

King lear lesson 6 essay



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Ibrahim Kari Unit 2: Lesson 6 Dec 5, 2011 The opening act of King Lear effectively demonstrates the initial situation and downward movement of Aristotle's structure of tragedy. When King Lear the tragic hero announces: "Know that we have divided... From our age" (I i 39-41) this is where the initial situation in the play begins and is the main flaw that will bring Lear to the bottom of the wheel.

This is the Reversal (the fall in the hero's fortune), the first stage of tragedy. King Lear decides to divide his kingdom into three, a piece for each of his three daughters. He asks his daughters which of them love him the most, this will determine the size of the fortune each will get. Goneril and Regan the king's eldest daughters, knowing what makes their father happy, give flattering speeches which are full of insincerity just to get as much as possible of their father's kingdom.

The last and youngest daughter yet Lear's favourite, Cordelia, does not know how to lie and flatter her father with dishonesty and falsehood like her sisters did. Therefore she says "Nothing, my lord" (I i 89) which brings her father into frustration. He says "Nothing will come out of nothing. Speak again" (I i 92), he means that saying nothing will not bring you fortune. King Lear's demand that his daughters express the amount of love they have for him shows us the insecurity and fear of an old man who needs to be reassured of his own importance.

Both his ignorance and excessive pride blind him from seeing that in fact Cordelia is the only daughter which feels real love for him. The Earl of Kent whom advises the king disagrees with Lear and earns him that he has

mistaken the unloyal with the loyal, “ Thy youngest daughter does not...
Reverb no hollowness” (I i 154-156). The ignorance and pride of King Lear
has caused his own downfall and loss of fortune.