urge others to jealousy. In himself he is as incapable of groundless suspicion as of groundless anger" (ibid) and due to the evidence he has been spoon feed by Iago "there is no lack of flammable material." ...

Although I understand why Othello believed Iago's carefully, constructed words, I don't agree on how he punished her or with his actions afterwards. I agree with Elliot, when he claims that "Othello was cheering himself up" in his final speech from his point of view it was the honourable thing to do. I believe he dishonoured Desdemona, she was ready to take the blame herself, in order to save him from facing the consequences of his actions, but in trying to take the blame of himself, by arguing he did it out of honour not hatred, it seems like he is trying to gain pity from his audience, by trying to prove he was the victim rather than accepting he had done wrong. Although he had fallen victim to the prejudices held against him by the Venetian people, Desdemona had been the exception. She had married him, despite dishonouring her father in the process- she had forgiven him, though he murdered her unjustly. She had committed nothing, but the sin of ignorance, her sheltered life and child like innocence meant she didn't understand how her actions could be misinterpreted and used against her.

But, in conclusion it is very difficult, if not impossible, to pin the blame entirely on one person for the outcome of the play, there were multiple people, circumstances and situations that affected it. Desdemona's naivety, Iago's manipulative and clever discourse, Cassio's character, the simple, straightforward and trustworthy if not ignorant nature of Othello, as well as his relationship with Venetian society. Along with the fact, that Othello and Desdemona had eloped in spite of Desdemona's father's deep disapproval. Because in his eyes he was a foreign Barbarian, and not deserving of his daughter, despite how faithfully, Othello served his home, like it was his own. All these factors happened "in succession, each one more active and of greater weight than the other" (Gervinus: 1987:) Othello was certainly the puppet of Iago's well conceived plot, but his actions because

4

of Iago's manipulation, though understandable, were not completely justified and he is not completely free from blame, nor is the seemingly innocent Desdemona who fell victim to her naivety.

Bibliography:

Fultz, Lucille P. , *Devouring Discourses: Desire and Seduction in Othello*, [Shakespearean Criticism](#).

Ed. Michael L. LaBlanc. Vol. 79. Detroit: Gale, 2004. From *Literature Resource Center*.

[Gervinus](#) G.G, Third Period of Shakespeare's Dramatic Poetry: 'Othello' , [Shakespearean Criticism](#).

Ed. Mark W. Scott. Vol. 4. Detroit: Gale Research, 1987. From *Literature Resource Center*.

nd

Newton, K.M [Reference Guide to English Literature](#). Ed. D. L. Kirkpatrick. 2 ed. Chicago: St. James Press, 1991.

[Shakespearean Criticism](#). Ed. Lynn M. Zott. Vol. 68. Detroit: Gale, 2003. From *Literature Resource Center*.

[Shakespearean Criticism](#). Ed. Michelle Lee. Vol. 89. Detroit: Gale, 2005. From *Literature Resource Center*.

[Shakespearean Criticism](#). Ed. Michelle Lee. Vol. 99. Detroit: Gale, 2006. From *Literature Resource Center*.

Data Chart: [Note the data chart is an extract of the full chart]

