

# Othello: The Study Guide



Tom Watson's Concept Sketch for Othello set design.

**OTHELLO: THE MOOR OF VENICE - FALL 2007**

## **STUDY GUIDE**

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Presented by Montana Shakespeare in the Schools,  
The Education Program of Shakespeare in the Parks  
An Outreach Program of the College of Arts and Architecture  
Montana State University – Bozeman



**Free...Every Summer.**

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Teaching Shakespeare to young people offers unique challenges and opportunities. On the one hand, we want our students to appreciate and come to love the rich language, the metaphors and the many wonderful performances that have been done through the years. On the other hand, we want students to connect with the plays on a personal and human level; to glean ideas from Shakespeare that has relevance to their own lives today. With that in mind, this guide offers you, the teacher, a variety of ideas and activities you can explore with your students both in preparation for the performance and after the touring production has left town.

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### Montana Shakespeare in the School's *Tragedy of Othello, the Moor of Venice*

William Shakespeare's extraordinary tragedy *Othello* is one of his most tightly-constructed plays and is generally considered to be one of his finest works. It is a powerful and gripping drama that still intrigues and interests audiences. This is perhaps because of its astonishing ability to transcend its own time and place. *Othello* seems both ancient and modern in its themes. For Montana Shakespeare in the School's touring production, the play has been abridged to accommodate a company of seven actors and limited school schedules. Some minor scenes in the original play have been cut (i.e. the scenes with Bianca and Cassio). The plot and action of the play remain true and our production stays centered on the power and tragic beauty of Shakespeare's language. Our sparse set evokes Byzantine and classical Italian architecture. The costumes take their inspiration from the paintings of Gustave Klimt.



**The Kiss** 1907-1908 Oil on Canvas

### The Persons in the Play

OTHELLO, the Moor of Venice.....	John Frazier
DESDEMONA, his wife.....	Tonya Andrews
Michael CASSIO, his lieutenant.....	Ian Anderson
IAGO, the Moor's ensign.....	Eric Leonard
EMILIA, Iago's wife.....	Elaine Robinson
BRABANZIO, Desdemona's father, a Senator of Venice.....	Patrick Halley
LODOVICO, kinsman of Brabantio.....	Michael Gonring
RODERIGO, a young Venetian, in love with Desdemona.....	Michael Gonring
MONTANO, Governor of Cyprus.....	Patrick Halley
A GENTLEMAN.....	Michael Gonring

### Synopsis

On a Venice street at night, Iago tells Roderigo that Othello, a mighty general of the Venetian army has married Roderigo's beloved Desdemona. Iago assures Roderigo that he hates Othello because he promoted Michael Cassio to the rank of his lieutenant rather than himself. Iago urges Roderigo to wake Desdemona's father, Brabantio and tell him that Othello has stolen his daughter. Brabantio is furious and demands justice against Othello.

Iago then warns Othello of Brabantio's rage. Othello responds that his position as a most valiant general and his love for Desdemona will stand the test. Meanwhile, Cassio arrives with a summons from the

Duke. As promised, Brabantio and Roderigo enter with swords drawn ready for a fight. Othello disarms them with his words and swears that his marriage was mutually agreed upon with Desdemona. Brabantio agrees that if Desdemona agreed to the match, he will give up his suit. Desdemona is sent for and confirms that she freely gave her heart to Othello. Brabantio, saddened, accepts her decision. Cassio then relays the news that the Duke has ordered Othello to defend Cyprus, and Desdemona asks to accompany him. Othello entrusts her care to Iago and his wife, Emilia as he shall leave in another ship before her.

As Roderigo despairs over his loss of Desdemona, Iago advises him to follow her to Cyprus, promising him that Desdemona's love for Othello will not last long. He departs and Iago shares with the audience his plot to poison Othello's marriage with jealousy because of his hatred for the Moor and the mere suspicion that Emilia has been unfaithful with Othello.

