**Literary Elements Characteristic of Tragedy**

*Tragedy represents a world that can crush human greatness and where things happen that we wish did not have to happen. The central metaphors are autumn and maturity.*

**Setting -** *Stories are set in a colder, harsher world. The unfriendly side of nature emerges and darkness triumphs.*

**Common Images**:

Darkness

Cold

Death

Harsh environment

Storm

Discord

**Characters –** *The hero/heroine can range from very innocent to more experienced, from totally good to having a tragic flaw. The villain defeats the hero. The villain may not be a person, it could be fate or death. Some or all of the following may be represented.*

The cruelty of people in general

The cruelty of nature

The cruelty of accidents or fate

There may be monsters (human or inhuman)

Another character is the blunt advisor who tries to warn the hero or help.

**Plot -** *Catastrophe is central to the plot.*

The hero is defeated or fails to accomplish their goal.

The laws of nature, "what must be," the gods or fate come into operation.

**Common Themes –**

Tension between the generations.

A love/hate relationship with a parent.

Destruction of the innocent

The existence of power and evil in the world

The possibility of evil in all people

**Common Motifs or Conventions**

There is a flaw in the hero/heroine's character that causes their defeat.

Fate, chance or circumstances operate against the hero.

The hero/heroine is acting alone.

The hero/heroine sacrifices himself for others.

There is an indication of hope and that the world goes on.