

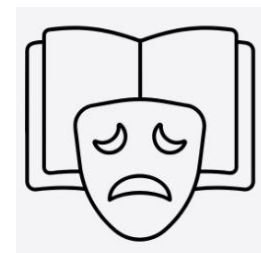
Convention	Definition	Symbol
Tragic Hero	The main character is usually of high social status (such as a king, prince, or nobleman) and is admired by others.	
Tragic Flaw (Hamartia)	The hero has a fatal weakness or character flaw, such as ambition, jealousy, pride, or indecision, which contributes to their downfall.	
Downfall	The protagonist experiences a dramatic decline from success or power to suffering and ultimately death.	
Conflict	The play features significant internal conflict (within the hero) and external conflict (against other characters, society, or fate).	
Supernatural Elements	Ghosts, witches, prophecies, omens, or other supernatural forces often influence events or create tension.	
Fate and Destiny	The idea that events are controlled by fate or prophecy is common, though the hero's own choices also play a major role.	
Death & Catastrophe	The play ends with the deaths of the tragic hero and often several other important characters, restoring order.	
Anagnorisis	The hero eventually realises their mistake or understands the true nature of their actions, often too late to prevent tragedy.	
Restoration of Order	After the tragic events, a surviving character assumes leadership or order is restored, bringing stability after the chaos.	

Shakespearean Tragedy

Tragedies usually adhere to a set of conventions: The play centers around a tragic hero. Usually he is male, usually with high status at the start of the play and some moral virtues.

Through a combination of the character's fatal flaw (their **hamartia**) and the intervention of fate, the character is set off on a path of self-destruction from which they cannot escape. They may have a moment of realisation in which they realise their mistake, but it is too late to turn back. The play ends with their death, and then the natural order is restored.

Audiences were meant to feel a sense of **catharsis**- that is, they could experience the intense emotions of the plot without making the same mistakes as the protagonist.



Key word:	Definition:
Hamartia	A fatal flaw or tragic error in judgment that brings about the downfall of a protagonist.
Catharsis	The emotional release that occurs when you finally express and process pent-up feelings.
Peripeteia	A sudden, unexpected reversal of circumstances or turning point in a story, often translating to a "reversal of fortune"
Manipulation	Controlling, or influencing of someone or something
Tyranny	Cruel and oppressive government or rule
Hubris	Excessive pride / arrogance

How to structure a PEEAL paragraph: Point: What is your impression of the character? Evidence: Pick a quotation from the play that shows that. Explain: How does that quotation create the impression? Analyse: Can you pick out a specific word that creates that impression? Or a technique? Why do you think the writer wants us to feel that way? Alternative: Give an alternative opinion, use an extra quote to reinforce your point here. Link : What were Shakespeare's intentions when writing the play? How would a Jacobean audience react?

Key Themes	
Ambition 	Jealousy 
Fate 	Pride 
Chaos 	

Freytag's Pyramid

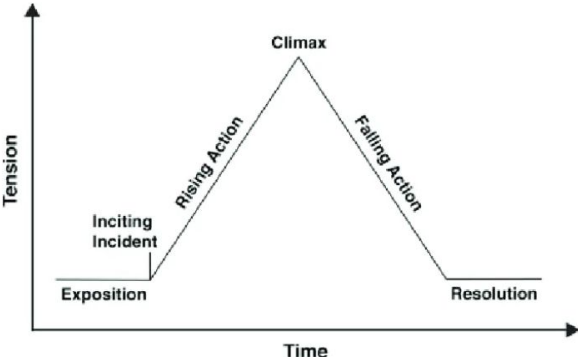
Exposition: The introduction where the audience learns the setting, background, and major characters. This usually ends with an **inciting incident** that kicks off the main conflict.

Rising Action: A series of events and complications that build tension, raise the stakes, and force characters to confront challenges.

Climax: The turning point of the story. The protagonist's fate is sealed, and tension reaches its absolute peak before things shift toward a conclusion

Falling Action: The immediate consequences and fallout of the climax. Tensions subside, and the narrative moves toward closure.

Resolution (or Denouement): The final outcome that ties up loose ends, answers lingering questions, and gives the audience a sense of fulfillment.



Freytag's "pyramid," also known as the "dramatic arc," showing a five-part story structure with rising and falling tension over time. Based on Freytag (1900).