A storm off the coast of Cyprus destroys the Turkish fleet and ends the attack. The Venetian's ships are delayed by the storm but all arrive safely. Iago then begins his plot by telling Roderigo that Desdemona is love with Cassio. He convinces him to start a fight with Cassio that evening to discredit him. During the celebration of the Turkish defeat, Iago gets Cassio drunk and Roderigo attacks him. During the fight, Cassio wounds Montano, the governor of Cyprus. Othello enters and demands to know who is at fault. Pretending reluctance, Iago blames Cassio and Othello, believing Iago, dismisses Cassio as his lieutenant. Iago then comforts the crestfallen Cassio, advising him to plead his case to Desdemona who will convince Othello to reinstate him. Alone again, Iago reveals his plan to turn Othello against Desdemona by making him think Desdemona pleads out of her love for Cassio, rather than for his good name.

Emilia and Desdemona listen to Cassio's suit. Cassio departs at the sight of Othello and Iago. Iago hints at the cause for his abrupt departure planting the seeds of suspicion. Desdemona entreats Othello to reconcile with Cassio. After she leaves, Iago continues to sow his seeds of doubt in Othello's mind. Othello demands proof of her infidelity. Emilia finds Desdemona's handkerchief (which has dropped on the ground) and gives it to Iago. Iago plans to leave the token in Cassio's lodging. Iago then tells Othello that he heard Cassio declaring his love for Desdemona in his sleep. Othello becomes convinced of her guilt and flies into a rage. He asks Iago to kill Cassio. Iago agrees and Othello makes him his lieutenant.

When the angry Othello demands to see the handkerchief, Desdemona is unable to produce it and is left to wonder what strange mood has overcome her husband. Later, Iago pours more poison into Othello's ears, telling him that Cassio has confessed to his infidelity with Desdemona. Othello, overcome, falls into a trance. Iago contrives to convince Othello by leading Cassio into a conversation about his mistress Bianca while Othello listens from afar believing Cassio is talking about Desdemona. When Cassio shows Iago the handkerchief he has found, Othello recognizes it as the one he gave to Desdemona and is convinced that both Desdemona and Cassio must die.

Lodovico arrives with letters calling Othello back to Venice and promoting Cassio to Othello's position in Cyprus. Desdemona speaks well of Cassio and Othello strikes her, amazing Lodovico. Iago confirms to Lodovico that Othello is most changed. Othello questions Emilia about Desdemona's fidelity and Emilia insists that she is innocent of any accusations. Othello refuses to believe her. He orders Desdemona to prepare for bed and dismiss Emilia. Meanwhile the desperate Roderigo seeks out Iago and Iago convinces him that he must kill Cassio that night in order to win Desdemona's love. Roderigo ambushes Cassio and Cassio injures him. Iago stabs Cassio in the leg and flees. While Lodovico and Montano tend to Cassio, Iago returns and kills Roderigo. Iago sends Emilia to alert Othello.

Othello enters Desdemona's chambers. She wakes to his accusations of infidelity, swears he is wrong and pleads for her life. Othello smothers her and Emilia enters to discover the murder. Emilia confronts Othello with his deed and learns that Iago has told him of Desdemona's offenses. Emilia realizes what has occurred and swears to let all know the truth. Hearing Emilia's cries for help Montano and Iago enter. Emilia questions Iago and when Othello cites the handkerchief as evidence of Desdemona's wrongs, Emilia reveals Iago's lies. Iago kills Emilia and flees but is captured and returned to the room with Cassio and Lodovico. Othello wounds Iago and confirms the truth of Iago's lies from Cassio. Iago is turned over to the state for torture and Cassio is put in command of Cyprus. Othello asks that they relate the tragic story with truth and then stabs himself and dies next to his faithful wife.

### **WHAT'S THE PLAY ABOUT? THEMES AND ACTIVITIES FOR THE CLASSROOM**

Often, the answer to that question revolves around character and themes. Themes are ideas or concerns that are dramatically explored or presented in different ways as the play develops.

