



DC English IV

World/British Literature

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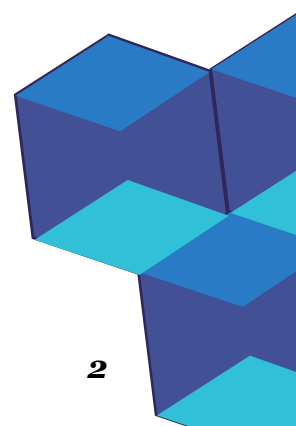
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King Lear as a Tragic Hero

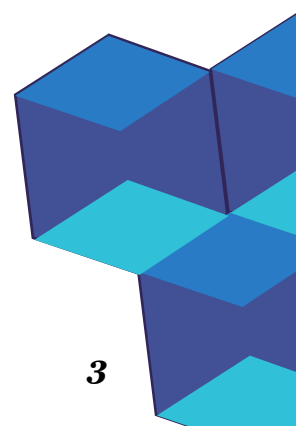
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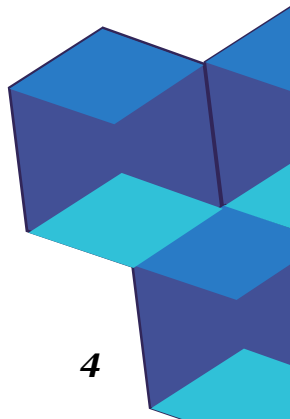
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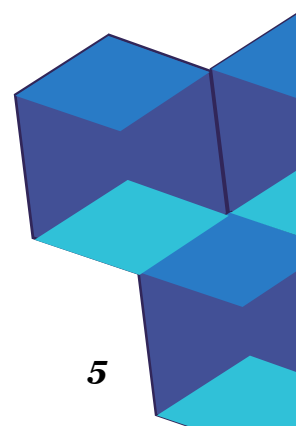
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- They are **fated** to cause grief to individuals or to the community.
- Driven and **obsessed** with past deeds or by fate.



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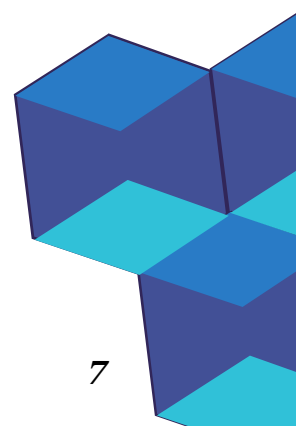
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- Heroes are neither 100% good nor 100% evil.
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- The hero is often a **king or leader in the community**, head of family.

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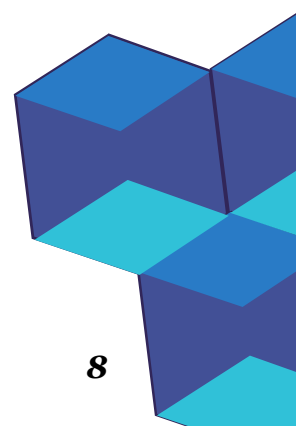
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- They symbolize the community or the family unit.



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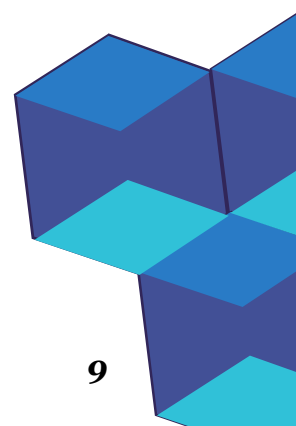
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- The hero's **downfall** is caused by his/her flaws (for example excessive pride).



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- The heroes **fight to the death** due to a flawed belief system.



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- The hero's downfall is caused by his/her flaws (for example excessive pride).
- The heroes fight to the death due to a flawed belief system.
- Sooner or later, tragic heroes understand **they are doomed.**

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- The heroes fight to the death due to a flawed belief system.
- Tragic heroes understand they are doomed.
- The heroes' downfall should arouse **pity and/or terror** in the reader.

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- The heroes' downfall should arouse pity and/or terror in the reader.
- They learn from their mistakes, but this fact cannot save them from their **fate**.

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- They learn from their mistakes, but this fact cannot save them from their fate.
- There may be **supernatural** involvement.

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In addition, Shakespeare includes:

- an apparent **internal struggle** shown through a central figure's soliloquy; this moment allows a greater connection to the character, even if his or her actions are opposed to the audience's values
- a hero **seeking a stronger understanding of his/her world**; these characters are confused by sudden shifting of power or they develop a misunderstanding of their fate; Lear is placed in a state of limbo and confusion as he realizes the world he once understood no longer exists

The **audience will often feel a sense of waste**; a tragic hero's **obsession over fate** or his/her attempts to affect history leaves only an atmosphere of misery and **lack of resolution**.