Source	Hypothesis: Othello was the puppet ...	Evaluation
Shakespearean Criticism . Ed. Lynn M. Zott . Vol. 68. Detroit: Gale, 2003. From <i>Literature Resource Center</i> .	Other critics focus on Othello's character and on his relationship with Iago. Arthur M. Eastman (1972), for example, identifies a marked similarity between Othello and Iago in that they both approach the world as ironists. Eastman explains that as ironists, they assert their authority by addressing situations from a position of concealed power. It is this affinity between Othello and Iago, Eastman contends, that allows Iago to manipulate Othello successfully. Derek Cohen (see Further Reading) centers his ...CONTINUED	Supports the idea that Othello, was the puppet of Iago's cruel plot- This source, uses a lot of evidence to support his ideas from various other sources to support his ideas suggesting that the information they give is reasonably reliable CONTINUED
Shakespearean Criticism . Ed. Michelle Lee. Vol. 99. Detroit: Gale, 2006. From <i>Literature Resource Center</i> .	The critic singles out Anthony Cochrane's venomous, spellbinding Iago for special praise in Richmond's engaging presentation. By contrast, Frank L. Rizzo (see Further Reading) remarks that uneven acting--particularly Firdous Bamji's sometimes emotionally absent Moor--in Coonrod's staging muted the overall tragic scope of the play. Nevertheless, the critic admires David Patrick Kelly's Iago who was "so matter of fact, so chillingly low-key that you could understand how none of his victims might see the demi-devil coming." CONTINUED	Supports the idea that Iago's deceitful plot & his "murderous malice" towards Othello successfully caused the possessive and Jealous monster within Othello to rare it's ugly head (which lead to Desdemona's murder and Othello's suicide) CONTINUED This author also derives a lot of her evidence from other critics, a lot of which studied at university suggesting that the information she has given is quite reliable
Unpinned or Undone?: Desdemona's Critics and the Problem of Sexual Innocence, W. D. Adamson ,	Surveys of Othello criticism have for years noted that most of the opinion about Desdemona's moral significance is lamentably polarized: at one extreme are her idolaters, the readers who see her as a desexualized spirit, "ardent with the courage and idealism of a saint" (A. C. Bradley); and at the opposite one, her attackers, including those who disparage her as "little less than a wanton" (President John Quincy Adams) or even as an outright strumpet.	This article, differs from all the other sources as it dominantly focuses on Desdemona, and her part in the play/plot. In the notes of this critical essay, it appears that Adamson has done quite an extensive amount of research to support and create her argument, this suggests that this source is quite reliable and has looked at various points of views to come to an accurate conclusion. CONTINUED

	Grade Boundary: High Achieved
4.	<p>For Achieved, the student needs to develop an informed understanding of language and/or literature using critical texts.</p> <p>This involves developing a coherent reading, critique, and interpretation which includes judgements, commentary and details and/or examples.</p> <p>This student has developed an understanding of <i>A Clockwork Orange</i>, informed by critical texts by A Leary and E Tanguay. The investigation is framed by a hypothesis about Nature vs Nurture in relation to the main character, and the synthesis of information underpins the student's coherent reading, critique and interpretation of that hypothesis.</p> <p>The student coherently introduces and summarises two critical perspectives (1) and establishes a personal point of view (2). The student develops their commentary by agreeing with one critical viewpoint and supporting it (3). The evaluation of a contrasting critical perspective with their own point of view begins to be convincing (4).</p> <p>To reach Merit, the student could develop and relate the points made to a critical viewpoint, so that understandings become discerning.</p>

What does *A Clockwork Orange* reveal about the debate surrounding Nature vs Nurture?

Alex De Large' is the main character of *A Clockwork Orange* (ACWO), which is a controversial dystopic novel written by Anthony Burgess in 1963. The novel has many important themes but one which stood out to me first and foremost was that of Nature vs Nurture. Andrew Leary, talks about how Alex had grown up in a turbulent environment, and this is where he gets his relentless need for malice. Whereas critic Edward Tanguay, talks about how Alex had few pleasures growing up, but one of those little pleasures were music, and how he associated it with the 'ultra-violence' that he commits daily. What makes the man? Is it whether one was born with an inner evil? Or is it that they had grown up in an evil environment? It's a question which is up for debate. I personally believe that ACWO reveals to us, the reader, that we are a product of our own environment rather than born with our own devils.

