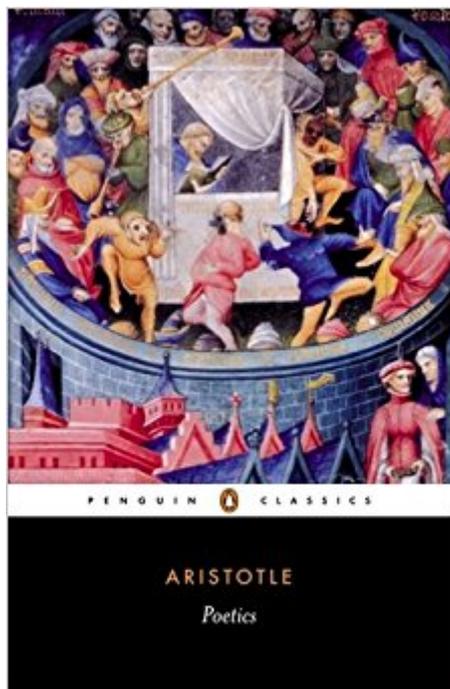


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Poetics (Penguin Classics)



Synopsis

Essential reading for all students of Greek theatre and literature, and equally stimulating for anyone interested in literature. In the *Poetics*, his near-contemporary account of classical Greek tragedy, Aristotle examines the dramatic elements of plot, character, language and spectacle that combine to produce pity and fear in the audience, and asks why we derive pleasure from this apparently painful process. Taking examples from the plays of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides, the *Poetics* introduced into literary criticism such central concepts as mimesis ('imitation'), hamartia ('error') and katharsis, which have informed serious thinking about drama ever since. Aristotle explains how the most effective tragedies rely on complication and resolution, recognition and reversals, while centring on characters of heroic stature, idealised yet true to life. One of the most perceptive and influential works of criticism in Western literary history, the *Poetics* has informed serious thinking about drama ever since. Malcolm Heath's lucid translation makes the *Poetics* fully accessible to the modern reader. In this edition it is accompanied by an extended introduction, which discusses the key concepts in detail, and includes suggestions for further reading.

For more than seventy years, Penguin has been the leading publisher of classic literature in the English-speaking world. With more than 1,700 titles, Penguin Classics represents a global bookshelf of the best works throughout history and across genres and disciplines. Readers trust the series to provide authoritative texts enhanced by introductions and notes by distinguished scholars and contemporary authors, as well as up-to-date translations by award-winning translators.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I find the Introduction extremely convincing, lucid, learned, fair to past scholarship, and truly illuminating about the meaning of tragedy in general and about the very specific acceptions of hamartia, katharsis, *ekplâfâxis*, and *thau*, in the context of an appropriate understanding of the Poetics. Another remarkable feature is the dexterity and ease with which it draws on all the relevant parts of the Aristotelian corpus to shed light on troublesome textual passages in the Poetics. Finally, the style of the Introduction is straightforward, free of unnecessary jargon, direct, and economical, the best interpretation of the Poetics I ever read. - Sabetai Unguru, Tel Aviv University

“The translations of Joe Sachs are a great gift to Greekless amateurs like me. He uses simple, unambiguous words joined into sentences that are often complex, as they must be to be accurate, but always clear (after sufficient attention has been paid). A stylist may find some awkwardness in the hyphenated compound words and the noun clauses he prefers to the polysyllabic Latinate words often found in English versions of Aristotle. But these blunt locutions along with Sachs’s excellent notes manage to convey both the richness of meaning and the clarity of thought of their Greek antecedents. The resulting translation may strike some as awkward in style, but it will strike the careful reader who cares about what is translated as elegant (in the way mathematicians use that word).”

• Jerry L. Thompson, Author, Truth and Photography

--This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Text: English (translation) Original Language: Greek

I bought this because Aaron Sorkin said it was one of his favorite books on writing. I expected dense and it is but not in the way I imagined. It’s also clever and interesting and in an odd way comforting to know these writing principles are ancient and true-- true in the way of hitting their mark. However, a practical guide on writing this is not, you have to sift through it to find what applies to your writing. Not sure I agree with Sorkin, but glad to have read it. Plus, now I can sound soooooo cerebral when I tell people I read this.

this is THE foundation text for all creative writers, not just screen writers! I’m glad to have it as part of my permanent collection, where I can turn to it again and again for inspiration.

The Kindle edition of the Oxford World’s Classics version is not well executed. The text is there and legible but there are numbers in the margin that seem to link to nothing and have no readily

apparent significance. Another example of lousy conversion from print to ebook. Stick with the actual book. The Kindle edition is a disappointment.

The Penguin Aristotle editions are probably the best available for nonspecialists with limited or no classical Greek. The long and detailed introduction is worth the cost of this book alone; and the translation itself is scrupulous and scrupulously annotated with detailed notes and references to historical contexts and Aristotle's other writings. (The H.C. Lawson-Tancred translation and annotation of Aristotle's Art of Rhetoric is another outstanding example.) I have read the Poetics in various translations for over forty years. This is by far the best translation for conveying, as nearly as possible, what Aristotle actually wrote and, even more importantly, the historical and literary contexts in which he wrote and the consequent inferences his first Greek readers would have been expected to make based on what they knew. It's also a very readable translation (no small feat with Aristotle, who can be made very tough going in English by translators more interested in showing off their erudition than assisting readers). This is the translation to buy for students or casual readers making their first attempt at Aristotle, or by more seasoned readers who have been confused or discouraged by enigmatic translations without notes. This is also an economically priced translation, a much better buy than the cheaper, unannotated translations.

Going back to read some classic literature and this is great!

It helps to be familiar with a couple of the great works of Greek tragedy before you read this, to provide a more full understanding when the author uses examples. However, as a therapist who uses narrative therapy, the importance of this study extends far beyond the stage.

Obviously only relevant to those of us who are writers or interested in writing. You'll almost definitely need some kind of guide to go along with this 2,000+ years old writing.

Very good book for philosophy or political science.

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