



The Hero

THE PROTAGONIST goes through some form of change: either a positive development or a fall.

THE ANTAGONIST creates indecision, confusion and conflict for the protagonist, by thwarting his ideals .

THE TRAGIC HERO

The tragic hero has to have good intentions, otherwise his fall will be justified and not a tragedy. His fate is to fall in status. Tragic heroes have 5 common elements. Consider how these apply to Okonkwo:

1. Nobility of birth.
2. Potential for greatness.
3. Tragic flaw that results in an error of judgement.
4. The flaw is worked on by external forces, but his own judgement, against the advice of gods or superiors, leads to the flaw causing his downfall.
5. He causes his own downfall and death.

4 TYPES OF HEROES

The Classical Hero

He is of royal birth or a demi-god, who performs extraordinary feats. He is a noble character but for a fatal flaw which leads to his death in an unusual way. His suffering is physical.

The Medieval Knight

He can be of common birth, but must have a good moral character, demonstrate obedience to hierarchy and follow rules of chivalry, dress, courtesy, and codes of conduct. His battle is an ongoing test of manhood and loyalty to the liege lord, on whose behalf he will wage war.

The Romantic Hero

Birth and class are unimportant. He is a rebel, making his own rules. He is moody, isolated, and introspective. The battle is internal. Self-knowledge is valued more than physical strength or endurance.

The Modern Hero

He seeks to survive in a world that is seen as having no order. He has a code of behavior rather than a code of ethics, that he uses to create meaning and value. His internal struggle is with addiction to drugs, liquor, sex, or money, and his external struggle is with corruption in formal organizations. He has some support from a select circle of people.

Adapted from <http://www.fellowshipofreason.com/archives/4heroes.htm>

<https://www.dictionary.com/browse/tragic-hero>