

## **some notes on Aristotle's version of the "tragic hero"**

Aristotle's tragic hero is a literary character who makes an error in judgment that inevitably leads to their own destruction; Aristotle claims, "a man does not become a hero until he can see the root of his own downfall."

### Key Characteristics:

1. The hero must possess nobility (of a noble birth) or wisdom (by virtue of birth).
2. The hero must have an obvious flaw or make a notable error in judgment.
3. There must be a clear reversal of fortune brought about because of the hero's flaw.
4. The hero must discover or recognize that the reversal was brought about by their own actions.
5. The audience must pity and/or fear the character.

There is balance in the hero's character; this person is no better or worse than we are. Tragic heroes fall from great heights by having made an irreversible mistake, and they eventually die a tragic death that they accept courageously and with honor.

### Other Common (but not required) Traits of the Tragic Hero:

1. suffers more than they deserve
2. obviously doomed from the start
3. is noble in nature but imperfect so we can see ourselves in them
4. sees and understand their inevitable doom
5. is physically and/or spiritually wounded by their experiences, resulting in death
6. is intelligent enough to have the capacity to learn from their mistakes
7. has a weakness that's clear/evident to the reader
8. bear no responsibility for possessing the flaw
9. is faced with a very serious decision
10. suffers in a meaningful way