Socratic Seminar #4 – Othello

Review your IB Analysis “Cheat Sheet,” Rule #6 regarding all conflict boiling down to an opposition between a romantic, ideal view of things versus a realist, cynical view of things. Then consider the following questions:

A) ‘Love of the idea of love” is a common trope in Shakespeare. To what extent is this concept apparent in Othello, Act IV? Where, and how so?

B) Also, After Othello has slapped her in public, yelled at her, and called her a whore, Desdemona insists, “Unkindness may do much; / And his unkindness may defeat my life, / But never taint my love” (Act IV, Scene ii, 160–62). What do you think of Desdemona and her response to Othello’s treatment? Do you pity her? Respect her? How might you explain her behavior?

C) What is this play’s implied ideological stance regarding the idea of love?