

GIUSEPPE VERDI'S

OFFICO

Opera Funtime Collection

by the Young Patronesses of the Opera

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OPERH FUNTIME

A YOUNG PERSON'S INTRODUCTION TO THE ARTS THROUGH OPERA



NARRATION
MUSIC
HISTORY
DANCE
PAINTING
CRAFTS
COSTUMES
GAMES
PUZZLES

Illustrated by Valerie Mydske.

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OTELLO, like every opera, starts with a story.

In this case, it began with a play by William Shakespeare. It is the tragic tale of a hero, flawed by feelings of inferiority, who allowed his life to be ruined by a WEB OF LIES. The librettist, Arrigo Boito, adapted the words; Giuseppe Verdi composed the music.

My name is William Shakespeare. I have been called a Man of Genius; but I prefer that you ~ my friends across the years ~ remember me as a Man for all Times. How fortunate I was to have been born in England during Queen Elizabeth's reign, when London town was an exciting, bustling city! And to London I went, shortly after my marriage to Anne Hathaway.

I was born in the quaint market town of Stratford-on-Avon. I was the third of eight children, and attended the Stratford Grammar school. As you might guess, Stratford, although small, was exciting and full of experiences for me. I loved life,

and loved to write about it!

Although I wrote many poems, I became best known as a playwright, producing nearly corty plays. Inckily, at this time drama was popular with everyone. What an opportunity for me to create scenes, invent words, and

shape and reshape the English language!

Books say that people were astonished at my amazing knowledge in a variety of subjects. I told and re-told stories, and had a flair for weaving a plot using vivid prose and poetry. I made my characters come alive. Often they could be recognized by a one-line description. Othello, for example, you will learn was "... one that loved not wisely, but too well!"

Across time my story of Othellowas retold by Boito and Verdi. What began as a play was transformed into opera. Poetic dialogues became duets; soliloquies became arias; Othello became Otello (Italian).

Ah yes, my plays have endured, and rightly so, because they belong to all of us; and

"All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players.

They have their exits and their entrances."

(From "As Ibu Like It")

And now it is time for me to make my exit!

CILLIFIN SHRESPERE

(1564 - 1616)

P.S. We found 88 words of 3 letters or more in the name SHAKESPEARE. How many can you make?

@REGEN-DEYE ELAUSOJY & 3 MUDBESERG De

Shakespeare meant it when he said, "I shaped and reshaped the English language!" Unscramble some of the words and phrases that he "invented and put into use.

Shakespeare in reshaped the of the words and put into

6 HET MITE SI TOU FO JONIT (3)

OSINGASASA



GIUSEPPE VERDI (1813-1901)

My opera, "Otello," was a success from the beginning. On opening night, November 15, 1887, at La Scala Opera Theater in Milan, the audience gave me thunderous applause and many shouts of praise. In their enthusiasm, the people unhitched the horses from my carriage and pulled it back

to the Hotel Milano. I went for joy.

I have come a long way from my humble peasant child-hood in the village of Le Roncole. My parents were supportive and recognized my talent. When I was eight, my father gave me an old spinet to practice on. At twelve I became the village organist. Later, I worked and studied at the Busseto Music School. I was gradually allowed to take part in orchestra vehearsals, copy out orchestra parts, and conduct. I tried for a scholarship to the Milan lon-servatory, but failed. I so wanted to become more than just a village musician! Luckily, I met the famous Maestro Livigna, who accepted me as his pupil for several years. What at first seemed like failure became a chance for new opportunities!

When my old teacher, Provesi, died, I took his place as the orchestra conductor of Busseto. I married my sweet - heart, Margherita, daughter of my first benefactor, Señor Barezzi. We had two precious children. When our first

little one died, I was grieg - stricken.

^{*} A spinet is a smaller type of keyboard instrument such as a harpsichord, piano or organ.

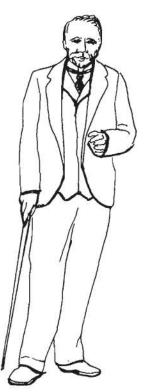
I moved my camily to Milan, where I continued to work on my first opera, "Oberto." Giuseppina Strepponi, a samous singer, was so impressed that she convinced her friend Merelli to stage it at La Scala, where he was manager. Success was once more within my grasp.

Our second child died My beloved Margherita died. All joy went out of my life. I wrote a comic opera at Merelli's request, but it was a failure. With no money and no heart for my work, I would have given up ~ had not Merelli once again encouraged

me to compose. At 46, I married Giuseppina, and we settled in a lovely villa in Busseto. At last we could enjoy gresh air and my dogs and horses, and I could continue to compose operas. My one regret in life was that poor health had kept me from fighting for my country. But in 1860, I was proud to be elected a deputy, and later a senator

for life!

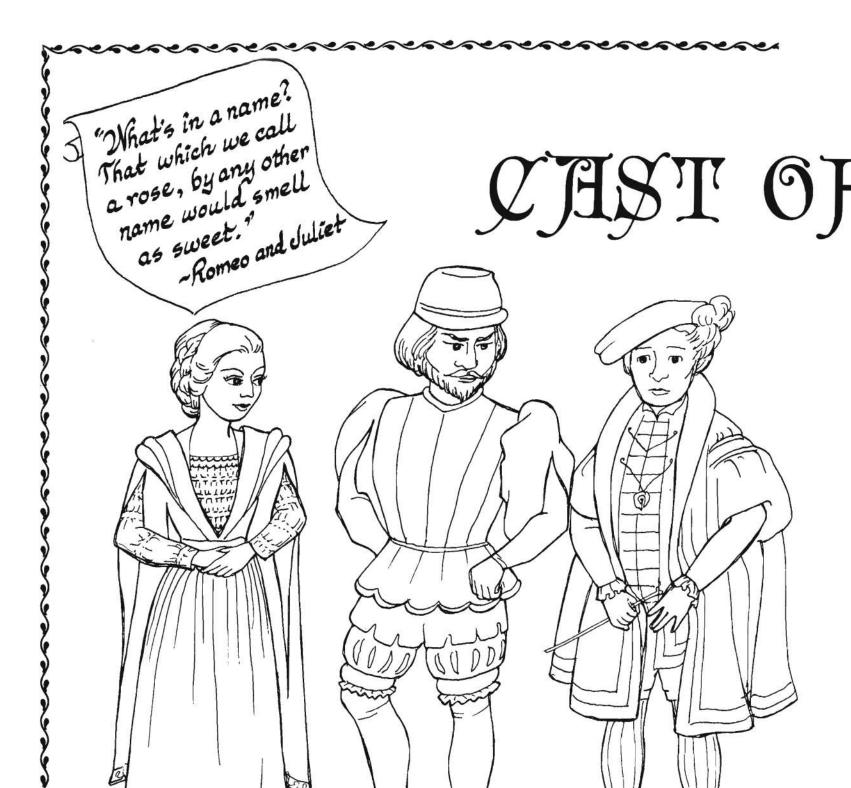
'I finished my last opera, "Falstaff," when I was 80 years old. I have lived a long, full life, and am ready to go.



