**Subject area/course**: English/Language Arts

**Grade level/band**: 11-12

**Task source**: Educational Policy Improvement Center (EPIC)

**Becoming the Bard**

**TEACHER'S GUIDE**

1. **Task overview**:

In this task, students will locate, interpret, and translate into modern English a scene from *Othello* that focuses on Iago’s power to convince. Students will need to first understand and then interpret the play and its rhetorical devices (logos, pathos, and ethos). They must be able to locate the presence of rhetorical devices in a scene. For the first part of the assignment, they will translate the scene into modern day English in the format of a play or a song. For the second part, students will produce and record their translation. Lastly, the students will perform their adaptation for the class.

1. **Aligned standards:**
2. **Common Core State Standards**

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.3](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/W/11-12/3/) Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.4](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/W/11-12/4/) Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.5](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/W/11-12/5/) Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.6](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/W/11-12/6/) Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.9](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/W/11-12/9/) Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.1](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/SL/11-12/1/) Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.4](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/SL/11-12/4/) Present information, findings, and supporting evidence, conveying a clear and distinct perspective, such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, alternative or opposing perspectives are addressed, and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and a range of formal and informal tasks.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.5](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/SL/11-12/5/) Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.

1. **Critical Abilities**

Communication in Many Forms: Use oral and written communication skills to learn, evaluate, and express ideas for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, and rewriting while considering the audience.

Use of Technology: Present information, findings, and supporting evidence, making strategic use of digital media and visual displays to enhance understanding. Use technology, including the Internet, to research, produce, publish, and update individual or shared products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.

Interpersonal Interaction and Collaboration: Develop a range of interpersonal skills, including the ability to work with others, to participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations.

1. **Time/schedule requirements:**

Plan five days for students to complete the task and three days for group performances. Schedule in-class time for an in-depth study of a scene that focuses on Iago’s rhetoric. Out of class time will also be necessary.

1. **Materials/resources:**

For students:

* Text of *Othello*
* Video and audio technology (recording capabilities (i.e. camcorder, iPad, smartphone) and editing software (i.e. Masher, Animoto, iMovie)

Teacher resources:

* You may want to explore the themes of Othello’s race (a Moor surrounded by Italians) and isolation (he is a “stranger in a strange land”), which lead to his insecurities. The success of Iago’s rhetoric can be partly attributed to these themes. Consider consulting these sources:

http://www.articlemyriad.com/perceptions-race-othello-shakespeare/

http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/masterpiece/othello/tg\_race.html

* Consider sharing and viewing these performances with students for inspiration:

*The Othello Rap, Reduced Shakespeare Company*

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UC-f0drvdmM

*Sanford and Son – Lamont as Othello*

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5VM34bM2czI

*Othello Music Video* (student project)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4jBl5ZvIvtE

*The Othello Rap Summary*, Green Money Productions

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VrktWuZpoj0*.*

1. **Prior knowledge:**

Students should be able to:

* Have a strong understanding of the play, *Othello*
* Understand the format/techniques/audience and purpose of play and songwriting
* Understand rhetorical devices and concepts of logos, pathos, ethos
* Identify and analyze rhetorical devices in a play

1. **Connection to curriculum:**

This task is intended for use after reading the entire play of *Othello*. Follow your normal schedule, assignments and assessments for reading the play, but avoid lengthy class discussions about the power of rhetorical language as you read.

1. **Teacher instructions:**

DAYS ONE and TWO:

* Distribute the student prompt information.
* Review rhetorical devices of logos, pathos, ethos.
* As a class, analyze and translate a scene that demonstrates Iago’s use of rhetoric.

DAYS THREE-FIVE: (Optional: view any or all of the videos provided under “Teacher Resources” for student inspiration.)

* Students form groups and choose a scene. Facilitate this selection process so that not all groups choose the same scene.
* Groups work on translating the scene in the format of their choice: a drama or a song. Prompt students to review the most important features of songs and dramas: (i.e. character taglines, stage setting, song versing, refrains, etc.).
* At the end of day five, students should be prepared to hand in their translation in the appropriate format. Students will need to organize and work outside of class as necessary to meet this deadline.

DAYS SIX-EIGHT

* Students practice, record, and perform their productions for the class. Time outside of class may be needed to practice and record their production. Provide a recording device and editing software for each group.
* Groups perform their scenes in class.
* At the end of day eight, students must submit a pre-recorded video of their performance (recorded prior to their live in-class presentation). Troubleshoot often with video and software issues; have additional technical assistance available on the recording days.
* If time permits, hold a viewing (after you have previewed all of the videos) of the recorded performances.

1. **Student support:**

* Review rhetorical devices such as logos, pathos and ethos in *Othello* for students who need a refresher. Consider consulting the following source:

http://humanities.byu.edu/rhetoric/silva.htm

* Select passages for the students to read, which would limit the domain of possible stimuli.
* Provide additional check-ins with the instructor.
* Allow for extended time if needed.

1. **Extensions or variations:**

Students could write an essay focused on the use of rhetoric in *Othello*, using both evidence from the play and research for support.

1. **Scoring instructions:**

Each task is accompanied by a corresponding rubric to be used to score your students’ work. Training for utilizing the rubric to score the student responses will be provided through a webinar, and information about where you can access that training will be provided to you. It is important that you use the specified rubric according to the instructions provided in the webinar. If you have questions during the scoring process, you should feel free to contact your Point of Contact from the research team.

This task will be scored using the English/Language Arts Effective Communication Oral Presentation Rubric.