#### **It's Never Simply Black and White**

The themes of black and white are examined throughout the play, both metaphorically and in terms of racial relationships. Othello is referred at the beginning of the play as the "noble Moor." Modern interpreters

tend to believe that Othello was of sub-Saharan ancestry, but in spite of the fact that the play is quite concerned with racial difference, Shakespeare does not provide us with a specific indication of Othello's race. To an Elizabethan audience, a Moor could have been an Arab from Northern Africa, a so-called "white Moor" of the Barbary Coast, or a "black Moor" from more Southern Africa. And even Shakespeare's use of the word "black" to describe Othello could have been interpreted as "swarthy," simply more deeply complected than the Anglo-Saxons, who sometimes even referred to brunettes as "black."

Shakespeare uses his language to carry and reinforce the racial stereotyping and prejudices of the dominant social groups of Elizabethan England. Iago and Rodrigo are the worst offenders. Othello (albeit under the spell of Iago) himself uses the term 'black' in a pejorative way to describe Desdemona: "her name, that was as fresh As Dian's visage, is now begrimed and black as mine own face."

It is also clear that Shakespeare did mean for he and his wife to be an interracial couple. At the heart of the play is the marriage between a black man and a white woman, seen by some of the play's characters to be 'against all rules of nature.' However, Othello is prized by all as a great general and Desdemona clearly states her love for him throughout the play. Shakespeare seems to be asking his audience to look carefully at the actions of those in the play and make decisions as to individual's good character based not on the color of their skin but on their deeds. As Othello is corrupted by Iago's lies, his relationship with Desdemona is 'blackened' and he is tarnished not by his own blackness but trusting in Iago.

One of the ways Shakespeare does this is through his use of black and white imagery throughout the play. This contrast is intensified by Shakespeare's use of **antithesis**: the setting of word against word, or phrase against phrase. This device expresses conflict and conflict is the essence of all drama so it is not surprising that Shakespeare employs it. However, the poetic skill with which he uses it in Othello compliments and complicates the audience's black and white preconceptions and potential prejudices. Othello is black-skinned and yet, it is white skinned Iago who turns out to be the devil and who immerses himself in images of black and darkness. By contrast, Desdemona's fairness is emphasized and even at the end of the play, Othello refers to her as a 'pearl' and as 'light'.

Another contrast of dark and light is through the settings. The play begins at night, where Iago's evil plan is first hatched. The play moves through storm into daylight, only to end again at night for the final tragic events. In addition, Shakespeare moves the play from the bright lights of Venice, which in Shakespeare's time was the center of thriving capitalism and colonial power, to Cyprus, which was considered a dark outpost in need of strong military forces.

### Activities

- As you read through the play, note how many times the words black and white, light and dark are either used or referred to.
- Using only black and white illustrations, photos, display paper and other resources, create a collage of words, quotations and pictures which explores the central opposition between black and white in the play.
- The use of black and white imagery can be found throughout literature, art and theatre. Create a list of all the stories, plays, films and other arts that employ the contrast between black and white to symbolize the conflict between good and evil. Discuss how such treatments can perpetuate racial stereotyping in our society.
- Discuss other opposites Shakespeare explores in the play, such as honesty/dishonesty; loyalty/disloyalty; public/private; black/white; alienation/belonging.

### Iago's Story

One of the most extraordinary villains ever created, it is the deceitful Iago who drives the action in the play forward and lays the groundwork for the play's tragic end. And, in point of fact, there really is no play without Iago's machinations. His force upon the story is so great that it has caused some scholars to muse that Shakespeare should have made Iago the title character.

At the beginning of the play, Iago is upset at Othello for passing him over for a promotion and giving the rank of lieutenant, which Iago believes is rightfully his, to the inexperienced Cassio. Swearing hatred and revenge on Othello, Iago begins to lay his plot. Before leaving Venice he tries to turn Desdemona's father against Othello. Upon reaching Cyprus, he attempts to turn Othello against Cassio by insinuating that Cassio is having an affair with Desdemona. During this time of methodically plotting behind Othello's back, Iago begins to insinuate himself into the Moor's confidences.

