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June 2018

English Literature Summer Reading Assignment 11th Grade

Dear Student:

Well, here you are getting ready to take on the challenge of junior year English Literature. You've probably heard rumors about the workload and the demands we place upon our students. Believe or don't believe them, it is entirely up to you. What you need to understand is that you only get out what you put into this class. So, we have prepared this assignment to fully prepare you over the summer for what will be a fun, challenging class in the fall.

The literature we read junior year is filled with powerful, mystical, magical, intelligent people who perform extraordinary tasks. Some of the literature is more fiction than nonfiction, but the intent is the same: all of the authors more or less seek to define what it means to be a heroic individual. It is possible to write pages and pages to define the word 'hero.' In fact, we will be spending the entire first marking period formulating a definition of hero by examining literature written before 1600. To give you a starting point, here is the core definition as we see it:

A hero is a person who displays traits necessary for a culture to thrive.

Let us elaborate a bit more:

- **A hero is a person.** Well, heroes are usually not just an average person. The hero is often a god-like human, such as Aragorn from *The Lord of the Rings*; a god-human blend, like Hercules from Greek mythology; a human-like god, like Vishnu from Hindu religion or even more rarely, a god-animal blend like in Egyptian mythology; or human-animal blend, Enkidu in the *Epic of Gilgamesh*. As we move through the literature, you will see the heroes become less and less like gods and animals and more and more like humans.
- **A hero displays traits.** To elaborate, these traits could be listed as strengths, powers, or virtues, but some of the traits can also be weaknesses, disabilities, or even vices. Generally, heroes display positive traits, but to say that is true in every case is an oversimplification.
- **A hero is cultural.** By linking the definition of a hero to its culture, this definition highlights the fact that heroes are a product of time and place. In one sense, heroes transcend time and space because we can compare heroes from pre-Columbian America to heroes from contemporary India and find similarities. In another sense, each hero is also anchored very specifically to a culture, which can be defined as a complicated interweaving of ethnic groups, religions, history, landscapes, rituals, languages, and political systems.
- **A hero saves others.** Stories about heroes often highlight some brave act that saves people from the brink of disaster, such as slaying a dragon that is threatening to destroy the local village. However, these acts of salvation from extraordinary events or creatures are really just dramatized versions of what a culture must do to survive extraordinary threats: death, disease, drought, conquest by warring neighbors, or even more metaphysical harm such as damnation or control from an oppressive government. The most basic drive humans have is the quest for survival. Stories we tell each other about heroes dramatize the need to conquer the forces that threaten the survival of human beings and their culture.
- **A hero helps cultures to thrive, not just survive.** People not only have the need to survive death, illness, and destruction, they have the need to thrive or to continually strive for self-improvement. The hero can save people from physical death, but he or she can also help individuals and cultures move from the most basic level of need to the highest level of need.

The next pages will outline some more specific notes regarding the Hero's Journey as well as the assignment you are being asked to complete over the summer.

Sincerely,

Dan Craig
Instructor of English

Mary Houghtaling
Instructor of English

Robert Fischer
Instructor of English

Tracy Paparella
Instructor of English

The assignment:

There are several steps to take in order to complete the summer reading assignment for English Literature:

1. **Read all the notes included here regarding the Hero's Journey and Joseph Campbell's theories behind it.** Campbell theorized that the human psyche strives to make a literal or a figurative journey. That journey primarily involves traveling into darkness (death, chaos, evil, hell) in order to bring back an object that will save the hero and/or society. He further believes that all people in all times and in all cultures possess the same psychological belief.
2. **Complete Worksheet #1.**
3. **Complete Worksheet #2, for a film of your own selection.** Additional instructions are included on Worksheet #2.
4. **Complete Worksheet #3, for the novel 1984, by George Orwell.** *1984* is a dystopian novel detailing a nightmarish future where oppression is normal and information is controlled. Area libraries will carry this novel, but we strongly recommend purchasing your own copy for annotations and note-taking. You will be asked to take a test on the novel upon your return to school.

Furthermore, you will be expected to hand in all worksheets on the **first day of school.**

WHY STUDY MYTH?

Myths offer us a metaphorical map of human experience. The heroic quest belongs to each of us, just as it belonged to Beowulf, Merlin, Arthur, Gilgamesh. Our lives are a process, a journey consisting of challenges to be faced, trials to be endured, and adventures to be had. Examine the chart below to see the hero's journey in the specific film, *Star Wars* (1977).

