

Second Year

Greek and Roman Literature and Literary Criticism

(3)

Dear students,

Please study the details of this summary in the book pages 9 - 11.

On pages 9 - 11 of the book, we have the following question:

What is art according to Aristotle? Or

What is the conception of art or poetry according to Aristotle? Or

What is mimesis according to Aristotle?

Pages 9 - 11 answer this question. The answer should include the following points:

1. According to Aristotle, art is anything made by man as opposed to being found in nature. For example, poetry is art, but chairs are also art.
2. According to Aristotle, art or mimetic art is mimesis or imitation. For example, a painting of a flower is an imitation of a real flower.
3. Paintings use paint to imitate real life, and sculptures use stone. Poetry is a mimetic art that uses language, rhythm, and harmony to imitate real life.
4. In what way does poetry imitate or mimic real life?
Tragedy deals with humans who speak and act in a way that real humans could have spoken or acted. The events in *Oedipus Rex* are not real; they are fictional. For example, in *Hamlet*, no one should call the police when Hamlet kills Polonius.
5. According to Aristotle, poetry is mimetic, but our modern conception of poetry is linked to its being written in verse. Thus, Aristotle points out that Empedocles' philosophical verses are not poetry because they present ideas rather than imitate life. In other words, they do not present characters who look like humans.
6. Narrative is essential to Aristotle's conception of poetry, including comedy, tragedy and epic poetry because in narrative there are characters who look like humans.
7. Tragedy is a composite of language, rhythm, and harmony that deals with agents who are on the whole better than us, and the poet speaks directly through these agents.

Best luck