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

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

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

**Becoming the Bard**

**STUDENT INSTRUCTIONS**

1. **Task context**:

In Shakespeare’s *Othello*, the character Iago uses rhetorical language, which demonstrates how dangerous language can be when used by an individual with ulterior motives. For this task, you will explore the persuasive power of language by pretending to be a modern-day bard - translating Shakespeare’s work into your own words.

You will need to select a scene in which Iago’s power to convince is particularly compelling. Working with a group, you will then translate that scene into modern English in the form of a song or dramatic scene. Finally, you will demonstrate your skills as beginning actors and actresses.

Working in small groups, choose a scene from *Othello* that focuses on Iago’s skillful use of rhetoric and power of persuasion. Then you will:

1. Translate the scene into modern English.
2. Decide on a medium to write the scene in: song or drama.
3. Use your translation to write a modern version of the scene, following the conventions of a song or drama.
4. Produce the song or drama in audio and video format.
5. Perform your song or drama for the class.
6. **Final product**:

You will need to develop three work products for this task: 1) a typed manuscript of your performance, 2) a video/audio production of your performance, and 3) a live, class production of your performance.

**Answers to some questions you might have:**

1. **What do I need to know or do to be successful on this task?**
2. **On this task, you will show that you know these things:**

* Understand Shakespeare’s play, *Othello*
* Understand rhetorical devices and concepts of logos, pathos, and ethos

1. **On this task, you will show that you are able to do these things:**
   * + Create a clear, written manuscript
     + Revise, edit, and strengthen your written piece
     + Use digital media to produce a video/audio production of your performance
     + Present clearly and coherently to the class
2. **What materials will I need to complete this task?**

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

1. **How long will I have to complete this task?**

You will have five days to complete the task and three days for group performances. In-class time will be given for group work, but out-of-class time may also be necessary.

1. **How will my work be scored?**

Your task will be scored using the English/Language Arts Effective Communication Oral Presentation Rubric. You should make sure you are familiar with the language that describes the expectations for proficient performance.