HRRIGO BOITO (1842-1918)

Arrigo Boito was a famous poet and musician. Padua, Boito was, like Verdi, an Italian who loved opera.

Boito shared Verdi's great interest in politics. this is why the two men worked so well together. was well-qualified to condense Shakespeare's plays and put them into Italian verse. Then Verdi translated the words into dramatic music. Together they created "OTELLO" and "FALSTAFF", outstanding examples of Italian opera.



EMILIA (Mezzo-Soprano) Jemona's ladv-ii

Desdemona's lady-in- powaiting and lago's wife... unwitting accomplice in his wicked plot.

I AGO (Baritone)

Otello's ensign...sneaky, devious, conniving for position and power.

RODERIGO (Tenor)

lago's friend...secretly
in love with Desdemona,
therefore a willing tool
in lago's hands.

CHRACTERS



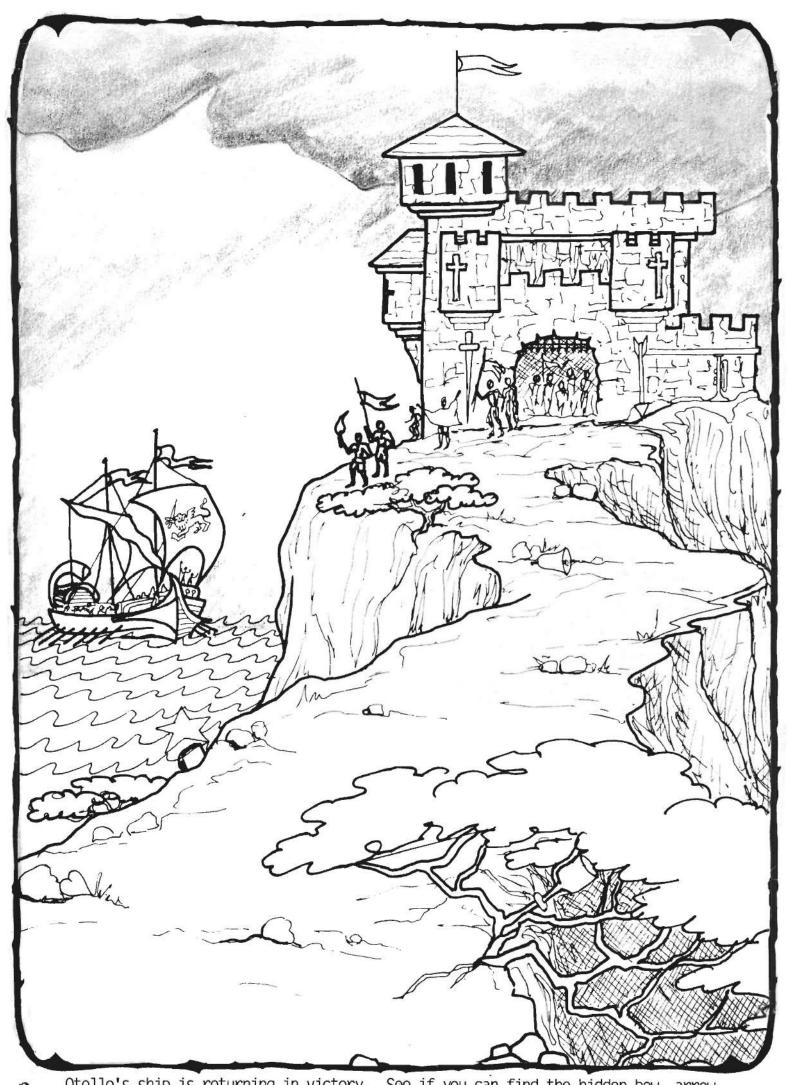
(Tenor)

Otello's honorable lieutenant... recently promoted, only to be demoted.

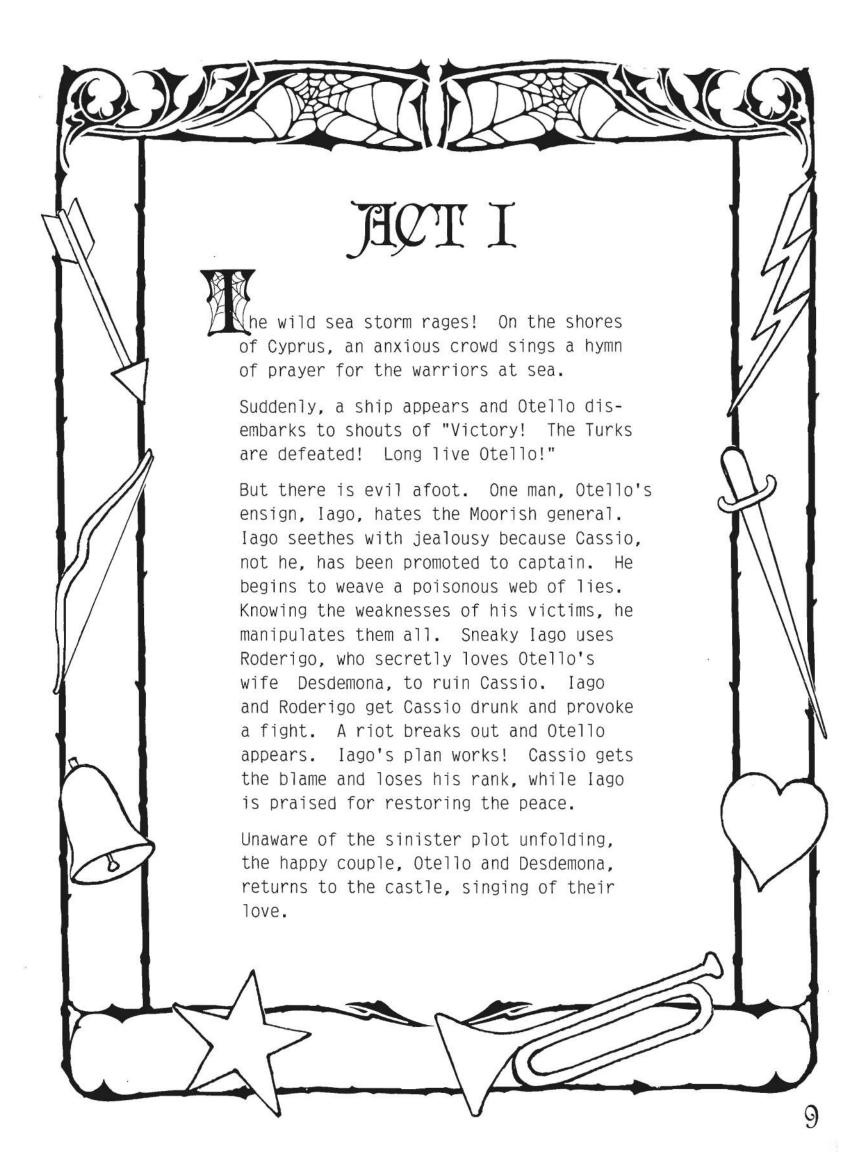
An esteemed Moorish General in the service of the Venetian army... married to Desdemona.

