



ello for what she sees as “a deed” that is “no more worthy heaven/Than thou wast worthy her”.

The changes that emerge in the representation and character of Emilia are undoubtedly elements that can serve to uplift and edify an audience. It is interesting that towards the conclusion we witness the striking influence that Desdemona’s goodness has exerted on the formerly cynical and shallow Emilia. At the conclusion, Emilia is not afraid of taking a defiant stance against Othello, calling him a “gull”, a “dolt” who is “as ignorant as dirt”, “a filthy bargain”, “a black devil”.

She is totally fearless in her vindication of the truth and authenticity of Desdemona’s virtue. Neither is Emilia afraid for herself, as she tells Othello: “I’ll make thee known/Though I lost twenty lives . . .” She dies shortly after uttering these words, killed at the hands of her hus-

band as she exposes the full truth about the handkerchief.

The manner of Emilia’s death is definitely morally uplifting and inspiring. She dies defending Desdemona’s fidelity and reiterating how much Desdemona truly loved Othello: “Moor she was chaste, she lov’d thee, cruel Moor; So come my soul to bliss, as I speak true.” There is no doubt that the story of Emilia is one aspect of this play that enlightens an audience or reader on how goodness can contribute to positive change within the soul of a person.

In conclusion, Shakespeare has managed to write a truly dramatic play in *Othello*. It is a play that can leave a truly horrifying experience of evil on an audience or reader, as it reveals the deep-seated evil that lies latent with a human being. On the other hand, the play *Othello* has a capacity to reflect through certain characters how genuine goodness and virtue can help uplift and inspire an audience.

Help! I’ve only started my study now – is it too late? What can I do?

No, it’s never too late. You can always manage to mobilise material for the English paper even at the last minute.

One of the most important things to bear in mind in any exam, and particularly in English, where you have to write a lot, is to keep a clear head and a relaxed approach as much as possible. When you are nervous it becomes very obvious on paper and particularly in the case of a lot of written work. Study comprehension passages and use the language from the questions themselves to focus and frame an answer. Always quote from the passages given to support your points in your answers.

Write some paragraphs as preparation for your essay or

composition and learn off some phrases that are interesting and original. You can get these from short stories and from short articles in popular magazines. Remember, the daily newspaper can be a great resource for learning how to write letters or persuasive pieces. There are always sample magazine articles given in the newspapers at weekends, so look up some of these and copy down phrases.

Study central characters in the single text and learn off some points about the main themes. Watching a video or DVD of the play can be a quick way to revise.

Learn off what is required in the comparative sections and know what

is the meaning of Literary Genre, Cultural Context and Themes/Issues. Write out a list of key situations from the texts on the comparative course.

It can help in the Comparative Section to write an essay on the different headings and learn it off for the exam. Remember in this essay to put in linking devices or comparative phrases in every paragraph. Some examples of these are “in contrast to the two other texts”, “similar to the novel” or “unlike the play”.

Know some biographical points about the poets you are studying.

Tape some of the poems and listen to them when you are travelling to school. You can do the same with your play and your comparative texts.

Making the most of the mocks

The mock exams are a very good opportunity to test your knowledge of the subjects you will be doing in June for examination. Mocks exams are designed for a positive function – they enable you to test your knowledge of all your subjects, and they provide a means of being able to apply this knowledge on paper. They test your ability to think under pressure. They also help you to manage time better and see how you can get information down on the page.

Mocks are not designed to create stress and nerves. Neither are the mock exams designed for fun or to pass the time. Try to look at the mock exams in a positive light.

Remember that the mock exams come early in the year, usually February or March. This gives you time to learn from your mistakes and to rectify the situation. It does not mean that you should get perfect results – straight As. They are an opportunity to learn and therefore must be viewed in that light.

Before the mocks

Before your mock exams it is important to familiarise yourself with the layout of each one of your papers. Know how long you have for each examination, and know how many marks are allotted to each section. This is important for time management, as you will need to plan how long you will spend on each section. In addition, know what sections are compulsory, and what sections you can leave out.

In some subjects you may not have covered the whole course before your mock exams, and in this case it is important to answer well on those sections that you have been studying in class.

Have targets in each subject on what you are

going to do before you start to study.

During the mocks

There is not much point in staying up late at night trying to cram in information. Know what sections are compulsory. Know also how you are going to manage your time once you are sitting in the exam.

Just remember to keep answering the questions you are asked. You are not expected to know large amounts of information, but instead you have to know how to apply this information to answering the question clearly and fully.

Attempt every question even though you may not have done all the course yet. The mock exams are a way of helping you to think and act under pressure. Try to write an introduction and a conclusion for every question, even though you may not have learned that section fully yet.

After the mocks

It is a good idea to have a notebook where you can write down the things you learned while doing the mock exams. Write down areas that you have to cover in certain subjects and even note how long this will take you. It can also be very helpful to write down the mistakes you made, as you will probably learn more from these than anything else.

Always remember that the mock exams are only a learning ground and often those people who do less well in these exams very often do much better in the real exams in June.

Write down the things you have learned about yourself (how you react to pressure from school, parents, peers) from the lead up to the mock exams and try to avoid or apply it before the actual exam in June.