Iago is a villain able to ruin the lives of others with a series of suggestions, words with no proof to back them up, and when asked for proof, he contrives to provide a handkerchief. And yet, almost to the end, others in the play refer to Iago as 'honest'. Othello calls him 'honest Iago' and trusts him to bring Desdemona safely to Cyprus. He repeats with 'Iago is most honest' to Cassio when directing them to keep guard in

Cyprus. When Iago initially refuses to implicate Cassio in the fight with Lodovico, Othello attests that Iago's 'honesty and love doth mince the matter.' Perhaps it is because Iago has so skillfully convinced –either through good and honest behavior in the past or by skillful deception – that Othello is so easily misled. However he attained his original good opinion, Iago uses it masterfully to his own ends throughout the play. Indeed, much as we love to watch cunning bad guys in film and on television, watching as Iago thinks on his feet and adjusts his plans is thrilling in its perverted intelligence and charm. Shakespeare enhances this effect. It is only to the audience that Iago speaks true. He unveils his plans, taking the audience into his confidence and ultimately, the audience is in the awkward position of becoming accomplices to Iago's plot, unable to prevent the disastrous results.

Shakespeare complicates Iago's story by providing relatively weak motivations for Iago's ruinous plot. We learn early in the play that he has been passed over for promotion in favor of Cassio. Iago mentions briefly that he suspects Othello has had an affair with his wife, Emilia. References to these two motives are few and occur only in the first few scenes, leading some scholars to believe that Iago is driven simply by his own evilness or that once he begins to realize the power of his manipulations he becomes drunk on his own success. Others contend that the motives are enough. At the end of the play, Othello himself demands to know why Iago has done such deeds. Iago answers:

Demand me nothing. What you know, you know.

From this time forth I never will speak word. (Act V, Scene 2)

And he doesn't. He is taken offstage to be tortured but it's hardly conceivable that he will tell more. This only adds to the audience's frustration and to the mystery of Iago. Shakespeare refuses to give us the satisfaction of a reason or seeing him punished onstage. Perhaps Shakespeare wanted to leave us with the uneasiness that accompanies our knowledge of such evil in the world.

### Activities

- Iago is a malcontent, a man with a grudge. He puts on an outward face of an honest and brave soldier while all the time scheming and lying. Discuss the character of Iago. If he were a real, live person today what might be his favorite film? His favorite television program? What might he do for a living? What football team would he favor? As you make decisions, discuss why you made those choices.
- Working in pairs, create two tableaux (frozen pictures) of Iago with another character from the play at two different times in the play. For example, show Iago with Othello at the beginning of the play and again toward the end when Iago has convinced Othello of his betrayal. Or Iago with Roderigo at the beginning when he plays the part of his supporter and at the end of the play when he stab him. Share your tableaux with the class without telling them who the other character is. The second person should be obvious from the way Iago treats them.
- Make a list of favorite "bad guys" from film, plays and/or television. What do those characters has in common with Iago? Why do you think audiences like to watch such characters?
- Discuss the ending of play and Shakespeare's reluctance to provide a strong motive or explanation for Iago's actions. What was your reaction? What effect do you think Shakespeare intended to have on his audience?

### A Play About A Handkerchief

One of the seminal moments in the play is when Emilia, Desdemona's maid and the wife of Iago, finds Desdemona's embroidered handkerchief and gives it to Iago. It seems simple and innocuous enough. In fact, it seems downright silly when you write it down: the maid steals a handkerchief and from that act tragedy ensues. But, we all know that a snowball can become an avalanche and a few misplaced words can start a war. As the audience learns about Iago's plots and hears how the characters view the handkerchief, the small piece of fabric snowballs in importance, hurtling everyone toward a horrific conclusion.