Burgess's overall didactic message is that one, that being Alex, adapts to one's environment and that you yourself are a product of your surroundings, just as much as your surroundings are a product of you. There are many factors to take into account which could all individually be the reasons behind Alex's antisocial behavior. The lack of strict parenting which Alex had overpowered. "Pee and em in their bedroom next door had learnt now not to knock on the wall with complaints of what they called noise. I had taught them." The absence of a strong government. "We are not concerned with motive, with the higher ethics. We are concerned only with cutting down crime." And the lack of peer bonding. These can all be a cause behind his malicious acts. Although some may argue that it is nature which makes him the way he is, that he is just an aggravated adolescent male, it is more than that, if nature is to blame behind his acts, then every hormonally fueled pubescent teenager would be running rampant through the cities and towns of this day and age. It is because his surroundings have changed him into the boy he is in the novel, and he will not change unless a serious act makes him hit the wall. Like in the final chapter in Part 3, "Perhaps was getting too old for that sort of jeezny I had been leading, brothers."

Leary says that it is Alex's domain that makes him such a terror on society, rather than that of nature, it is because of this hostile environment, with its negative and absent government which turns Alex into a creature of malice. Leary quotes from the book as Alex is coming home from a night of debauchery. "I did pass *one young* maichick sprawling and creeching and moaning in the gutter, all cut about lovely, and saw in the lamplight also streaks of blood here and there like signatures." Leary then talks about how he sees Alex's situation. "When a boy grows up in such an unstable environment like this, no one would question why he himself is committing the crimes, but what are the causes behind him doing it?" That is one of many horrific scenes that Alex had grown up to view on a daily basis, and he is now a part of a culture which isn't aggravated or even bothered by seeing this, and who are willing to do nothing, in fear of other street hooligans. I agree with Leary's statement, as it is scenes like this that would shock a society like ours, but Alex's society, which constantly sees this sort of horror daily, keeps calm and carries on.

Tanguay argues his point that it is the music that inspires Alex to his un-provoked acts of violence, and not the environment. How he explains his point, is he tells us Alex's favorite music to listen to that of Beethoven's ninth symphony, he asks. Why can't Beethoven's 9th not bring up images of violence? It's just a matter of association. As Tanguay quotes from the book after turning on his 'lovely Mozart.' "There were vecks and pttisas, both young and starry, lying on the ground screaming for mercy, and I was smecking all over my rot and grinding my boot in their litsos." Although this does depict a disgusting scene, it doesn't enforce the idea that it is music which makes Alex commit his awful crimes. What is flawed in

4

Tanguay's thinking is that if Alex is so provoked by music, then it could also be said that someone could be inspired to do the same acts by something as menial as a flower, eg: fighting its way up from a seedling, going through all the dirt and grime to become a fledgling flower, this could be associated with the battle of life, where we need to step on the dirt and grime of society to become that blossoming flower. This is why I think Tanguay is overlooking the importance of the whole environment rather than specifically the influence of music.

After reading both of these critics reviews on the book *ACWO* I think, and can show that it is nurture which makes the man, not nature. Whether a man is born with an inner evil is irrelevant. What makes a man is how they are brought up into the world, not what music he listens to or what he may associate it with, where Alex has grown up into an abusive environment shows us that he himself will become aggressive and abusive towards others which he comes into contact with. We as a people may be born with an inner evil but the devil within won't get a chance to come out if we are raised in a correct manner.

(The student's bibliography and data evaluation chart were completed but are not included with this exemplar.)

	Grade Boundary: Low Achieved
5.	<p>For Achieved, the student needs to develop an informed understanding of language and/or literature using critical texts.</p> <p>This involves developing a coherent reading, critique, and interpretation which includes judgements, commentary and details and/or examples.</p> <p>This student has developed an understanding of <i>Othello</i>, informed by critical texts by AC Bradley, ST Coleridge and F West (1). The investigation is framed by a hypothesis about Iago's evil nature, and the synthesis of information underpins the student's understanding about the hypothesis.</p> <p>The student synthesises (2) and evaluates (3) three critical points of view and relates them to the hypothesis with sufficient coherence (4), and the three critical perspectives are compared and critiqued (5). The student concludes by reaching a judgement of why Iago was a '<i>deliberately evil man</i>' (6).</p> <p>For a more secure Achieved, the student could further argue their own point of view regarding the critical viewpoints, and further develop a coherent reading by structuring the discussion chronologically.</p>

Hypothesis: Iago was a deliberately evil man who wanted Othello to suffer.

