

Plot and Character Aristotle argues that, among the six formative elements, the plot is the most important element. The plot contains a beginning, a middle and an end, where the beginning is what is "not posterior to another thing," while the middle needs to have something happened before, and something to happen after it, but after the end there is nothing else." The characters serve to advance the action of the story, not vice versa. The ends we pursue in life, our happiness and our misery, all take the form of action. Tragedy is written not merely to imitate man but to imitate man in action. That is, according to Aristotle, happiness consists in a certain kind of activity rather than in a certain quality of character. As David Daiches says: "the way in which the action works itself out, the whole casual chain which leads to the final outcome. Lastly, Aristotle notes that forming a solid plot is far more difficult than creating good characters or diction. Incidents mean action, and tragedy is an imitation of actions, both internal and external.