

# A – Level English Literature: Transition Unit

The purpose of the transition pack is to support you in your progression from your GCSE studies at Key Stage 4 to your A-Level studies at Key Stage 5.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

'Othello' by William Shakespeare

'Death of a Salesman' by Arthur Miller



Show me a hero, and  
I'll write you a tragedy.

F. Scott Fitzgerald

“quotefancy”

Fulford School and Sixth Form English Department



# English Literature A–Level (AQA Specification B)

## Introduction:

### Content and Assessment

#### Content

Year 12 is largely based around ‘Literary Genres’, with a focus on tragedy.

You will study 3 texts:

- One Shakespeare play – *Othello*
- One further drama text – *Death of a Salesman*
- One poetry text – Keats selection

**You will also begin to explore the NEA unit (coursework) towards the end of the year, choosing your own texts to write about and studying Feminism, Narrative, Marxism and Eco-Criticism.**

**We will cover ‘aspects of tragedy’ such as:**

- the type of the tragic text itself, whether it is classical and about public figures, like Lear, or domestic and about representations of ordinary people, like Tess
- the settings for the tragedy, both places and times
- the journey towards death of the protagonists, their flaws, pride and folly, their blindness and insight, their discovery and learning, a mix of good and evil
- the role of the tragic villain or opponent, who directly affects the fortune of the hero, who engages in a contest of power and is partly responsible for the hero’s demise
- the presence of fate, how the hero’s end is inevitable
- how the behaviour of the hero affects the world around him, creating chaos and affecting the lives of others
- the significance of violence and revenge, humour and moments of happiness
- the structural pattern of the text as it moves through complication to catastrophe, from order to disorder, through climax to resolution, from the prosperity and happiness of the hero to the tragic end
- the use of plots and sub-plots
- the way that language is used to heighten the tragedy
- ultimately how the tragedy affects the audience, acting as a commentary on the real world, moving the audience through pity and fear to an understanding of the human condition.

Note that whenever the word “significance” is used, it is intended to refer to how features construct meaning and effect, rather than “importance”!

## Assessment

- **AO1:** Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression.
- **AO2:** Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts.
- **AO3:** Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received.
- **AO4:** Explore connections across literary texts
- **AO5:** Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations.

### **Paper 1 Aspects of Tragedy**

- **2 hour 30 minutes**
- **Closed book**
- **75 marks**

#### **Section A: *Othello* – William Shakespeare**

Explore the significance of the aspects of dramatic tragedy in **the following passage** in relation to the play as a whole.

You should consider the following in your answer:

- the presentation of characters
- the dramatic setting
- other relevant aspects of dramatic tragedy.

#### **Section B: *Othello* – William Shakespeare**

Explore the view that, in Shakespeare's *Othello*, [statement about a tragic element of the poems].

Remember to include in your answer relevant comment on Shakespeare's use of dramatic methods.

#### **Section C: You must refer to both**

***Death of a Salesman* – Arthur Miller**

***Lamia, Isabella or The Pot of Basil, La Belle Dame Sans Merci, and The Eve of St. Agnes* – John Keats**

Explore the view that [statement about a tragic element].

Remember to include in your answer relevant comment on the methods writers use to create meaning.

AQA are also keen to stress the importance of the three “Command Words” used in the questions. They have specific meanings, as follows:

#### **Analyse**

- separate information into components and identify their characteristics

#### **Comment**

- present an informed opinion

#### **Explore**

- investigate without preconceptions about the outcome

## A-Level Literature Mark Scheme

All AOs are addressed in each part of the exam, with the following weightings:

- **AO1** - Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression. (7 marks / 28%)
- **AO2** - Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts. (6 marks / 24%)
- **AO3** - Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received. (6 marks / 24%)
- **AO4** - Explore connections across literary texts. (3 marks / 12%)
- **AO5** - Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations. (3 marks / 12%)

There is only one mark scheme, which is used across all sections of all exam papers.