In Act III, Scene 3, Othello complains of a headache and Desdemona seeks a remedy by applying her handkerchief to his forehead. Othello shrugs if off saying it is too small and it drops to the ground. Desdemona worried about Othello leaves with him and fails to retrieve the handkerchief (or 'napkin'). Emilia picks up and remembering that Iago has often asked her to steal decides to give it to him in order to make her husband happy. Her speech introduces the audience to the importance the handkerchief will soon play:

I am glad I have found this napkin.

This was her first remembrance from the Moor.

My wayward husband hath a hundred times

Wooped me to steal it, but she so loves the token –

For he conjured her (made her swear) she should ever keep it –

That she reserves it evermore about her  
To kiss and talk to. I'll have the work taken out  
And give it to Iago. What he will do with it,  
Heaven knows, not I.  
I nothing, but to please his fancy.

When Iago tells Othello that he suspects Desdemona is in love with Cassio, Othello demands he give him "ocular proof" of her unfaithfulness. In other words, he wants to see it with his eyes. This gives Iago the opportunity to use the handkerchief, telling him he has seen Cassio with it. Later, Othello asks Desdemona for "a handkerchief"; she gives him one but not the one in question. Othello tells her a story about how his mother was given the magic handkerchief by an Egyptian fortune teller who told her that while she kept the handkerchief her husband would always love her. But she lost it, her husband would seek another. Othello says that his mother gave it to him on her death bed and told him to give it to his wife when he married. As Othello insists to see the handkerchief, Desdemona tries to change the subject and Othello leaves her in anger. Emilia, meanwhile, has watched the scene, yet never tells that she actually found the handkerchief and gave it to Iago until it is much too late.

Evil Iago takes the purloined handkerchief and plants it on Cassio. He tells Othello that he has seen Cassio use this handkerchief which was the first gift Othello ever gave to Desdemona and which holds particular sentimental value to him. Othello flies into a rage. Then, Iago engages Cassio into telling him about his encounters with a local prostitute, Bianca. He has stationed Othello within eavesdropping distance and tells Othello that he will get Cassio to tell him of his illicit affair with Desdemona. Upon hearing Cassio speak of Bianca and believing him to be talking about Desdemona, Othello again flies into a rage. In the next scene with Desdemona, Othello strikes her and accuses her of being a whore and undeterred by her pleas of innocence, kills her. If that were not enough, upon discovering Othello's mistaken belief about the handkerchief, Emilia tells him that she gave it to Iago and Iago's villainy is revealed. In anger, Iago kills Emilia. And Othello realizing his mistake kills himself.

### Activities

- Shakespeare's use of a simple object highlights how objects can become powerful symbols through story. What other familiar stories use objects in similar ways? For example, consider the apple in Snow White or the broomstick in Harry Potter.
- Trace the meaning of the handkerchief for the different characters in the play. Take one of the characters in the play and state who you are, how you got the handkerchief and what you believe to be its significance. Sample characters might be: Othello, Desdemona, Emilia, the Egyptian fortune teller, Othello's mother, Iago, and Cassio.

### Jealousy and Doubt: The Resonance of the "Green-Eyed Monster"

*Othello* resonates for modern audiences just as it did in Shakespeare's time and just as it has done for the last four centuries because it speaks to human nature. It speaks to the good and the evil in all of us. It speaks to trust in our relationships, both personal and professional, and, perhaps most importantly of all, it makes us think of the all-too-human actions of broken vows and misplaced faith. Jealousy arises out distrust and doubt and Iago is the master at planting the seeds of doubt in Othello's mind. He tells Othello:

O beware, my lord, of jealousy:  
It is the green-eyed monster which doth mock  
The meat it feeds on.  
Poor and content is rich, and rich enough  
But riches fineless (endless) is as poor as winter  
To him that ever fears he shall be poor.  
Good God the souls of all my tribe defend  
From jealousy!