DESDEMONA (Soprano)

Otello's beautiful, faithful bride... innocently unaware of the suspicions surrounding her.



Otello's ship is returning in victory. See if you can find the hidden bow, arrow, bell, star, heart, sword, lightning bolt, goblet, and trumpet.





During the storm, the people of Cyprus (Cypriots) look toward the sea. With gestures of fear and supplication they pray for the safety of



This music is taken directly from the vocal score and has the original Italian and the English translation (now out of copyright). Try making your own English translation to fit the music.

QUOTHTIONS

It is a well-known fact that our composer, GIUSEPPE VERDI, kept his two favorite books always on his bedside table - the BIBLE and SHAKESPEARE.

The Bible's PROVERBS are full of good advice. The character Iago, however, was full of lies and deceit; and this is evident by the words that came out of his mouth. Match Iago's words with the <u>contrasting</u> PROVERB which might have helped him. See example below.



IAGO'S WORDS:

- 1. <u>Iago</u> "This tender web (handkerchief) furnishes me with the rope I wish to trap that innocent wench."
- 2. <u>lago</u> "Vengeance be my last, resolve!"

- 3. <u>Iago</u> "Go (Roderigo) over to him (Cassio) and provoke him. Go, make him furious!"
- 4. <u>Iago</u> "Friendship, fairness, honor...all is nonsense and rot!"
- 5. <u>Iago</u> "Now, listen: though I feign to be loyal, I hate Otello."
- 6. <u>Iago</u> "I set the trap: You
 (Roderigo) catch him (Cassio)
 and do the rest!"
- 7. <u>Iago</u> "There is one way to trick: make him drunk! Come here, my dear old friend (Cassio), drink away; keep on drinking. Watch him and see his mind go blank."

PROVERBS

Proverbs 20:1 - "Wine gives false courage: hard liquor leads to brawls: what fools men are to let it master them, making them reel drunkenly down the street."

Proverbs 17:17 - "A true friend is always loyal, and a brother is born to help in time of need."

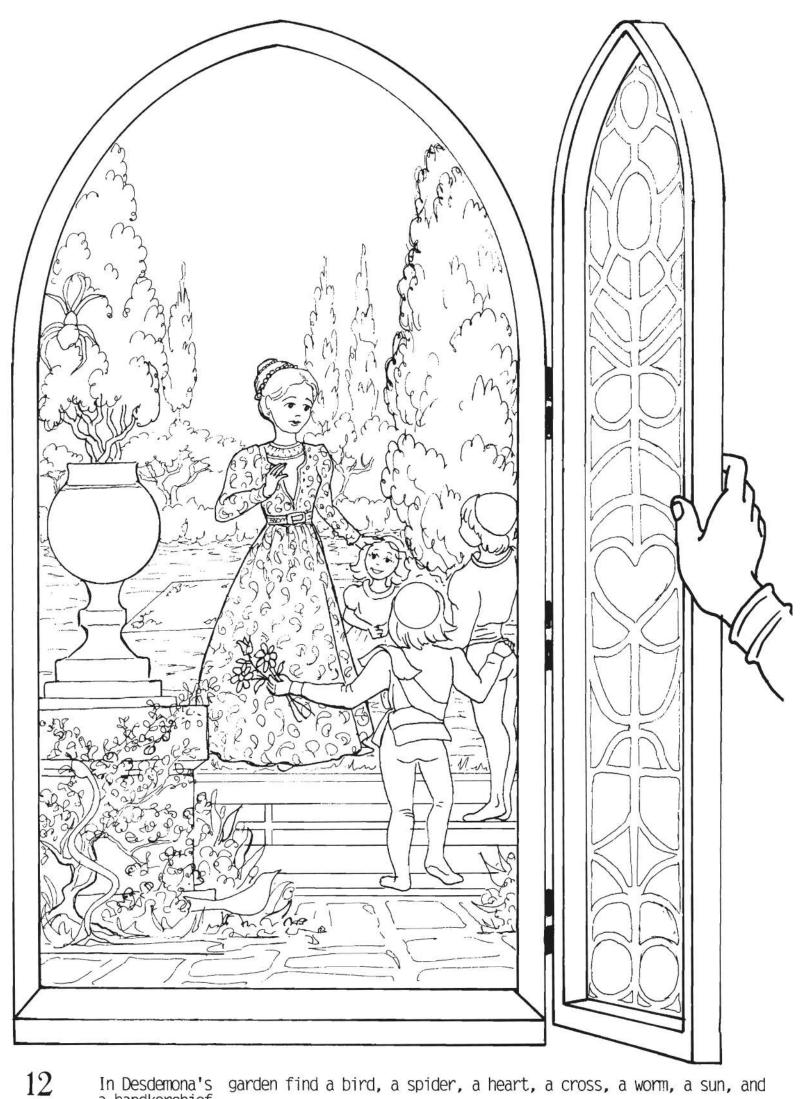
Proverbs 20:22 - "Don't repay evil for evil. Wait for the Lord to handle the matter."

Proverbs 12:20 - "Deceit fills hearts that are plotting for evil; joy fills the hearts that are planning for good."