Mark	AO	Descriptors	Indicative Content
<b>Band 5</b> <b>Perceptive/            Assured</b> <b>21-25 marks</b> 'Perception' is demonstrated when students are showing the depth of their understanding and responding sensitively to the texts and task. 'Assuredness' is shown when students write with confidence and conviction.	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• perceptive, assured and sophisticated argument in relation to the task</li> <li>• assured use of literary critical concepts and terminology; mature and impressive expression</li> </ul>	This band is characterised by <b>perceptive</b> and <b>assured</b> work which shows confidence, sharpness of mind and sophistication in relation to the task. At the top of the band students are consistently <b>assured</b> and will demonstrate sensitivity and <b>perception</b> across all five assessment objectives in the course of their response. At the bottom of the band there will be coherence and accuracy with some <b>perception</b> but with less consistency and evenness.
	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• perceptive understanding of authorial methods in relation to the task</li> <li>• assured engagement with how meanings are shaped by the methods used</li> </ul>	
	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• perceptive understanding of the significance of relevant contexts in relation to the task</li> <li>• assuredness in the connection between those contexts and the genre studied</li> </ul>	
	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• perceptive exploration of connections across literary texts arising out of generic study</li> </ul>	
	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• perceptive and confident engagement with the debate set up in the task</li> </ul>	
<b>Band 4</b> <b>Coherent/            Thorough</b> <b>16-20 marks</b> 'Coherence' is shown when students are logical and consistent in their arguments in relation to the task. They hold their ideas together in an intelligible way. 'Thoroughness' is shown when students write carefully, precisely and accurately.	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• logical, thorough and coherent argument in relation to the task where ideas are debated in depth</li> <li>• appropriate use of literary critical concepts and terminology; precise and accurate expression</li> </ul>	This band is characterised by <b>coherent</b> and <b>thorough</b> work where ideas are linked together in a focused and purposeful way in relation to the task. At the top of the band students will demonstrate a fully <b>coherent</b> and <b>thorough</b> argument across all five assessment objectives in the course of their response. At the bottom of the band ideas will be discussed in a shaped, relevant and purposeful way with a clear sense of direction, with one or two lapses in <b>coherence</b> and accuracy.
	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• thorough understanding of authorial methods in relation to the task</li> <li>• thorough engagement with how meanings are shaped by the methods used</li> </ul>	
	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• thorough understanding of the significance of relevant contexts in relation to the task</li> <li>• coherence in the connection between those contexts and the genre studied</li> </ul>	
	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• logical and consistent exploration of connections across literary texts arising out of generic study</li> </ul>	
	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• thorough engagement with the debate set up in the task</li> </ul>	

