



*So...what is a Tragic
Hero anyway?*



Tragic Hero Background

“A man cannot become a hero until he can see the root of his own downfall”

-Aristotle

-The tragic hero is a man of noble stature. He is an ordinary man, but a man with outstanding qualities and greatness about him. His own destruction is for a greater cause or principle.



Characteristics of a Tragic Hero

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Nobel Background

- ★ Often (but not always) a member of a royal family, or a higher social class
- ★ Someone that normal people would “look up to” or admire – has outstanding qualities



Imperfect or “Human” Despite Noble Nature

- ★ Has outstanding quality or greatness, but audience must identify with him
- ★ Without imperfections, downfall would seem unlikely

it's okay
to be
imperfect



Possesses a Fatal Flaw

- ★ Traditional fatal flaw is hubris, or excessive pride but there can be many others
- ★ Flaw ultimately leads to hero's downfall, often death



The Hero's Downfall is Partially His/Her Own Fault

- ★ Downfall is a result of free will/choice, NOT villainy or accident
- ★ We don't blame the character for the fatal flaw, only the decisions made or actions that result from the flaw.



Punishment Exceeds the Crime

- ★ May be injured, or may suffer losses of family or fortune
- ★ Wounds are not entirely deserved



The Fall is Not Pure Loss...

- ★ Downfall or death is usually seen as a waste of human potential
- ★ Suffering always has greater meaning
- ★ Greater lesson learned



Be prepared to explain how John Proctor is a Tragic Hero



1. Noble Background
2. Imperfect
3. Fatal Flaw
4. Causes own downfall
5. Suffers Greatly
6. Gains new knowledge