If there is one thing critics agree on, it is that Shakespeare crafted the character of Iago so skillfully that centuries later, critics still debate what Shakespeare intended this character to portray, and who he is. From Act 1, Scene 1 of Shakespeare's *Othello*, the character, Iago tells us "I am not what I am". This warning leads us to see that Iago was a deliberately evil man who wanted to see Othello suffer.

① Samuel Taylor Coleridge said that Iago was "A being next to Devil... only *not* quite Devil... & this Shakespeare has attempted... executed... without disgust, without Scandal!"¹ This viewpoint is classic of the early 19th century, when the concept of The Devil was much more real and people believed that Satan was a real figure, instead of an idea. Coleridge is marvelling at the fact Shakespeare could create such an evil figure, like the Devil, but still human.

② While Coleridge viewed Iago as a motiveless, malignant, devil-like creature, 20th century critic Fred West argues that Iago has all of the psychological traits of a psychopath. West wrote "It is not sufficient to simply drape Iago in allegorical trappings and proclaim him Mister Evil or a Machiavel or a Vice. Such a limited view of Iago is an injustice to the complexity of his character..."² West's critical analysis of Iago is psychological in essence, while still connecting to literary criticism. The rise of psychology as an academic profession in the twentieth century has provided literary critics with another way of approaching literary criticism. Iago certainly carries psychopathic traits: he is impulsive, boastful, vain and manipulative; and West draws parallels all the way through his article between clinical diagnosis of psychopaths and quotes from the play, and from Iago, that back it up. As the play progresses we see that he is also capable of impassive cruelty. However before Iago ruins Othello's life, there is no evidence of this happening before.

③ West argues that as a soldier, Iago was rewarded for such behaviour; in peacetime though there was not the same outlet for these aspects of his character.³ Using what he thinks of as his superior intellect he then manipulates other people's lives for his own 'sport', and justifies it through what he sees as Othello's slight in promoting Cassio above him. Iago, says West, seeks power and intellectual superiority over others and is willing to do anything to achieve it. In Act 1, Scene 3, Iago manipulates Roderigo into giving him money, which he sees as a form of power, and at the same time striking at Othello through Roderigo's feelings for Desdemona: *Let us be conjunctive against him. If thou canst cuckold him, thou dost thyself a pleasure, me a sport.* Iago professes his hate for Othello to Roderigo, to make Roderigo feel he can trust him, and anticipates pleasure in seeing Othello hurt and humiliated. This behaviour is consistent with the psychopathic personality that West describes.

④ A.C. Bradley also thinks that Shakespeare's portrayal of Iago as an evil man is exceptionally good: 'Evil has nowhere else been portrayed with such mastery as in the character of Iago.'⁴ Bradley thinks that previous images of Iago are wrong in two ways: that Iago was an 'ordinary villain' who acted only out of revenge; or that, like Coleridge's 'motiveless malignity', he was an evil being 'who hates good simply because it is good, and loves evil purely for itself'. He argues that this kind of being was not the human

¹ <http://shakespeare-navigators.com/othello/motiveless.html>

² Fred West, 'Iago the Psychopath', *South Atlantic Bulletin*, v.43, n.2, (May, 1978) pp.27-35, p.27. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3198785>

³ Fred West, 'Iago the Psychopath', *South Atlantic Bulletin*, v.43, n.2, (May, 1978) pp.27-35, p.31. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3198785>

⁴ <http://filebox.vt.edu/users/dradd/courses/4166Docs/BradleyOthello.html>, p.1.

