

How do we

define a tragedy?

Any serious and dignified drama that describes a conflict between the hero and a superior force and reaches a sorrowful conclusion that arouses pity or fear in the audience.

A tragic hero is destroyed precisely because of attempting to be good and is much better than most people, but

not perfect.

Tragedy implies a conflict between human goodness and reality.

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Tragedy assumes that this universe is rotten or askew.

Tragic literature is not intended to make people sad.

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Four Basic Concepts of a Tragedy

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BASIC CONCEPTS OF A TRAGEDY

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1. The events in the plot of a tragedy must have a clearly probable or inevitable connection—events should be believable but unexpected.



2. The plot should be complex and allow a change from ignorance to knowledge.



3. Suffering must all occur in a tragic plot which, preferably, should end unhappily.



4. The pity and fear which a tragedy evokes should come from the events and actions, and not the mere sight of something on stage.

Ten Basic Elements

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of a Tragedy

BASIC ELEMENTS OF A TRAGEDY

1. The protagonist must suffer some type of separation from his society.

BASIC ELEMENTS OF A TRAGEDY

The protagonist must make some kind of mistake or show bad judgment.



3. Deaths, more often than not, occur at the end of the play in the same way that comedies typically can end in a marriage or a feast.

BASIC ELEMENTS OF A TRAGEDY

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4. Tragedies often contain supernatural elements.



5. The tragic hero is a person with noble qualities and a flaw in his character.



6. Some disorder has been committed against the laws of nature and needs to be corrected.

BASIC ELEMENTS OF A TRAGEDY

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7. The conflict is often with country or with the hero himself.



 8. The hero is usually seeking revenge or he is being avenged.



9. Tragedies have a sad ending--the death, downfall or destruction of the hero and other main characters.



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10. Comic relief is provided with light scenes to relieve the stress of tragic events.



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Tragedy

The main character of a tragedy must possess these five character traits:

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The character must have a fault that leads to far more dire consequences than he deserves.

The character must be so virtuous that instead of feeling pity or fear at his or her downfall, we are simply

outraged.

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The character cannot be so evil that for the sake of justice we *desire* his or her misfortune.

The character should be someone who is neither outstanding in virtue and righteousness, nor bad or villainous of his own that he falls into misfortune, but rather through some flaw.

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There must be glory in the character's misfortune, which only virtue can ensure.

There are Six Basic Elements of a Tragic Hero

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1. The tragic hero is a good or noble man.

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 The hero acts against established law or moral codes but with noble motives.

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3. The hero makes a false moral choice, brought about by self deceptions or excessive noble pride.

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4. There is a dramatic moment of choice.

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5. The tragic hero often ends in death, downfall, or destruction.

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6. Disaster overtakes the hero because of this choice.