

Vocabulary: Ancient Greek Drama

To try to understand and analyze ancient Greek drama, we must learn some of the key terminology. Research the following terms, putting their definitions in your own words in the boxes below. Most importantly, however, use this as an opportunity to explore and learn about ancient Greek drama. We will have a formative quiz on this soon, and you will need these terms to do well in this unit.

Make sure you look up the definition of the word that is related to Greek drama!

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Term	Definition
Prologue	An opening to a story that gives the context and background details, often some earlier story that ties into the main one, and other miscellaneous information.
Parados	The passageway on either side of the stage on which chorus and actors made their entrances from either side into the orchestra
Scene/Episode	The part that falls between choral songs
Ode (stasimon)	One of the regular choral odes between two episodes in a Greek tragedy possibly sung with the chorus standing in its place in the orchestra
Paeon	Solemn choral lyric of invocation, joy, or triumph
Exodos	The exodus is the final scene or departure, usually a scene of dialogue
Chorus	A group of actors who described and commented upon the main action of a play with song, dance, and recitation
Choragos	A group of people performing odes from the very edge of the stage
Tragedy	A dramatic poem or play in formal language and in most cases has a tragic or unhappy ending.
Stichomythia	Sequences of single alternating lines, or half-lines or two-line speeches are given to alternating characters.
Pathos	Suffering
Catharsis	The purification or purgation of the emotions (especially pity and fear) primarily through art
Hamartia	Tragic flaw leading to a downfall of a hero

Hubris (and nemesis)	The excessive pride towards the gods
Anagnorisis	The startling discovery that produces a change from ignorance to knowledge
Peripeteia	The turning point in a drama after which the plot moves steadily to its denouement
Tragic hero	Protagonist of a tragedy
Catastrophe	Disastrous finish of a drama, usually a tragedy
Foil	Usually a character who contrasts with the protagonist, to better emphasize or differentiate certain qualities of the protagonist
Dramatic irony	The audience struck by the significance of a character's actions or words in a situation they know about but which the characters do not