

ELEMENTS OF CLASSICAL GREEK TRAGEDY



The Tragic Hero



- A great person of noble stature who has a tragic flaw that brings about his/her downfall

Tragic Flaw



- Tragic Flaw—Weakness of character, some **moral blindness**, or error causes total reversal of fortune for the tragic hero as he is brought to his/her knees
 - Tragic flaw can be and is often some aspect of the tragic hero that is admirable but taken to extreme, cause the downfall of the hero
- “Hamartia”

Fate



- Fate—The notion that what will happen is destined to happen regardless of what we as humans do to alter our lives.
- Fate is usually seen as a paradox because it is an issue that has no answer or resolution.

The Stages of the tragic plot



- Reversal: Story suddenly reverses. The reversal might even seem like good news at first.
- Recognition: When the tragic hero realizes he/she has taken part in some horrible event or secret
- Suffering: A destructive or painful act that might occur as a response to recognition

Dramatic Irony



- Dramatic irony--the words and actions of the characters of a work of literature have a different meaning for the reader than they do for the characters because aspects of the characters' fate has been revealed to the reader beforehand.
- This is the result of the reader having a greater knowledge than the characters themselves.