The Monomyth:

	Campbell	Star Wars
I.	Departure	
	The call to adventure	Princess Leia's message
	Refusal of the call	Luke must help with the harvest
	Supernatural aid	Obi-wan rescues Luke from the Sand People
	Crossing the first threshold	Escaping Tatooine
	The bell of the whale	Trash compactor
II.	Initiation	
	The road of trials	Lightsaber practice
	The meeting with the goddess	Princess Leia
	Temptation from the true path	Luke is tempted by the Dark Side of the Force
	Atonement with the Father	Darth Vader and Luke reconcile
	Apotheosis (becoming god-luke)	Luke becomes a Jedi
	The ultimate boon	Death Star destroyed
III.	Return	
	Refusal of the return	Luke wants to stay to avenge Obi-wan's death
	The magic flight	Millennium Falcon
	Rescue from without	Han saves Luke from Darth Vader
	Crossing of the return threshold	Millennium Falcon destroys pursuing TIE fighters
	Master of the two worlds	Victory ceremony
	Freedom to live	Rebellion is victorious over the Empire
	Common Mythic Elements	
	Two Worlds (mundane and Special)	Planetside vs. Death Star
	The Mentor	Obi-wan Kenobi
	The Oracle	Yoda
	The Prophecy	Luke will overthrow the Emperor
	Failed Hero	Biggs
	Wearing Enemy's Skin	Luke and Han wear Stormtrooper outfits
	Shapeshifter (the Hero isn't sure if he can trust this character)	Han Solo
	Animal familiar	R2-D2, Chewbacca
	Chasing a lone animal into the enchanted wood (and the animal gets away)	The Millennium Falcon follows a lone TIE fighter into range of the Death Star

WORKSHEET #3

TRACKING THE HERO'S JOURNEY OF WINSTON SMITH IN GEORGE ORWELL'S 1984

As you read *1984*, track the stages of the hero's journey as you encounter them. See the questions under each stage of the journey for further explanation.

"A hero is someone who has given his or her life to something bigger than just themselves."

-- Joseph Campbell

Joseph Campbell – The Hero with a Thousand Faces The Hero's Journey Chart Novel: 1984 by George Orwell Stage 1 – Departure/Separation	
Call to Adventure: How does the character receive the call to adventure?	
Refusal of the Call: Does the character accept the call immediately? If not, how does he/she respond?	
Supernatural Aid: What help or guidance from someone or something beyond the normal realm of the natural world does the hero receive?	
Cross the First Threshold: What is the first obstacle the hero must overcome on the journey?	
The Belly of the Whale: The point of no return – the final separation from the hero's known world and self.	
Stage 2 – Initiation / Fulfillment	
Road of Trials: What specific challenges/tasks does the hero face?	
Meeting with the Goddess: Does the hero meet with a character with special beauty and power?	
Temptation from the True Path: Material temptations that may lead the hero to abandon or stray from his or her quest.	
Atonement ("at one with") or Recognition by the Father: Is the hero reunited with his father (or father figure) in some way?	

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Stage 2 – Initiation / Fulfillment <i>(continued)</i>	
Apotheosis (Deification): Is there a point in the story where the hero is held up as an ideal or where the hero is worshipped as a god?	
Ultimate Boon / Magic Elixir: Does the hero find some special solution to the problem he is attempting to resolve? This might be a magic potion or a key to something.	
Stage 3 – The Return	
Refusal of the Return: Does the hero initially refuse to return to the homeland or the place that he began the journey?	
Magic Flight / Pursuit: Is there some point (generally toward the end) where the hero is being chased or is otherwise trying to escape something?	
Rescue from Without: Is there a point in the movie, when all seems hopeless, when it looks like the hero is going to die, then suddenly he/she is rescued unexpectedly?	
Crossing the Return Threshold: Is there some point where the hero clearly returns "home"?	
Master of Two Worlds: Does it appear that the hero has conquered life in both the familiar and unfamiliar worlds?	
Freedom to Life: Since the hero typically begins the journey to resolve a problem, does it appear the problem is at last resolved so that all can live freely?	