Mark	AO	Descriptors	Indicative Content
<b>Band 3</b> <b>Straightforward/ Relevant</b> <b>11-15 marks</b> 'Straightforward' work is shown when students make their ideas in relation to the task clearly known. 'Relevant' work is shown when students are focused on the task and use detail in an appropriate and supportive way.	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>sensibly ordered ideas in a relevant argument in relation to the task</li> <li>some use of literary critical concepts and terminology which are mainly appropriate; straightforward and clear expression</li> </ul>	This band is characterised by <b>straightforward</b> and <b>relevant</b> work where the student's response to the task is clear and intelligible.  At the top of the band students will demonstrate consistent <b>straightforward</b> understanding in the course of their argument. Ideas will be developed <b>relevantly</b> .  At the bottom of the band there will be flashes of <b>relevant</b> understanding with evidence of <b>straightforward</b> thinking.
	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>straightforward understanding of authorial methods in relation to the task</li> <li>relevant engagement with how meanings are shaped by the methods used</li> </ul>	
	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>straightforward understanding of the significance of relevant contexts in relation to the task</li> <li>relevant connections between those contexts and the genre studied</li> </ul>	
	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>explores connections across literary texts arising out of generic study in a straightforward way</li> </ul>	
	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>straightforward engagement with the debate set up in the task</li> </ul>	
<b>Band 2</b> <b>Simple/ Generalised</b> <b>6-10 marks</b> 'Simple' work is shown when students write in an unelaborated and basic way in relation to the task. 'Generalised' work is shown when students write without regard to particular details.	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a simple structure to the argument which may not be consistent but which does relate to the task</li> <li>generalised use of literary critical concepts and terminology; simple expression</li> </ul>	This band is characterised by <b>simple</b> and <b>generalised</b> work which is mainly linked to the task.  At the top of the band students will demonstrate a basic <b>generalised</b> understanding in the course of their answer. Ideas will be developed in a <b>simple</b> way.  At the bottom of the band there will be inconsistency, but the beginnings of a <b>simple</b> and <b>generalised</b> understanding.
	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>simple understanding of authorial methods in relation to the task</li> <li>generalised engagement with how meanings are shaped by the methods used</li> </ul>	
	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>simple understanding of the significance of relevant contexts in relation to the task</li> <li>generalised connections between those contexts and the genre studied</li> </ul>	
	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>simple exploration of connections across literary texts arising out of generic study</li> </ul>	
	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>simple and generalised response to the debate set up in the task</li> </ul>	
<b>Band 1</b> <b>Largely irrelevant/largely misunderstood/largely inaccurate</b> <b>1-5 marks</b>	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>some vague points in relation to the task and some ideas about task and text(s)</li> <li>the writing is likely to be unclear and incorrect; if it is accurate the content will be irrelevant</li> <li>little sense of the AOs in relation to the task; little sense of how meanings are shaped; little sense of any relevant contexts; little sense of any connection arising out of generic study; little sense of an argument in relation to the task</li> </ul>	Work is <b>largely irrelevant</b> and <b>largely misunderstood</b> and <b>largely inaccurate</b> , and so unlikely to be addressing the AOs in a relevant way.  At the top of the band students will mention some unconnected points in relation to the task. The writing is likely to lack clarity.  At the bottom of the band there will be no connection with the task; hard to follow and <b>irrelevant</b> .
	2		
	3		
	4		
	5		

## Tragedy

Because the first part of the A-Level course is about Tragedy, researching Tragedy will give you a brilliant start to understanding the genre as well as working on your research skills. **This booklet contains two essays which discuss what is meant by tragedy.** You need to **read** each one carefully and complete the task below.

- 1. Research task: what are the elements of Dramatic Tragedy? How does classical tragedy differ from modern tragedy?**

### Synthesising your research:

Whilst reading the items below, you should make as many notes as possible and research further the areas you do not understand. Once you have your notes you need to organise your ideas in a meaningful way. This stage is called synthesising; it is where you order the ideas that best answer the question: in this case, what is tragedy?

Use the space below synthesize your ideas.

Item 1: 'Some thoughts about Tragedy'

Item 2: 'Tragedy and the Common Man'

## Some Thoughts About Tragedy (Both Literary and Mundane):

*"We participate in tragedy. At comedy we only look." --Aldous Huxley*

*"I've never thought of my characters as being sad. On the contrary, they are full of life. They didn't choose tragedy. Tragedy chose them." --Juliette Binoche*

*"I have spent more than half a lifetime trying to express the tragic moment." --Marcel Marceau*

Many people do not see the point to tragedy. Much of American pop culture tends to embrace the comic vision of art, finding tragedy depressing or disturbing. However, in the 5th century B.C.E., the classical Greek writers thought that facing tragedy was a healthy and necessary antidote to human foolishness. It taught humans to know themselves in a way comedy could not. The Greek philosopher Plato, quoting Socrates, admonished his listeners, "Know thyself." Part of that is how we might react in a tragic situation similar to what the protagonist faces.

*"Tragedy is more important than love. Out of all human events, it is tragedy alone that brings people out of their own petty desires and into awareness of other humans' suffering. Tragedy occurs in human lives so that we will learn to reach out and comfort others" --C. S. Lewis*

Likewise, the Romantic poets and later Victorian viewers valued tragedy as an emotional exercise helping viewers learn compassion. Watching people suffer on stage could help the audience sympathize with another's pain. The rise of the sentimental novel in the late 1700s and early 1800s reveals a cultural interest in this process, and Romantic poets like Shelley, Byron, and Keats went into ecstasies over Shakespeare. Their poetic works are perhaps a distant cousin to the great tragic dramas of earlier years.