3 being that Shakespeare meant Iago to be. To Bradley Iago is not a violent man 'but a thoroughly bad, cold man, who is at last tempted to let loose the forces within him, and is at once destroyed.' He thinks that the important question about Iago is 'Why?' and comes to the conclusion that his vanity, love of power, ego and ability to plot combine to bring out the evil in him. He is a monster for doing monstrous things, but he is a *human* monster.⁵ Bradley concludes that because Iago's evil is intelligible, able to be somehow understood, it is human in comparison with Coleridge's devilish Iago.⁶

5 These three different critics of Iago all agree that Iago is an evil character, a real villain, and that Shakespeare was a master of clever and subtle characterization. From their different perspectives of time and viewpoint they come to different conclusions about what kind of evil he embodied, and what drove him to act the way he did. Iago plotted to achieve his goal of making Othello suffer, so much that Othello killed himself when he realised that Iago was evil and that Desdemona had always been true to him. So in this way he was undoubtedly a deliberately evil man. Coleridge, Bradley and West all had some insights into Iago, but West's argument that Iago fitted the profile of a psychopath and so acted that way makes the most sense to me.

6 **Bibliography**

Main sources (not included in exemplar)

<i>Extract from Data evaluation chart</i>		
<p>Source</p> <p>Note: your sources must cover at least two distinct time periods or perspectives</p>	<p>Hypothesis: Iago was a deliberately evil man who wanted Othello to suffer.</p>	<p>Relevance=</p> <p>Reliable?</p> <p>Useful?</p> <p>How the viewpoint supported or contradicted your hypothesis and / or other sources?</p>
<p>Source 2:</p> <p>http://shakespeare-navigators.com/othello/motiveless.html</p>	<p>The triumph! again, <i>put money</i> after the effect has been fully produced.--The last Speech, the motive-hunting of motiveless Malignity--how awful! In itself fiendish--while yet he was allowed to bear the divine image, too fiendish for his own steady View.--A being next to Devil--only <i>not</i> quite Devil--& this Shakespeare has attempted-- executed--without disgust, without Scandal!</p> <p>Coleridge asserts that Iago's motives (in our sense) were his "keen sense of his intellectual superiority" and his "love of exerting power." And so Iago's malignity is "motiveless" because his motives (in Coleridge's sense) -- being passed over for promotion, his suspicion that Othello is having an affair with his wife, and the suspicion that Cassio is also having an affair with Emilia -- are merely rationalizations.</p>	<p>Although this source is short, it is helpful and reliable because it quotes the critic Coleridge on his famous "motiveless malignity" criticism of Iago. This source is the only one I could find which put Coleridge in his own words.</p> <p>The viewpoint of Coleridge supports my hypothesis in that Iago is evil.</p> <p>Coleridge's criticism was written in 1819, a time when people truly believed in real life devils, and that Iago was one simply because he appeared to have no motive.</p> <p>Coleridge is also commenting on Shakespeare's skill as a writer, to be able to conjure up such a beautifully crafted devil character.</p>

⁵ <http://filebox.vt.edu/users/drad/courses/4166Docs/BradleyOthello.html>, p.13.

⁶ http://go.galegroup.com/ps/retrieve.do?sgHitCountType=None&sort=RELEVANCE&inPS=true&prodId=LitRC&userGroupName=per_k12&tabID=T001&searchId=R6&resultListType=RESULT_LIST&contentSegment=&searchType=BasicSearchForm¤tPosition=1&contentSet=GALE%7CH1420007265&&docId=GALE|H1420007265&docType=GALE&role=LitRC, *Shakespeare for Students*, 1992, no page numbers shown.