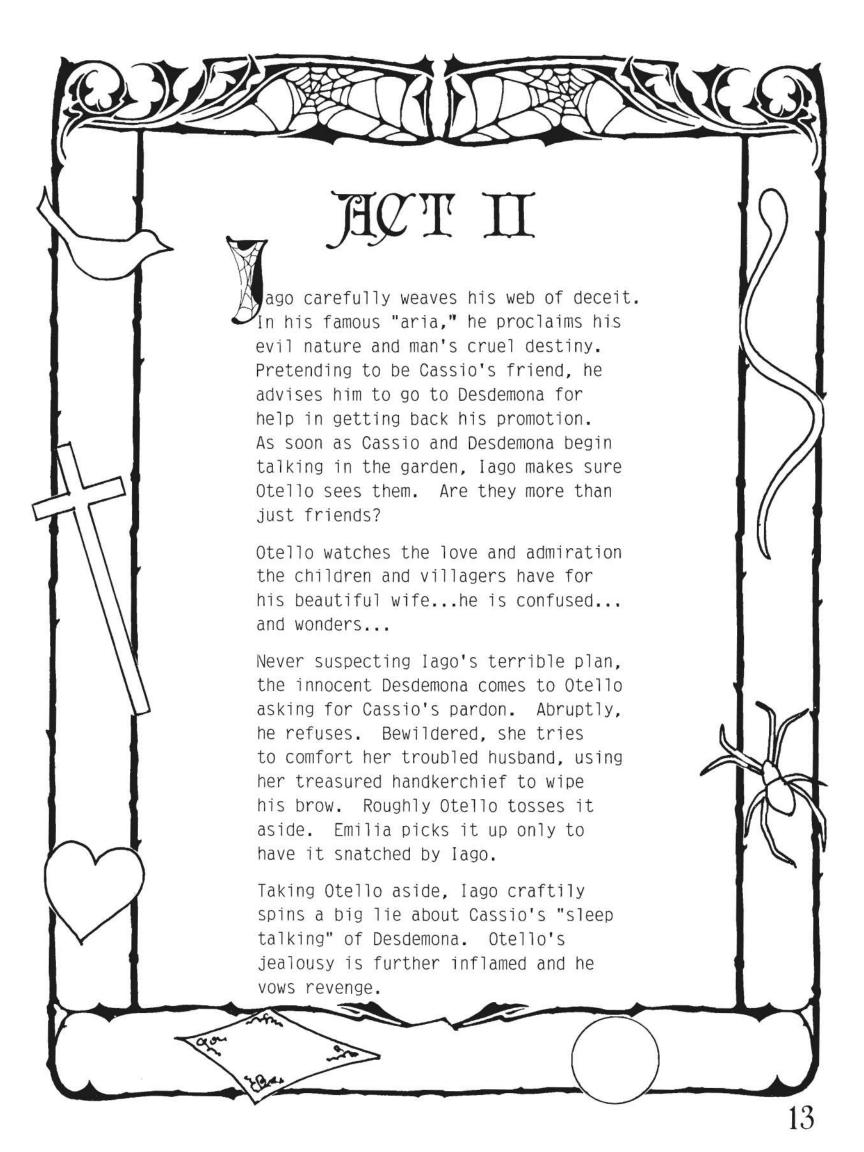
Proverbs 26:21 - "A quarrelsome
man starts fights as easily as a
match sets fire to paper."

<u>Proverbs 25:13</u> - "A faithful employee is as refreshing as a cool day in the hot summertime."

<u>Proverbs 29:8</u> - "Fools start fights everywhere, while wise men try to keep peace."



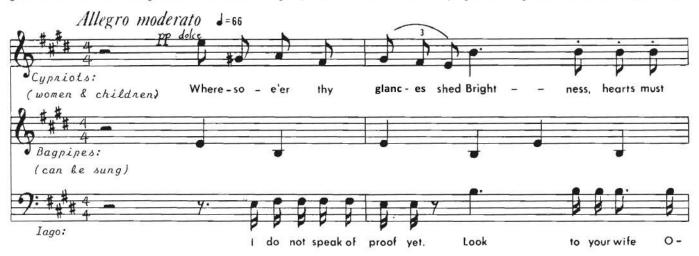
In Desdemona's garden find a bird, a spider, a heart, a cross, a worm, a sun, and a handkerchief.

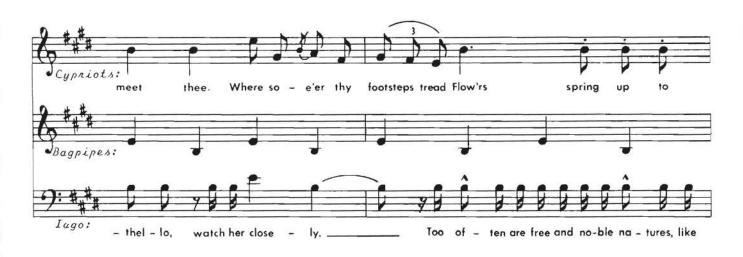


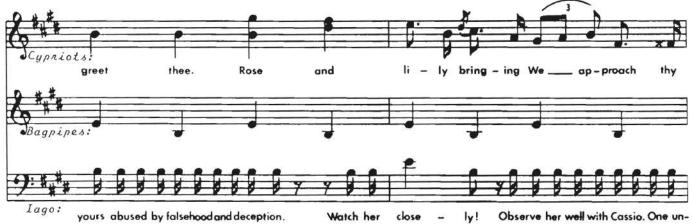
IAGO'S THEME: Watch for those slinky, sneaky triplets announcing Iago's entrance!



With love and admiration, the women and children of Cyprus serenade Desdemona in the garden. With envy and malice, Iago plants the seeds of jealousy in Otello's heart.



