A classic tragedy typically follows a 5 step pattern:

1. The state of equilibrium establishes a *universal moral code*.
2. The inciting incident occurs when a character commits an *act of shame*.
3. As the plot develops, this character undergoes *suffering*.
4. At the climax, the character achieves some *insight*.
5. As part of the resolution, the universal moral code is restored by some *act of redemption*.

The term universal moral code refers to that particular set of values that permeate the culture of the play. A society always lays down some moral laws to govern itself; these may be written or only assumed, but they always function to answer the question of what is right and what is wrong.