*"If a single person dies in front of you, it is a tragedy. If a million people die on the other side of the earth, it is a statistic." --Josef Stalin*

So what exactly counts as a literary tragedy? What does not? Comedians jokingly refer to tragedy as "the plays in which everybody dies." But the genre is more complex than that. Many plays, movies, and stories contain death, violence, and unhappy endings. Though depressing, these traits do not make a tragedy per se.

The classical definition comes from Aristotle:

*"Tragedy is the imitation of an action that is serious, complete, and of a certain magnitude, in language embellished with each kind of artistic ornament, the several kinds being found in separate parts of the play . . . through pity and fear effecting the proper purgation of these emotions." --Aristotle, *The Poetics*.*

The word catharsis (translated above as "purgation") implies that tragedy purges, removes, or unclogs negative emotions such as pity and fear that build up within the human spirit. Thus, watching a tragedy might be a sort of psychological Drano. However, the word catharsis can also be translated as "purification," implying that somehow tragedy purifies pity and fear, turns them into something healthy or good. Catharsis can also mean "distillation," the sense that purifying something involves concentrating it into a more potent form. Somehow tragedy takes all these negative emotions people feel and intensifies them. Depending upon how you translate that single word, the purpose and definition of tragedy varies greatly.

*"Only a great mind that is overthrown yields tragedy." --Jacques Barzun.*

*"Destiny has two ways of crushing us -- by refusing our wishes and by fulfilling them." --Henri Frederic Amiel.*

The first component of tragedy is the tragic hero. In traditional Greek drama, the hero must be somebody of great social importance--a prince or ruler or hero far removed from the everyday Joe-on-the-street. The tragic hero had to be someone basically likeable; he had to have traits that the audience admired. Often, it is this same admirable trait that causes the hero's downfall. For example, we admire Macbeth initially for his ambitious, go-get-'em attitude. His up-and-at-'em philosophy takes Macbeth to glorious heights in the military. However, the same trait causes his ethical and political self-destruction when he plots to kill his liege lord. In the same way, we may admire the passion in Romeo and Juliet's young romance, but that same inability to live apart results in their messy double-suicide. We admire Brutus for his patriotic concern for Rome, but it is that same love of country that leads him into betraying his best friend. At some point, the hero falls from glory. His own hubris, his own desire to reach beyond what is possible, ensures such a fall.

*"Fate is nothing but the deeds committed in a prior state of existence." --Ralph Waldo Emerson.*

Tragedy also involves a weird mixture of personal choice and fate. To be a tragedy, the hero must have personal choice and agency. If a teenager is shot at random in a drive-by shooting, his death does not count as a literary tragedy because the victim did nothing to bring such misfortune upon himself. He had no choice in the matter. Such a death can only be fashioned into tragedy if the subject makes some kind of personal or moral decision. The decision (always made out of free will) then results in a chain of unstoppable and unforeseen negative events. That sudden shift from upward glory to tragic decline is called the peripeteia. After the peripeteia, the hero confronts social forces so huge and irresistible the tragedy seems like the hand of fate. Thus King Lear cries out, "As flies to wanton school-boys are we to the gods. They kill us for their sport." However, his suffering results as much from his faulty judgment as it does from some fixed destiny.

*"There are no tragedies, just facts not recognized in time." --William D. Montapert.*

Another important component of tragedy is anagnorisis. For the tragedy to meet the bill, the hero must realize his mistake and its horrible results. If a character never understands what occurred and why, the result may be brute suffering, but that does not constitute tragedy in the literary sense. Part of the pain a tragic hero must face is his own realization of personal culpability and error. However, that new insight always comes too late for him to change the coming disaster. By the time Macbeth realizes his approaching downfall, he has become a hollow shell of humanity, devoid of former ethics, and he cannot wash the blood from his hands. By the time Brutus realizes the ultimate results of Caesar's assassination, Julius' adopted heir has already claimed the imperial scepter and roused the mob against the assassins. Anagnorisis refers to the moment of tragic recognition, in which the truth, especially a universal or transcendent Truth-with-a-capital-T, reveals itself to the hero.

