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Aristotle's Definition of Tragedy in the Poetics PART II THE FORMAL DEFINITION OF TRAGEDY AT THE BEGINNING of Chapter 6 (b), Aristotle presents his formal definition of . In the fourth century B.C., Aristotle, in his work, the Poetics, gave Western civilization a definition of tragedy which has greatly influenced writers of tragedy and the form of tragedy for over 24 . Aristotle's definition of tragedy: "Tragedy is an imitation of an action that is serious, complete, and of a certain magnitude; in language embellished with each kind of artistic ornament, []; with incidents arousing pity and fear, wherewith to accomplish its katharsis of such emotions." (Aristotle, Poetics, Book V). The discussion of tragedy proper (chs. 6–22) begins with a general definition: Now, tragedy is a representation (*mimēsis*) (a) of a serious and complete action possessed of a certain scale; (b) by means of language embellished with different kinds [of embellishment] in each of its sections; (c) of persons who perform actions rather than.

Aristotle's Definition of Tragedy in the Poetics PART II THE FORMAL DEFINITION OF TRAGEDY AT THE BEGINNING of Chapter 6 (b), Aristotle presents his formal definition of tragedy. Careless commentators have assumed that this formal definition introduces an entirely new topic; the more cautious suspect that the formal definition of tragedy.