

In the 5th Century BC, Aristotle noted that a tragedy must contain the following elements.

Aristotle's elements of tragedy

1. **tragic hero** – generally of high status who possesses a weakness
2. **tragic flaw** – this ultimately causes the character's downfall
3. **catastrophe** –
 - a. the moment of emotional upheaval
 - b. the point at which the characters realize they are in too deep to turn back now"
 - c. this and the resolution leave the audience with a feeling of catharsis
4. **catharsis** – a cleansing through emotions