*"What makes a tragedy so tragic is not that the noble individual falls into ruin, but that his fall causes so much suffering in others." --Charmezel Dudt.*

Finally, tragedy spirals out behind the hero himself. Not only does he suffer, his choice inflicts misery upon other innocent people, and he knows it. The error may be King Lear's, but Cordelia is the one hanged. Romeo and Juliet made the choice, but Tibalt and Mercutio also die. Tragedy is when a noble individual's poor choice destroys that admirable individual and also causes suffering, pain, and death to others he



holds dear. The interest lies in how the hero reacts to this knowledge. How does he respond to the no-win situation resulting from his earlier choices? Macbeth responds with nearly psychotic fatalism. Othello with grieving tears. Hamlet with long overdue action. What can the reader or viewer learn from such varied responses?

### **Tragedy and the Common Man** By Arthur Miller

In this age few tragedies are written. It has often been held that the lack is due to a paucity of heroes among us, or else that modern man has had the blood drawn out of his organs of belief by the skepticism of science, and the heroic attack on life cannot feed on an attitude of reserve and circumspection. For one reason or another, we are often held to be below tragedy-or tragedy above us. The inevitable conclusion is, of course, that the tragic mode is archaic, fit only for the very highly placed, the kings or the kingly, and where this admission is not made in so many words it is most often implied.

I believe that the common man is as apt a subject for tragedy in its highest sense as kings were. On the face of it this ought to be obvious in the light of modern psychiatry, which bases its analysis upon classic formulations, such as Oedipus and Orestes complexes, for instances, which were enacted by royal beings, but which apply to everyone in similar emotional situations.

More simply, when the question of tragedy in art is not at issue, we never hesitate to attribute to the well-placed and the exalted the very same mental processes as the lowly. And finally, if the exaltation of tragic action were truly a property of the high-bred character alone, it is inconceivable that the mass of mankind should cherish tragedy above all other forms, let alone be capable of understanding it.

As a general rule, to which there may be exceptions unknown to me, I think the tragic feeling is evoked in us when we are in the presence of a character who is ready to lay down his life, if need be, to secure one thing-his sense of personal dignity. From Orestes to Hamlet, Medea to Macbeth, the underlying struggle is that of the individual attempting to gain his "rightful" position in his society.

Sometimes he is one who has been displaced from it, sometimes one who seeks to attain it for the first time, but the fateful wound from which the inevitable events spiral is the wound of indignity and its dominant force is indignation. Tragedy, then, is the consequence of a man's total compulsion to evaluate himself justly.

In the sense of having been initiated by the hero himself, the tale always reveals what has been called his "tragic flaw," a failing that is not peculiar to grand or elevated characters. Nor is it necessarily a weakness. The flaw, or crack in the characters, is really nothing-and need be nothing, but his inherent unwillingness to remain passive in the face of what he conceives to be a challenge to his dignity, his image of his rightful status. Only the passive, only those who accept their lot without active retaliation, are "flawless." Most of us are in that category.

But there are among us today, as there always have been, those who act against the scheme of things that degrades them, and in the process of action everything we have accepted out of fear of insensitivity or ignorance is shaken before us and examined, and from this total onslaught by an individual against the seemingly stable cosmos surrounding us-from this total examination of the "unchangeable" environment-comes the terror and the fear that is classically associated with tragedy. More important, from this total questioning of what has previously been unquestioned, we learn. And such a process is not beyond the common man. In revolutions around the world, these past thirty years, he has demonstrated again and again this inner dynamic of all tragedy.

Insistence upon the rank of the tragic hero, or the so-called nobility of his character, is really but a clinging to the outward forms of tragedy. If rank or nobility of character was indispensable, then it would follow that the problems of those with rank were the particular problems of tragedy. But surely the right of one monarch to capture the

domain from another no longer raises our passions, nor are our concepts of justice what they were to the mind of an Elizabethan king.

