

What's the Point of Shakespeare in 2016?

Goal:

Developing critical thinking skills
Develop research skills
Develop communication skills
Synthesizing knowledge into dramatic performance

Your work on Othello will include the following:

- Pre-reading research to build contextual knowledge
- During reading annotation (to prepare for seminars and final essay)
- Seminar
- Final assessment

Pre-reading research topic:

Gender
Class
Race
Power
Domestic abuse/murder
Hatred
Revenge
Jealousy
Bigotry
Miscegenation
Economic, international trade, military matters
Christian/Muslim relations
Adultery
Going mad/madness
Psychological torture
Demonizing women
What's a man?
What's a woman?
Servants

Seminar work:

Here are some directions about how to effectively participate in our class discussions.

Content

- What you can talk about:
Share how your research topic relates to the text.
Make connections: real life, to other books you have read.

What motivates characters?

Analyze the chemistry between two characters.

Ask relevant questions that, when answered, produce valuable knowledge.

Answer those questions.

Translate metaphor and explain how they work in the context of plot, character behavior, etc.

Share an opinion, but back it up with evidence from the text.

Bring our attention to important lines and explain why, thematically, they are important.

Argue a point, but back it up. Ask for a comment or reaction to something you said.

Roles

Take lead (but don't dominate)

Make a follow-up observation of someone else's comment.

Encourage silent people to become a part of the group discussion.

Clarify a complex point someone else made.

What seminar is not

Competition

Not a chance to summarize plot.

Naming who is who in the story.

What seminar is

A team effort. A chance for you, rather than the teacher, to say what is mean

Analyzing characters.

Making large abstract statement – big truths – from particular things found in the text.

Your job

Bring book – annotated to help you.

Be prepared.

Speak.

Help make meaning.

Support others.

Grading

Graded Class Discussion Guidelines

To prepare for this type of discussion, you should post a discussion question among your group members ahead of time, and you should be make notes in your text about relevant passages and ideas. The more you prepare, the easier it will be for

you to make a meaningful contribution. That said, remember that part of an effective class discussion is knowing when to sit back and listen so that someone else has a chance to speak.

Class Discussion Rubric

Individual Mark (possible 5 points)

- Refers directly to text
 - Demonstrates active listening; piggybacks on the ideas of others or synthesizes points made
 - Encourages and/or allows others to be involved in discussion
 - Raises new questions and/or re-starts the conversation when it has come to a natural conclusion
 - Shows respect for class by using names of classmates
 - Demonstrates outside preparation for discussion; organized and focused
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Class Grade (possible 5 points)

- Everyone participates
 - Pace allows for clarity and thoughtfulness
 - Focus is on one speaker/idea at a time
 - Text is referred to often
 - Comments are not lost, the loud do not dominate, and the shy are encouraged
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Final Assessment: What's the Point of Shakespeare in 2016?

That's your job – answer that question: You did pre-reading research on a topic of your choice, from the 16th and 21st perspectives, and followed it through Othello. Time to make sense of it all.

Post-reading work: How will you answer the essential question? Use either of the final methods we have reviewed and practiced:

Performance of Literature
Documentary Performance
Personal Narrative