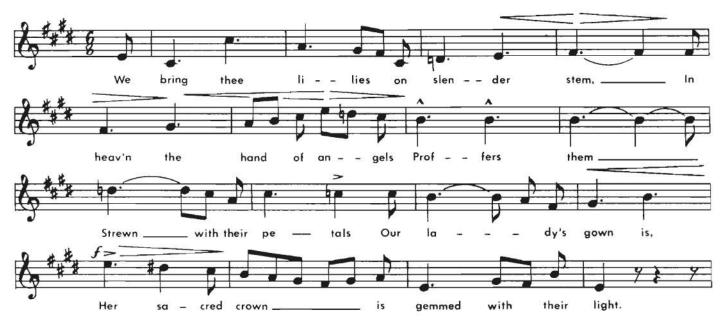


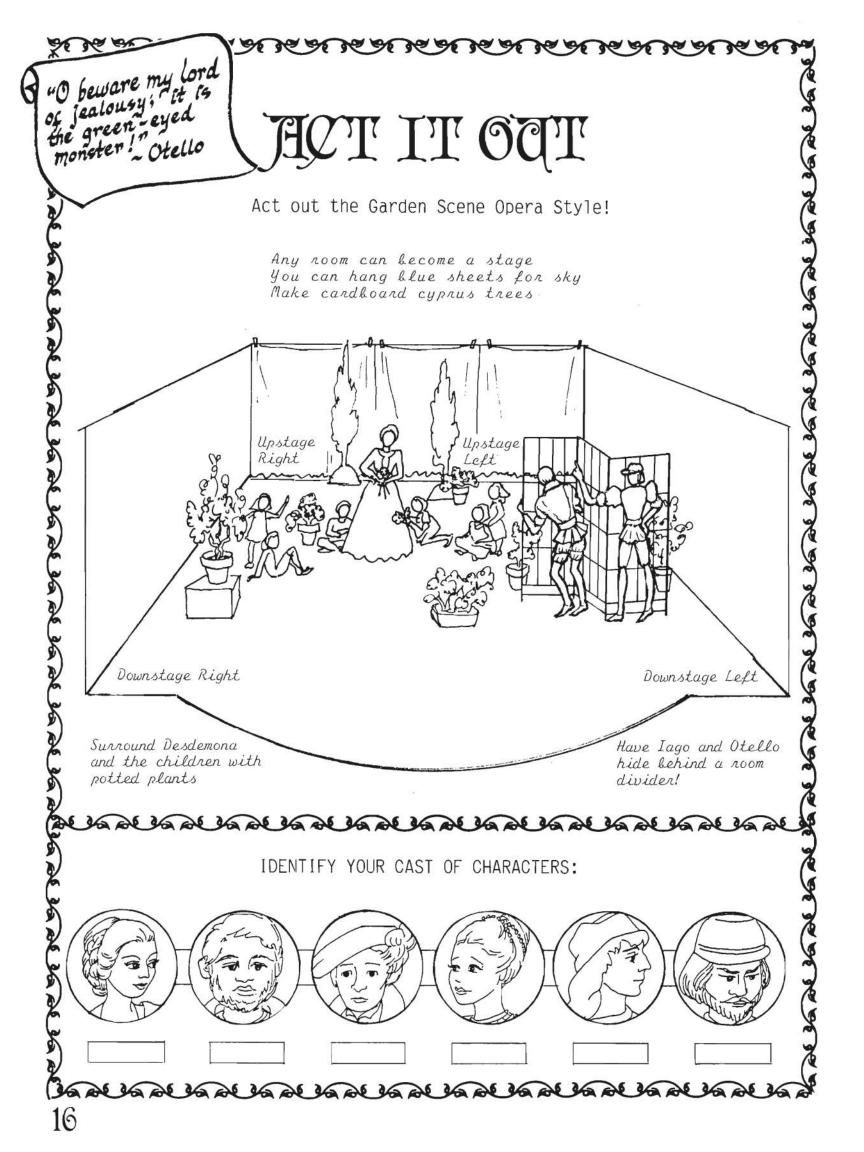




The children gather around Desdemona and sing . .









During the Renaissance the Italians were the foremost choreographers (designers of dances). They wrote many books on dance that were used all over Europe. Operas became more exciting, as pageantry and dance were added to the singing.

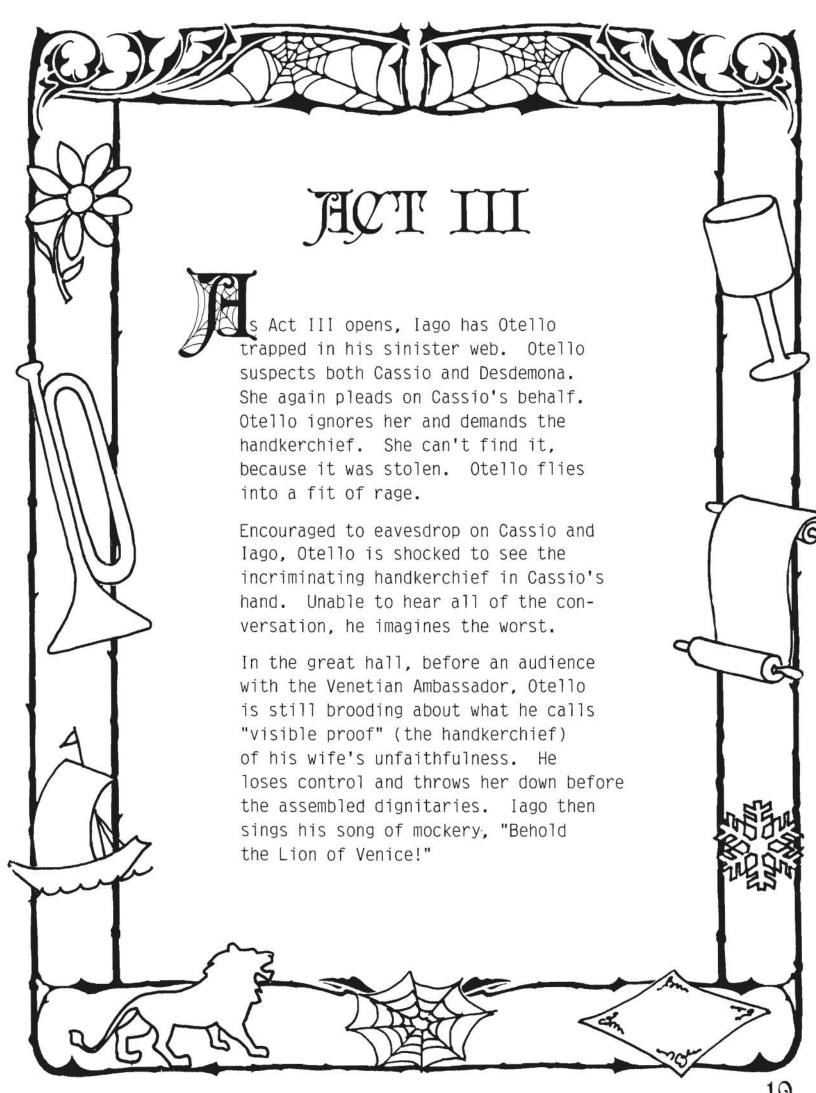
Most dances developed from folkdances, reflecting the customs and beliefs of the people. Where people lived had an effect on how they danced; for instance, in cold climates many fast steps were added, and in warmer climates slower steps and rhythms were popular. The purposes of dance were:

- 1) To teach good manners and courtesies
- 2) To develop good posture and poise
- To promote exercise and fitness
- 4) To make new friends and develop a sense of belonging
- 5) Just to have fun

The important thing to remember when dancing is KEEP EXACT TIME TO THE MUSIC! The steps can be made up, and consist of a series of variations or combinations that are slow and fast to match the beat of the music. Try to clap hands first to find the beat and then create your own steps. Some of the popular dances of the Renaissance included steps that were danced in circles, crossing of two groups in columns, holding hands, and forming chains, stars, and figure eights. Try to make up a dance with a group of friends to the rhythm of the music in the garden scene of "Otello"!

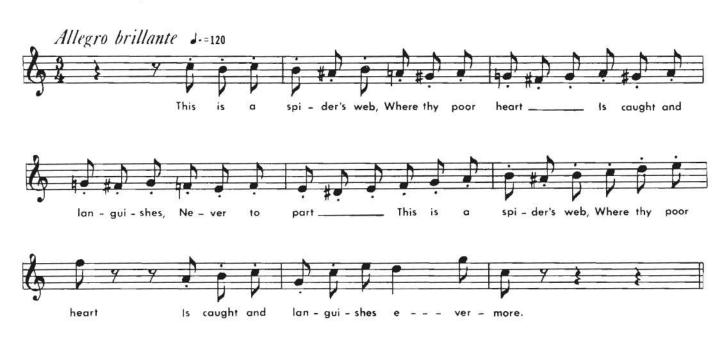


In this scene find a flower, a snowflake, a document, a web, a trumpet, a goblet, a lion, a ship, and a handkerchief.