The quality in such plays that does shake us, however, derives from the underlying fear of being displaced, the disaster inherent in being torn away from our chosen image of what and who we are in this world. Among us today this fear is strong, and perhaps stronger, than it ever was. In fact, it is the common man who knows this fear best.

Now, if it is true that tragedy is the consequence of a man's total compulsion to evaluate himself justly, his destruction in the attempt posits a wrong or an evil in his environment. And this is precisely the morality of tragedy and its lesson. The discovery of the moral law, which is what the enlightenment of tragedy consists of, is not the discovery of some abstract or metaphysical quantity.

The tragic right is a condition of life, a condition in which the human personality is able to flower and realize itself. The wrong is the condition which suppresses man, perverts the flowing out of his love and creative instinct. Tragedy enlightens-and it must, in that it points the heroic finger at the enemy of man's freedom. The thrust for freedom is the quality in tragedy which exalts. The revolutionary questioning of the stable environment is what terrifies. In no way is the common man debarred from such thoughts or such actions.

Seen in this light, our lack of tragedy may be partially accounted for by the turn which modern literature has taken toward the purely psychiatric view of life, or the purely sociological. If all our miseries, our indignities, are born and bred within our minds, then all action, let alone the heroic action, is obviously impossible.

And if society alone is responsible for the cramping of our lives, then the protagonist must needs be so pure and faultless as to force us to deny his validity as a character. From neither of these views can tragedy derive, simply because neither represents a balanced concept of life. Above all else, tragedy requires the finest appreciation by the writer of cause and effect.

No tragedy can therefore come about when its author fears to question absolutely everything, when he regards any institution, habit or custom as being either everlasting, immutable or inevitable. In the tragic view the need of man to wholly realize himself is the only fixed star, and whatever it is that hedges his nature and lowers it is ripe for attack and examination. Which is not to say that tragedy must preach revolution.

The Greeks could probe the very heavenly origin of their ways and return to confirm the rightness of laws. And Job could face God in anger, demanding his right and end in submission. But for a moment everything is in suspension, nothing is accepted, and in this sketching and tearing apart of the cosmos, in the very action of so doing, the character gains "size," the tragic stature which is spuriously attached to the royal or the high born in our minds. The commonest of men may take on that stature to the extent of his willingness to throw all he has into the contest, the battle to secure his rightful place in the world.

There is a misconception of tragedy with which I have been struck in review after review, and in many conversations with writers and readers alike. It is the idea that tragedy is of necessity allied to pessimism. Even the dictionary says nothing more about the word than that it means a story with a sad or unhappy ending. This impression is so firmly fixed that I almost hesitate to claim that in truth tragedy implies more optimism in its author than does comedy, and that its final result ought to be the reinforcement of the onlooker's brightest opinions of the human animal.

For, if it is true to say that in essence the tragic hero is intent upon claiming his whole due as a personality, and if this struggle must be total and without reservation, then it automatically demonstrates the indestructible will of man to achieve his humanity.

The possibility of victory must be there in tragedy. Where pathos rules, where pathos is finally derived, a character has fought a battle he could not possibly have won. The pathetic is achieved when the protagonist is, by virtue of his witlessness, his insensitivity, or the very air he gives off, incapable of grappling with a much superior force.

Pathos truly is the mode for the pessimist. But tragedy requires a nicer balance between what is possible and what is impossible. And it is curious, although edifying, that the plays we revere, century after century, are the tragedies. In them, and in them alone, lies the belief-optimistic, if you will, in the perfectibility of man.

It is time, I think, that we who are without kings, took up this bright thread of our history and followed it to the only place it can possibly lead in our time-the heart and spirit of the average man.

**2. Extension task:** Use a local library to find a book about tragedy and add to your research. Two recommended books include:

- 'The Cambridge Introduction to Tragedy' by Jennifer Wallace
- 'A Concise Guide to Popular Greek Tragedy' by Lorren Eldridge

**3. Application task: What elements of Tragedy do you find in 'Echo and Narcissus'?**

You will have learnt by now that Tragedy has its origins in Ancient Greece. The text you will study next is inspired by that period; it is by a modern writer called Ted Hughes who translated a number of 'Tales' by a Roman poet named Ovid.