	Grade Boundary: High Not Achieved
6.	<p>For Achieved, the student needs to develop an informed understanding of language and/or literature using critical texts.</p> <p>This involves developing a coherent reading, critique, and interpretation which includes judgements, commentary and details and/or examples.</p> <p>This student has framed a hypothesis regarding Katherine Mansfield's use of a character as a portrayal of the human condition (1). They have begun to develop an informed understanding of literature using critical texts by R Hull and I Meyer. Several critical viewpoints are identified which relate to the hypothesis (2), and evidence from the text is used to support the critical viewpoints (3).</p> <p>To reach Achieved, the student could develop a coherent reading and critique by articulating personal informed understanding and judgements in relation to the critics' views, and evaluate the usefulness of critical texts used in the investigation in relation to the hypothesis.</p>

Katherine Mansfield's 'Miss Brill'

Katherine Mansfield is a well renowned writer who has a larger-than-life insight for the human psyche. She largely wrote short stories and is thought to have revolutionised the modern day short story. In her writing, Mansfield had a tendency to explore our human condition and psyche. She sheds light on how we, as humans, create an illusion to act as a mask. She seems interested in how these masks disguise our real lives. We see this in one of the many stories she crafted, Miss Brill. Miss Brill is a lonely women who puts on a mask, to make it feel like she is part of society. The hypothesis for this essay is 'Katherine Mansfield's Miss Brill is an insightful exploration of the inner self.'

1

Critic Robert L Hull says "Miss Brill's world is more than lonely; it is also an existential world in which she finds herself in complete solitude estranged from God, man and more importantly, from herself."⁷ We see this when a young couple comes and sits down next to Miss Brill on the seat in the park, where she watches a young couple in a relationship. Hull says "Miss Brill's world is more than lonely; it is also an existential world in which she finds herself in complete solitude estranged from God, man and more importantly, from herself."⁸ Miss Brill overhears the young lady saying "no, because of that stupid old thing over there."

2

3

Katherine Mansfield believes everyone puts on a mask. Critic Isabelle Meyer says "She herself recognizes this towards the end of the story: her fantasy has transmuted reality, and she can no longer see herself outside her imagined role -she is her mask,"⁹ This tells us that Miss Brill had a mask on all the time. I believe she puts on the mask because she wants to be a part of society.

2

Critic Robert Hull says "For her, love - the love of her fur piece, which functions like an unsympathetic mirror into which she cannot see, and the 'vision of love', in which she imagines all those gathered in the park singing and thus communicating with one another - is faintly chill because somehow she has been excommunicated from a real experience of love."¹⁰ We see this in her routine of going to the park looking out for familiar faces who she follows each week. We also see this in her imagination as she thinks she is part of a play. We see this in the story where she says 'Oh, how fascinating it was! How she enjoyed it! How she loved sitting here, watching it all! It was like a play.'

2

3

Report continues in similar style...

Bibliography:

Daly, S. F?. Twayne's English Authors Series 23. (1956)

⁷ R L Hull, Alienation in 'Miss Brill', *Studies in Short Fiction* Vol. V, No. 1, Fall., (1967) pp 74-6.

⁸ R L Hull, Alienation in 'Miss Brill', *Studies in Short Fiction* Vol. V, No. 1, Fall., (1967) pp 74-6.

⁹ Isabelle Meyer, 'A Masque of Masks'. *Women's Studies Journal*, December (1988), p 77.

¹⁰ R L Hull, Alienation in 'Miss Brill', *Studies in Short Fiction* Vol. V, No. 1, Fall., (1967) pp 74-6.

Evans, S. Interpretations of Mansfield's "Miss Brill". (2010)

Hanson, C and Gurr, A. Miss Brill, *The South of France 1918-20*. (1981)

Hull, R. Alienation in Miss Brill. (2003)

Mansfield, K. Miss Brill, *The Garden Party and Other Stories*. (1992) Alfred. A Knopf

Meyer, I. A Masque of Masks: Self Presentation in the Writings of Katherine Mansfield. *Women's Studies Journal* (1988)

Stead, C. K. Katherine Mansfield, *Letters and Journals*. (1997)

(The student's data evaluation chart was completed, but not included with this exemplar.)