



Present

Shakespeare's Tragedies: Origins and Style

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Outline

Part 1: Who was Shakespeare?

- A. Shakespeare's life and times
- B. Shakespeare's use of language
- C. Elizabethan drama
 - 1. the importance of words
 - 2. real life versus stage life
 - 3. symbolic art

Part 2: Tragedy

- A. What is tragedy?
- B. Oedipus Rex: the height of Greek tragedy
- C. Tragedy in the Middle Ages
- D. Shakespeare and Tragedy

William Shakespeare Fast Facts

- Born in Stratford-on-Avon, England; lived from 1564 to 1616
- was a member of the theater company the Chamberlain's Men, later called the King's Men
- wrote comedies, like A Midsummer Night's Dream and Twelfth Night
- wrote history plays, like Henry V and Richard III
- wrote tragedies, like Hamlet and King Lear
- wrote poetry, including the book-length poems Venus and Adonis and The Rape of Lucrece, and more than 150 sonnets

Shakespeare Quote

Aristotle's thoughts on drama/tragedy

Poetry

Shakespeare wrote in both poetry and prose.

Poetry is a concentrated language, produced through rhythm and sound.

Prose is the language of everyday speech and writing.

Often, Shakespeare wrote in iambic pentameter, a poetic form that closely resembles the natural patterns of human speech.

Though it may seem like a difficult concept, iambic pentameter isn't impossible to grasp. It goes something like this:

1. Iambic pentameter contains iambs.
2. An iamb is an unstressed syllable followed by an stressed syllable. This is the rhythm that closely resembles human speech.
3. A line of iambic pentameter contains five iambs That's because 'penta' means 'five.'
4. That's about it! Here's a line of perfect iambic pentameter:

A horse, a horse, my kingdom for a horse!

Did you catch the up-and-down movement of the iambs? Here's the line again, but this time, here are the unstressed (-) and stressed (˘) syllables:

A horse, a horse, my kingdom for a horse! (need marks on top)

Tragedy Timeline