The poem is called 'Echo and Narcissus'. In it Echo, a nymph, falls in love with the beautiful but cruel Narcissus who dismisses Echo who then dies because of the pain of rejection. Watching on, though, are the Gods who decide that Narcissus must be punished. His punishment is that he falls in love with his own reflection and, as a result, is doomed to be an unrequited lover.

You need to listen to the audio recording on YouTube. To find it type in 'Echo and Narcissus' followed by 'Ted Hughes'. It is in three parts. You should use the table below to record your analysis. One idea has been done for you.

Element of Tragedy	Application to the poem?
Traditionally, the main character should be of noble birth.	Narcissus was son of a river god. You could also argue that his beauty set him above others.


Checking your answers:

Elements of Tragedy	Application to the poem
Traditionally, the main character should be of noble birth.	<i>Narcissus was the son of a river god. You could also argue that his beauty set him above others.</i>
Fatal / Tragic Flaw	<i>His flaw is his pride in his appearance.</i>
Supernatural elements	<i>Although this is usually ghosts or witches – the Gods choose to punish him.</i>
Revenge	<i>Narcissus' pride is revenged when he falls in love with himself.</i>
Sad ending	<i>Echo is doomed to live on without a body whilst Narcissus dies because he is unable to stop looking at his reflection.</i>
Strong moral current	<i>The reader sees the error of excessive pride.</i>
Other characters suffer due to the tragic hero	<i>Echo suffers his pride when he rejects her.</i>
Peripeteia	<i>At the end of the poem, Narcissus is the one who experiences rejection.</i>
Discovery	<i>He realises at the end of the poem that he is torturing himself and must have tortured others in the past.</i>

## Key Terms

### Literary

<b>Setting</b>	
<b>Character development</b>	
<b>Motif</b>	
<b>Symbolism</b>	
<b>Allegory</b>	
<b>Exposition</b>	
<b>Sub plot</b>	
<b>Metre</b>	
<b>Blank verse</b>	
<b>Iambic pentameter</b>	
<b>Protagonist</b>	
<b>Antagonist</b>	
<b>Metaphor</b>	
<b>Image</b>	
<b>Personification</b>	
<b>Onomatopoeia</b>	
<b>Synecdoche</b>	
<b>Alliteration</b>	
<b>Rhyme</b>	
<b>Assonance</b>	
<b>Consonance</b>	
<b>Sibilance</b>	
<b>Foreshadowing</b>	

<b>Allusion</b>	
<b>Denotation</b>	
<b>Connotation</b>	
<b>Periphrasis</b>	
<b>Pathetic fallacy</b>	
<b>Oxymoron</b>	
<b>Paradox</b>	
<b>Irony</b>	
<b>Litotes</b>	
<b>Hyperbole</b>	

## Tragedy

<b>Classical/ Epic</b>	
<b>Magnitude</b>	
<b>Anti-hero</b>	
<b>Catharsis</b>	
<b>Purgation</b>	
<b>Purification</b>	
<b>Hubris</b>	
<b>Hamartia</b>	
<b>Order</b>	
<b>Disorder</b>	
<b>Tragic flaw</b>	
<b>Pathos</b>	
<b>Bathos</b>	
<b>Pity</b>	

<b>Fear</b>	
<b>Hamartia</b>	
<b>Peripeteia</b>	
<b>Anagnorisis</b>	
<b>Amplification</b>	
<b>Universalism/ apocalypticism</b>	
<b>Academic tragedy</b>	
<b>Revenge tragedy</b>	
<b>Domestic tragedy</b>	
<b>Modern tragedy</b>	
<b>Contemporary tragedy</b>	
<b>Materialism</b>	
<b>Consumerism</b>	
<b>Procrastination</b>	
<b>Alienation</b>	

## Drama

<b>Soliloquy</b>	
<b>Dramatic tension</b>	
<b>Dramatic irony</b>	
<b>Proscenium stage</b>	
<b>Five part structure</b>	
<b>Asides</b>	
<b>Denouement</b>	
<b>Unities</b>	

