

10th Grade Summer Reading and Writing Assignment:
“Tragedy” Plot Pattern
***Till We Have Faces: A Myth Retold* by C.S. Lewis**

Assignment: Read through the explanations below of plot structure and the seven basic plot patterns. Read the novel, paying close attention to the plot structure. Write a literary analysis essay explaining how this novel fits into the archetypal plot pattern of “Tragedy.” See below for detailed essay requirements. Turn in all work by August 10th.

What is Plot?

There are five main elements in a plot.

1. The **exposition** or the introduction. This is known as the beginning of the story where characters and setting are established. The conflict or main problem is introduced as well.
2. The **rising action**, which occurs when a series of events build up to the conflict. The main characters are established by the time the rising action of a plot occurs and at the same time, events begin to get complicated. It is during this part of a story that excitement, tension or crisis is encountered.
3. The **climax** or the main point of the plot. This is the turning point of the story and is meant to be the moment of highest interest and emotion. The reader wonders what is going to happen next.
4. The **falling action** or the winding up of the story. Events and complications begin to resolve and the result of actions of the main characters are put forward.
5. The **resolution** or the conclusion. It is the end of a story and ends with either a happy or a tragic ending. <https://literarydevices.net/plot/>

What are the Basic Plot Patterns?

In literary theory, some critics have identified seven basic plot patterns into which most stories fit. The seven basic plot patterns are: Rags to Riches, Voyage and Return, Rebirth, Comedy, Tragedy, Overcoming the Monster, and Quest. As 10th graders, your focus this summer will be on the Tragedy plot pattern.

What is the Tragedy Plot Pattern?

A tragedy is typically a story in which the protagonist is a Tragic Hero who desires something and, for a variety of different possible reasons, finds himself in a downward spiral which ultimately culminates in his death or destruction.

Tragedy meta-plot structure/stages according to Christopher Booker:

1. **Anticipation Stage:** The tragic hero is in some way incomplete or unfulfilled and his thoughts have turned the future in hope of some turn of fortune. Some positive course of action presents itself, and his energies have found a focus.
2. **Dream Stage:** The Tragic Hero gets committed to his course of action and for a while things go almost improbably well for the hero. He's winning the gratification he had dreamed of and there seem to be no obstacles in his way.
3. **Frustration Stage:** Things start to go wrong...perhaps very slowly, "almost imperceptibly," but the Hero is starting to experience difficulties and annoyances. The hero cannot find a point of rest. He begins to experience a sense of frustration, and in order to secure his position may feel compelled to further "dark acts" which lock him into his course of action even more irrevocably. Something dark may appear at this point, seeming in some obscure way to threaten him.
4. **Nightmare Stage:** Things are now slipping seriously out of the hero's control. He has a mounting sense of threat and despair. Forces of opposition and fate are closing in on him.
5. **Destruction Stage:** Either by the forces, he aroused against himself, or by some final act of violence which precipitates his own death, the hero is destroyed. **Something happens in Book II of *Till We Have Faces: A Myth Retold* that interrupts the projected tragic death!!! In your paper, explain how the destruction stage is interrupted in Book II to redeem our tragic heroine.

Work Cited

Booker, Christopher. *The Seven Basic Plots: Why We Tell Stories*. Bloomsbury Continuum, 2016.

What is your assignment?

1. Read this handout carefully.
2. Read the book. While you are reading, pay attention and take notes about plot and our tragic heroine.
3. Write a five-paragraph plot-analysis essay. Organize your essay according to the meta-plot stages outlined above, allotting one paragraph for each stage. Identify the events in the story that, in your opinion, belong in each stage and explain why. In the end, this novel takes a redeeming turn which rescues our protagonist from her fate. Be sure you explain this redeeming turn.
4. Explain the stages as part of your topic sentence for each body paragraph. Use **at least two (2)** specific examples **with page numbers** per paragraph.
5. Include works cited for the novel, Christopher Booker's theory (see above), and any other sources you reference.
6. Consult the attached rubric.
7. Be reminded that our school's policy regarding plagiarism will be administered and applied to this and all other essay assignments throughout the year.

If you need any help with this assignment, contact me at rebeccahagues@calvaryknights.com. Don't be shy to ask. I teach because I love to help :)

10th Grade Rubric: Summer Reading Literary Analysis Essay		(___/100)
(___/5) MLA Style, 8th edition: heading, header, double space, margins, title, font		
(___/15) Plot Stage 1: Anticipation Stage		
Explain the stage in your own words.		
Provide two pieces of textual evidence (quotations) proving the novel has (or doesn't have) this stage. You must use " " and novel page numbers to cite the quotes. Give commentary or explanation of how the quotations you chose prove your point about the stage.		
(___/15) Plot Stage 2: Dream Stage		
Explain the stage in your own words.		
Provide two pieces of textual evidence (quotations) proving the novel has (or doesn't have) this stage. You must use " " and novel page numbers to cite the quotes. Give commentary or explanation of how the quotations you chose prove your point about the stage.		
(___/15) Plot Stage 3: Frustration Stage		
Explain the stage in your own words.		
Provide two pieces of textual evidence (quotations) proving the novel has (or doesn't have) this stage. You must use " " and novel page numbers to cite the quotes. Give commentary or explanation of how the quotations you chose prove your point about the stage.		
(___/15) Plot Stage 4: Nightmare Stage		
Explain the stage in your own words.		
Provide two pieces of textual evidence (quotations) proving the novel has (or doesn't have) this stage. You must use " " and novel page numbers to cite the quotes. Give commentary or explanation of how the quotations you chose prove your point about the stage.		
(___/15) Plot Stage 5: Destruction Stage		
Explain the stage in your own words.		
Provide two pieces of textual evidence (quotations) proving the novel has (or doesn't have) this stage. You must use " " and novel page numbers to cite the quotes. Give commentary or explanation of how the quotations you chose prove your point about the stage.		
(___/10) Grammar		
Check for spelling and word usage accuracy		
Check sentence structure (no fragments or run-ons)		
Check for any other grammatical errors.		
(___/5) Works Cited, MLA 8th Edition (perfect, almost right, many errors, missing)		
Cite the novel & anything else you use to write your paper		
(___/5) Biblical Integration		
Suggestions: Make a connection between this story and a story or character you have read about in the Bible. Explain the connection. Identify a message the author might be conveying in writing this book. Does this message line up with a biblical worldview? Or does it contradict what Scripture teaches?		