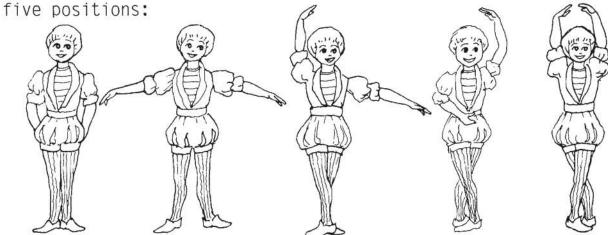
HADRERCHIEF SONG

Iago takes Desdemona's handkerchief from Cassio. Sometimes the singer who portrays Iago twists and turns in almost ballet-style as he dangles the handkerchief for Otello to see from his hiding place. (Iago is a laritone. His music is usually written in the bass clef. We have transposed it to the treble clef for sopranos.)



BALLET MOVEMENTS

Every ballet movement begins and ends with the feet in one of these



Which of these would you use in dancing to the "Handkerchief Song"?



Desdemona's handkerchief played a major role in Iago's web of lies. Construct the story in your own words. Act it out using these pictures as guidelines.

Before the opera starts: 1. Courtship gift from Otello to Desdemona

2. Act II - Desdemona tries to wipe Otello's fevered brow. 3. Otello throws it down.





0 ** D *



4. Emilia picks it up.

5. Iago grabs it from her.

6. Iago "plants" it in Cassio's room.

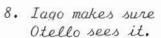


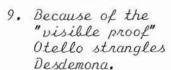


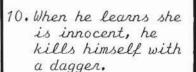


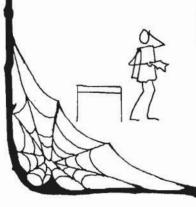


7. Act III Cassio wonders aloud where it came from.





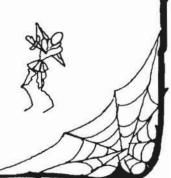






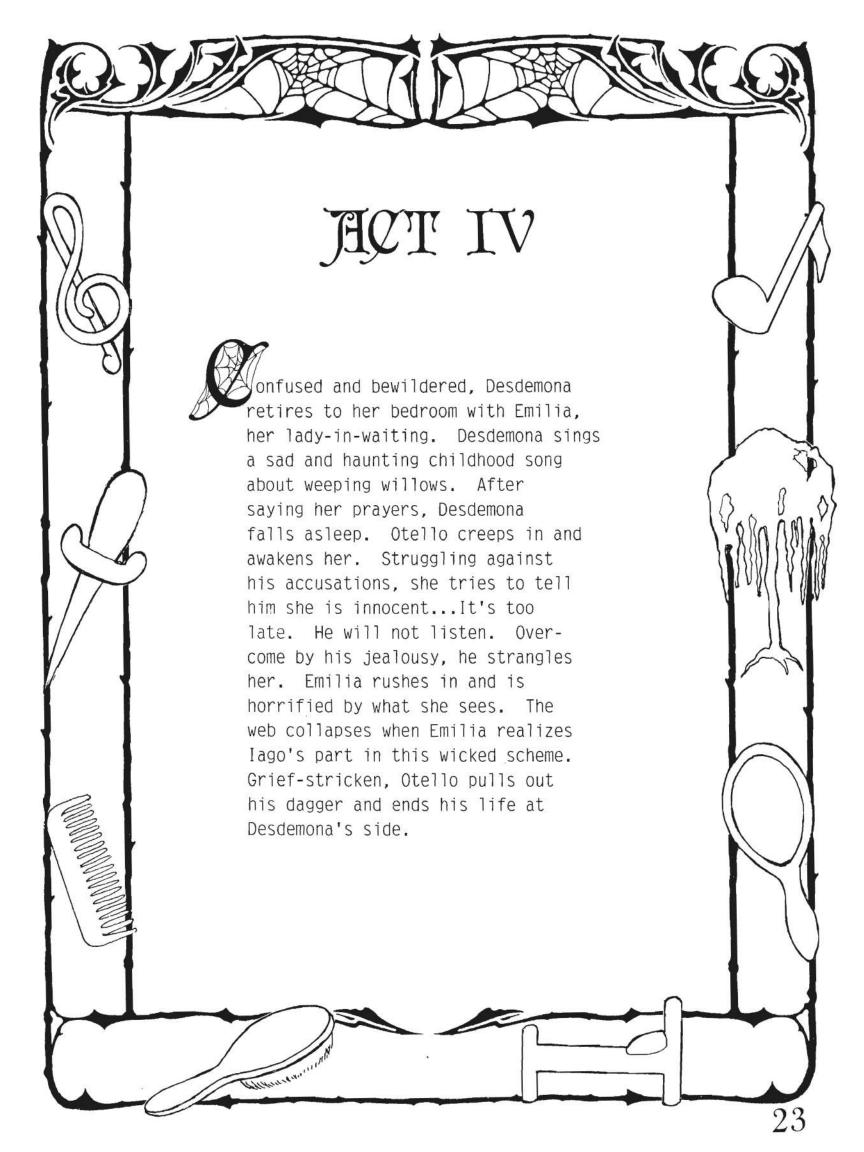








Hiding in Desdemona's bedroom are an extra hairbrush and a bed, a comb, a hand mirror, a dagger, a willow tree, a treble clef, and a musical note.



WILLOW SONG

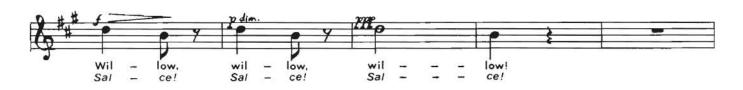
As Emilia listens, Desdemona, sad and weary, sings of a young woman named Barbara who was betrayed by her sweetheart.