Othello asserts that he would not be swayed by suspicions but by proof; however, as the play proceeds it is through Iago's insidious suggestions of proof that Othello is convinced. As Othello's trust of Desdemona breaks down, Othello becomes more and more jealous, feeding upon itself just as Iago predicted that it would.

Desdemona believes that if there is no cause for jealousy then none will arise. However, Emilia seems to better understand the danger. As Desdemona wonders at the change in her husband's attitude towards her, Emilia prays that it is not jealousy. Desdemona states she never gave him reason. To which Emilia echoes Iago's imagery stating:

But jealous souls will not be answered so,  
They're not ever jealous for the cause,  
But jealous for they're jealous. 'Tis a monster  
Begot upon itself, born on itself.

One of the key devices Shakespeare uses to sow the seeds of jealousy is to set up a scene where Othello 'eavesdrops' on a conversation between Iago and Cassio. The audience knows that Iago has staged the scene so that while Cassio speaks of his mistress Bianca, Othello believes he is talking about Desdemona. After the scene, Iago drives the point home by reviewing what was said. He asks him, "Did you perceive how he laughed at his vice?" He reminds Othello of the handkerchief and Othello asks if it was his. "Yours, by this hand," Iago replies. "And to see how he prizes the foolish woman your wife." Knowing that his net has caught, Iago is bold in his assertions and quickly moves to urge Cassio and Desdemona be put to death.

### Activities

- Shakespeare uses the color green to describe jealousy. Why is that? Think of other instances where green is used (i.e. 'green' with envy).
- Try pantomiming an eavesdropping scene as if it were a silent movie. Communicate by showing how the characters move, stand or position themselves to imply that they are talking about the person watching the scene.
- Play a version of the telephone game. Discuss how statements can easily be misunderstood when passed around secondhand.
- Write alternative endings to the play that show what might have happened if Othello had listened to his wife.

### Shakespeare's Dramatic Language

Enjoyment of Shakespeare's plays can be enhanced by an understanding of the subtleties of his use of language. Shakespeare was writing for theatre conditions that were different than those found today. There were no lights and little scenery or props. Playwrights created the atmosphere, the settings and the action through language. When Othello arrives in Cyprus, Cassio signals his approach by saying 'Lo where he comes!' The storm at sea and the destruction of the Turkish fleet is spoken not seen:

The desperate tempest hath so banged the Turks  
That their designment halts (enterprise is crippled).

With each arrival, more news of the fierce storm is added so that a complete picture of the "foul and violent tempest" is created.

Actors find, as Shakespeare, and his actors likely knew, that the rhythm of the language helps them to remember their lines. Actors also discover much about a character through figures of speech. Onomatopoeia, simile, metaphor, personification, and alliteration are used brilliantly in all of Shakespeare's plays, giving clues to the characters' emotional and physical states. The actor uses these clues to create a well-rounded character whose intentions are clear to the audience.

Shakespeare writes in both verse and prose. The verse is created through iambic pentameter, where the rhythm is based on iambs (or unstressed syllables followed by stressed syllables) and there are five iambs ("penta" meaning five). That's ten syllables all together. Sometimes Shakespeare will write in rhyming verse. The rhyme comes at the end of the lines, usually in couplets, or pairs. Shakespeare uses rhymed verse to signal a character's heightened emotional state or the conclusion of an act or scene.

Shakespeare traditionally has the high status characters speak in verse and lower status characters in prose. Othello begins the play speaking in verse and his thoughts and images are developed in a coherent and confident way. It is clear to all that he is a powerful man who is known for his bravery in battle and his skill in speaking. By contrast, Iago's speeches are often end-stopped or broken up with pauses or spoken in prose. This helps to suggest that he is a plain spoken man.

