

Othello

William Shakespeare

Why is Othello's claim that he is 'rude' in speech difficult to believe by the end of his defense?

TOTAL TIME

PASSAGE

30 minutes	Othello claims to be a poor speaker
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FIND THE ANCHOR TEXT

Use the Anchor Text Table of Contents in the Enhanced Reader to open the START anchor. Then use the dropdown to select the END anchor.

SECTION / LOCATION	Act I, Scene III
START	Most potent, grave, and reverend signiors
END	This only is the witchcraft I have used. Here comes the lady. Let her witness it.
PASSAGE ID	sec-oth-02

THE MOVE

Compare a speaker's claim with the speech that follows

WHY THIS PASSAGE

Othello describes himself as 'rude' and unpolished in speech, then delivers a controlled, persuasive account of his life and courtship. The speech itself becomes evidence against the speaker's opening claim.

MARK

Box Othello's claim about being an unskilled speaker. Underline two places where the defense is especially organized, vivid, or persuasive. Write CONTRADICTS CLAIM beside the strongest example.

NOTICE

- What expectation does Othello create when he calls himself 'rude' in speech?
- Which features of the defense make that self-description difficult to accept literally?
- Why might Othello benefit from presenting himself as less rhetorically skilled than he actually is?

THINK

Answer provisionally: Why is Othello's claim that he is 'rude' in speech difficult to believe by the end of his defense? Choose the strongest interpretation you can defend from this passage alone.

WRITE

Write a short evidence-based response to: Why is Othello's claim that he is 'rude' in speech difficult to believe by the end of his defense? Use at least two details from the assigned passage and explain how they support your interpretation.

CLOSE

Name the single detail that most changed or sharpened your interpretation, and explain why.

STRONG ANSWER	Othello calls himself an unpolished speaker, but the defense that follows is controlled, vivid, organized, and persuasive. His performance becomes evidence against his own claim about rhetorical weakness.
EVIDENCE	Use the opening self-description and then at least two features of the actual speech—structure, narrative control, vivid detail, restraint, or persuasive effect.
WATCH FOR	Do not say he is lying just because he speaks well. Consider why presenting himself as plain-spoken may itself strengthen credibility.
SOLO	Read the exact passage independently.
SUPPORTED	Use narration and sentence highlighting while reading the same passage.
LISTENING	Listen to the exact passage; visual following is optional. Same question and evidence demand.

STUDENT PAGE · SAME PASSAGE, SAME THINKING

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Why is Othello's claim that he is 'rude' in speech difficult to believe by the end of his defense?

START ANCHOR	Most potent, grave, and reverend signiors
END ANCHOR	This only is the witchcraft I have used. Here comes the lady. Let her witness it.

Use the Anchor Text Table of Contents in the Enhanced Reader to open the START anchor. Then use the dropdown to select the END anchor.

OPEN THE MARKED PASSAGE IN TUMBLELIT

SOLO: read independently. SUPPORTED: use narration + highlighting. LISTENING: listen to the exact passage. The question and evidence task stay the same.

1. **MARK** - Box Othello's claim about being an unskilled speaker. Underline two places where the defense is especially organized, vivid, or persuasive. Write **CONTRADICTS CLAIM** beside the strongest example.
2. **NOTICE** - What expectation does Othello create when he calls himself 'rude' in speech? Which features of the defense make that self-description difficult to accept literally? Why might Othello benefit from presenting himself as less rhetorically skilled than he actually is?
3. **THINK** - Answer provisionally: Why is Othello's claim that he is 'rude' in speech difficult to believe by the end of his defense?
4. **WRITE** - Write a short response using at least two pieces of evidence from this passage.

Use evidence from the assigned passage. Show what you noticed and how the text supports your interpretation.