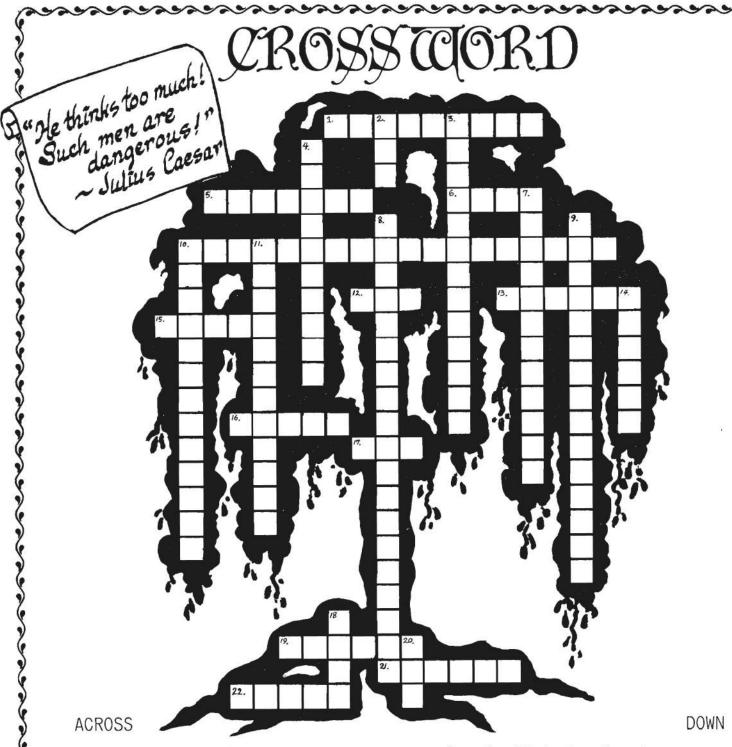






LOVE THEME





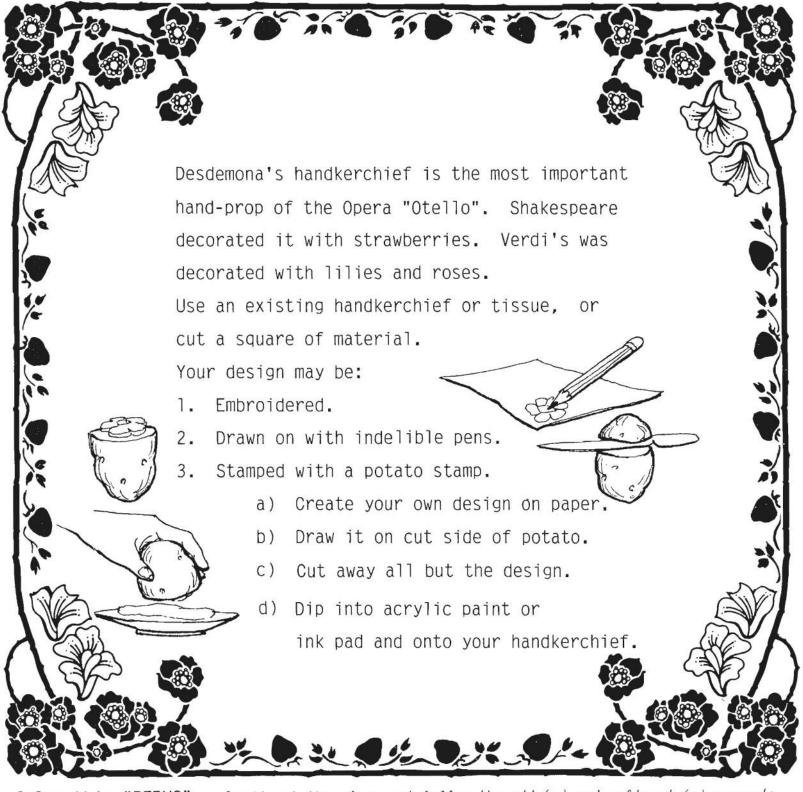
- 1. Otello's wife
- Shakespeare's Homeland
- 6. Otello's sneaky ensign
- 10. Playwright of "Otello"
- 12. Falsehood
- 13. Otello's honorable lieutenant
- 15. Country Columbus sailed from to discover America
- 16. Composer of "Otello"
- 17. Spider's home
- 19. Island setting for
 "Otello"
- 21. Web-weaving creature
- 22. Large body of water

- 2. Small body of water
- 3. Sea surrounding Cyprus
- 4. Cast of
- This book you're working in
- 8. Discoverer of America
- 9. This game
- 10. Tree Desdemona sang about
- 11. Otello's Venetian title
- 14. General in the Venetian Army, our main character
- 18. How spiders make webs
- 20. One who secretly watches another

