



Othello

Iago's Motives

In literature, a **motive** is a character's reason for experiencing an emotion, taking an action, or pursuing a goal. It is the reason a character does what he/she does.

Shakespeare's characters often have very clear motives.

Action
Roderigo goes along with Iago's plot against Cassio.

Action
Othello murders Desdemona.

Action
Desdemona defends Cassio to Othello.



Motive
Roderigo is in love with Desdemona.

Motive
Othello is convinced that Desdemona has been unfaithful.

Motive
Desdemona considers Cassio a friend.

Iago's motives for destroying Othello are slightly more complicated than these. Identify three possible motives for Iago's actions and list them in the graphic organizer. Include text evidence for each motive. Then select the motive you think is most likely. On a separate sheet of paper, write a paragraph supporting your choice. Be sure to support your claim with text evidence.

Action
Roderigo goes along with Iago's plot against Cassio.



Motive	Motive	Motive
Iago is jealous of Cassio's promotion and doesn't feel he deserves it. He wants to get back at Cassio for getting the job he wanted.		
Evidence:	Evidence:	Evidence:
<p>Forsooth, a great arithmetician, One Michael Cassio, a Florentine ...</p> <p>Mere prattle without practice</p> <p>(No Fear: 1.1.20-27)</p>		

RL.11-12.1 Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

RL.11-12.3 Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).