As the play progresses and Iago infects Othello with doubts and jealousy, Othello's syntax (sentence structure) starts to break down. This tells the audience that his state of mind is becoming cloudy and Iago's plan is working. His way of speaking shifts from calm authority: "Keep up your bright swords, for the dew will rust them" to tortured confusion by Act IV: "Pish! Noses, ears, and lips. Is't possible? – Confess? Handkerchief? O devil!". Furthermore, Othello's speeches evoke more animal imagery later in the play and are in direct opposition to his eloquent speeches to Desdemona's father at the beginning of the play. With



trust/mistrust, like/dislike. Notice how the words change depending on the internal state of the person speaking.

- Using the script of the play, divide into five groups with each group taking one act of the play. Produce a three-minute version of the act, using only words from the play itself. When the groups are ready, put each of the acts together in turn, creating a fifteen-minute version of the whole play.

## **Resources**

### Books and Essays on *Othello*

Bloom, Harold, ed. Bloom's Notes: Othello. Chelsea House Publishers, 1996.

Coles, Jane, ed. Cambridge School Shakespeare, Othello. Cambridge University Press, 2005.

Nostrbaken, Faith. Understanding Othello: A Student Casebook to Issues, Sources, and Historical Documents. Greenwood Press, 2000.

### Books and Essays on *Teaching Shakespeare*

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Davis, James E., and Ronald E. Solomone, eds. Teaching Shakespeare Today: Practical Approaches and Productive Strategies. Urbana, IL: NCTE, 1993.

Epstein, Norrie. The Friendly Shakespeare: A Thoroughly Painless Guide to the Best of the Bard. New York: Viking, 1993.

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Gilbert, Miriam. "Teaching Shakespeare Through Performance," Shakespeare Quarterly, 35 (1984), 601-608.

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Robinson, Randal. Unlocking Shakespeare's Language: Help for the Teacher and Student. Urbana, IL: NCTE and ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills, 1989.

Rygiel, Mary Ann. Shakespeare Among Schoolchildren: Approaches for the Secondary Classroom. Urbana, IL: NCTE, 1992.

Salomone, Ronald E., and James E. Davis, eds. Teaching Shakespeare into the 21st Century. Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 1997.

Shakespeare, a journal sponsored by Cambridge University Press and Georgetown University, focuses on the teaching of Shakespeare at the secondary and university levels. Email and editors at [editors@shakespearemag.com](mailto:editors@shakespearemag.com)

Shakespeare Quarterly, special teaching issue, 41: 2 (Summer 1990); special issue on teaching Shakespeare with women writers of his era, 47: 4 (Winter 1996).

### Video

The BBC has produced the entire canon of Shakespeare's plays on video tape. Check your local library. If the tapes are not available there, inquire about interlibrary loan within the state.

Available through video rental stores are a number of fine films, such as the Laurence Olivier and Kenneth Branagh versions of *Henry V* and the Mel Gibson and Branagh *Hamlets*. *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *King Lear*, *Twelfth Night*, *Othello* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* are available in recent and accessible versions.

There are two recent versions of *The Comedy of Errors* on video: a Canadian Broadcasting Company production in association with the Stratford Festival of Canada produced in 1996 and a BBC Television production in association with Time-Life Television produced in 1992

See also Teaching Shakespeare: New Approaches from the Folger Shakespeare Library, a guide by Peggy O'Brien, Former Education Director of the Folger Shakespeare Library, available through Vineyard Video Productions.

### On the Internet

Numerous sites now provide wonderful materials on Shakespeare:

For the website associated with Shakespeare magazine, see <http://www.shakespearemag.com>

For texts of the plays, see the Shakespeare Homepage:

<http://the-tech.mit.edu/Shakespeare/works.html>

For information on the World Shakespeare Bibliography and links to other Shakespeare sites, see <http://www-english.tamu.edu/wsb/>

For quality study guides and educational materials, see The Shakespeare Theatre Company in Washington DC. [www.shakespearetheatre.org](http://www.shakespearetheatre.org)

For educational materials on Shakespeare, see the National Endowment for the Arts project titled, Shakespeare in American Communities.

<http://www.shakespeareinamericancommunities.org/>