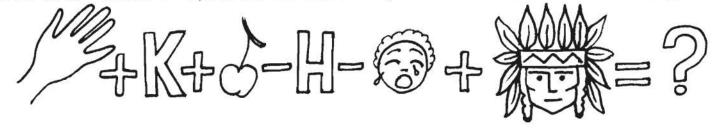


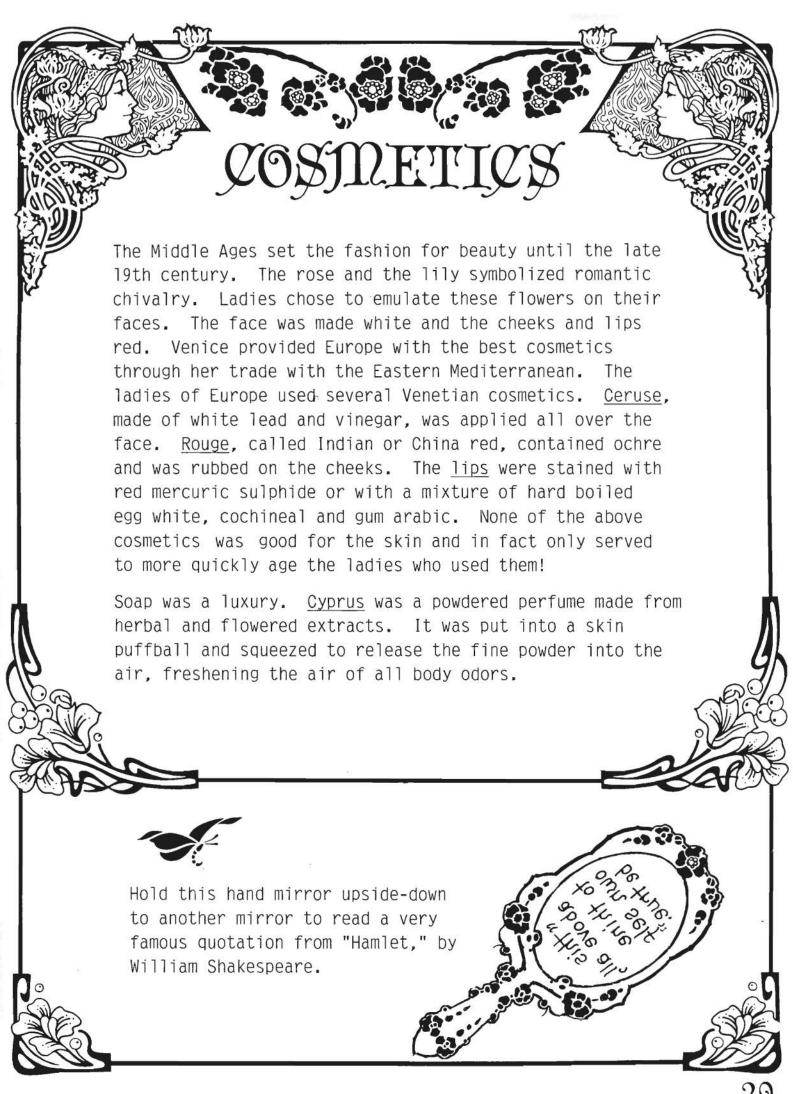


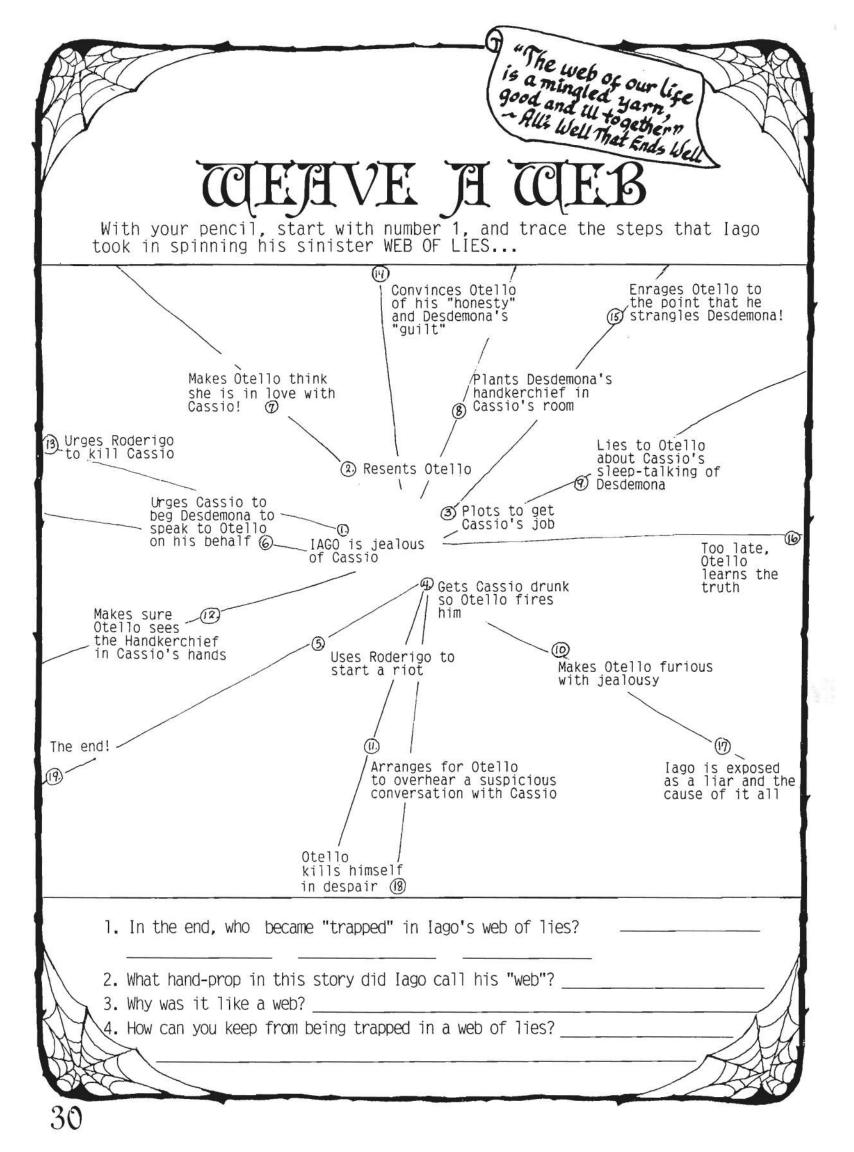
MARE A HAD PROP



Solve this "REBUS". Spell out the clues and follow the add (+) and subtract (-) commands.









OPERA ETTIQUETTE

Learn a little about the show.

Read the story before you go.

Wear your very nicest clothes.

No giant hats, hairdos, or bows.

Get there early take your seat.

No noisy wrappers on what you eat.

No talking, singing, or loud snoring,

Even if you think it's boring!

No photographing of the show

And taping is a real no-no.

Turn cell phones off, computers too.

No texting 'til the show is through.

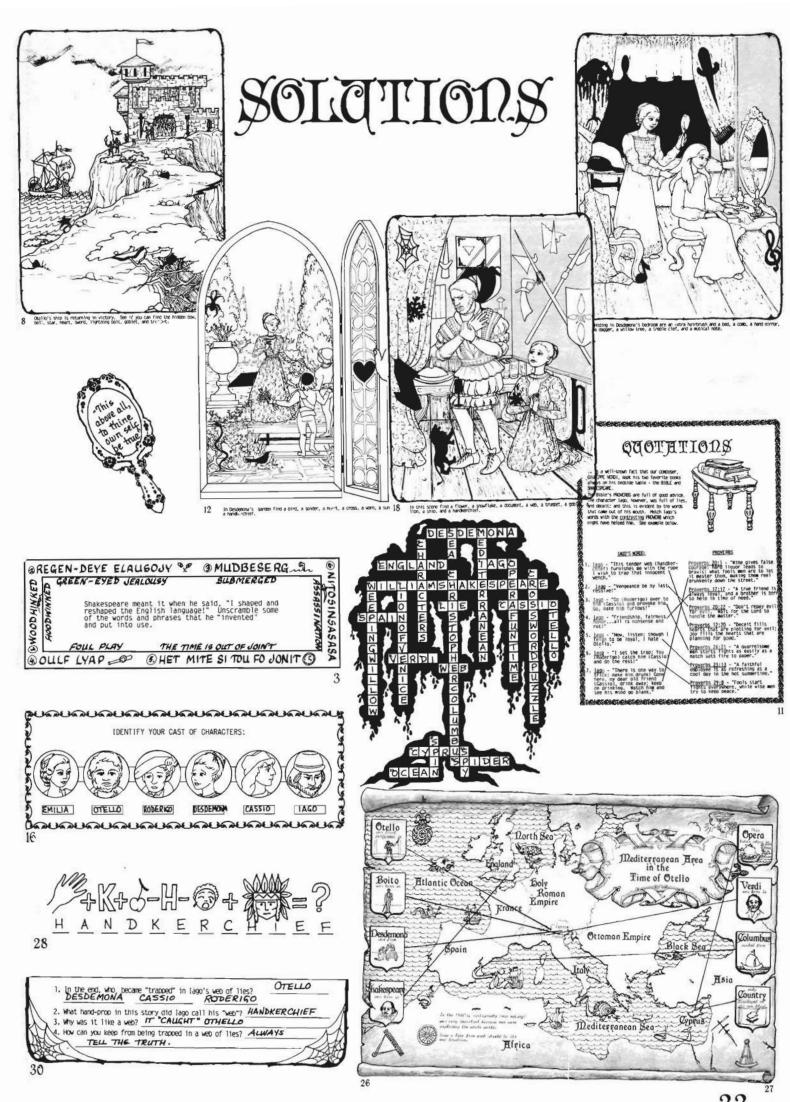
To make performers feel real proud

Applaud or yell, "Bravo!" real loud!









OPERA'S FUN FOR EVERYONE