TAKING THE HERO'S JOURNEY: An Introduction

Everyone takes the Hero's Journey to some degree. Most of the time we aren't aware of it. On the following pages, you can consciously move through the stages of the Hero's Journey by following the stages.

Throughout this section, while describing each particular stage, I will try to enhance the experience with example, quotes and scene descriptions from popular stories. Most of the examples may stem from the film medium, since it is a popular, easily accessible, medium and often lends itself to quick analysis.

“If you go looking for adventure, you usually find as much of it as you can manage. And it often happens that when you think it is ahead, it comes on you unexpectedly from behind.”

- J. R. R. Tolkien

How does this Hero's Journey work for my class?

This thematic curriculum, which we will use to the pattern of the heroic journey, is a foundation for studying and understanding all the literature you read, the films you watch, and the experiences you encounter. Our focus will be on writing and collaborative learning through character analysis, short story writings, group presentations and a researched essay. The Hero's Journey is the pattern of human experience. It underlies virtually all literature and film, making it an ideal framework for learning British Literature. If you begin to understand the archetype and learn to see literature and film as “modern myths,” stories which both reflect and direct human experience, then with this Hero's Journey guide, I hope that you will find new meaning in literature and in life.

“I have a strong feeling about interesting people in space exploration ... And the only way its going to happen is to have some kid fantasize about getting his ray gun, jumping into his spaceship, and flying into outer space.”

George Lucas

CREATOR OF STAR WARS

So? From whom are we getting all this?

Perhaps the best-known comparative mythologist of this age, Joseph Campbell, was born March 2, 1904, in New York, to a middle class, Roman Catholic family. As a child he saw, and was enchanted with, Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show; subsequently he developed, while still a youth, a keen interest in Native American cultures and mythologies. As he grew up and as his education continued, this early fascination with culture and myth expanded to include the myths of many cultures worldwide – it could well be said of him that he “followed his bliss,” something he would ultimately exhort his readers and students to do.

His education – he studied at Dartmouth, Columbia, and the Universities of Paris and Munich – was extensive, including linguistic, anthropological and literary studies. He was well-traveled, and had an open and inquisitive mind. In the course of his studies, he came to feel that there was a strong commonality linking various myths and legends of disparate lands and cultures. Campbell believed that myth was universal, because it sprang from the common imagination of the collective unconscious. He went so far as to enumerate particular themes and features that different myths shared, theorizing, in the case of these heroic myths, the standard storyline, which he called the monomyth. In his seminal book, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, he mapped the universal Hero's Journey in detail, using as an example methods from many cultures and traditions.

However, since Campbell uses some specialized technical terms that require going back to his examples in his book *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* to find out what he's talking about, I've taken the liberty of amending his outline. After all, every storyteller bends the myth to his own purpose.

What do we mean by Myth?

A myth is a sacred narrative explaining aspects of human life and the world in which we live. Most cultures, for instance, from ancient times through the present, have creation stories, which tell how the world came to be. These stories are sacred in more than one respect: they are sacred in that they frequently deal with deities and divine mysteries, and they are sacred in that they are worthy of reverence and respect.

In modern usage, the word myth has acquired an additional, negative meaning – we often hear the word used to denote falsehood, as in “That's just a myth.” This use of the word is ironic because myth – in the sense in which we are discussing it here, as a sacred narrative – is something that transcends any assessment of true/false. Myths speak to us in symbolic and metaphoric language. The stories are meaningful and poetic, rich in truths about human life.

The Monomyth of the Hero

In the course of analyzing the myths and lore of various world cultures, mythologist Joseph Campbell saw an underlying similarity throughout the stories, and in fact perceived and articulated a storyline-structure he believed to be universal for hero-myths. This storyline he called the monomyth.

Here is an outline of the basic structure of the universal hero's monomyth, as Campbell discussed it in his book, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*. Not only does the monomythic structure apply to classical Hero mythology, it can often be applied to modern stories, also.

The hero symbolizes a man's unconscious self, and this manifests itself empirically as the sum total of all archetypes and therefore includes the archetype of the father and of the wise old man. To that extent the hero is his own father and his own begetter.

- C. G. Jung

THE HERO'S JOURNEY

I.

Departure

- The Call to Adventure
- Refusal of the Call
- Supernatural Aid
- The Crossing of the First Threshold
- The Belly of the Whale

II.

Initiation

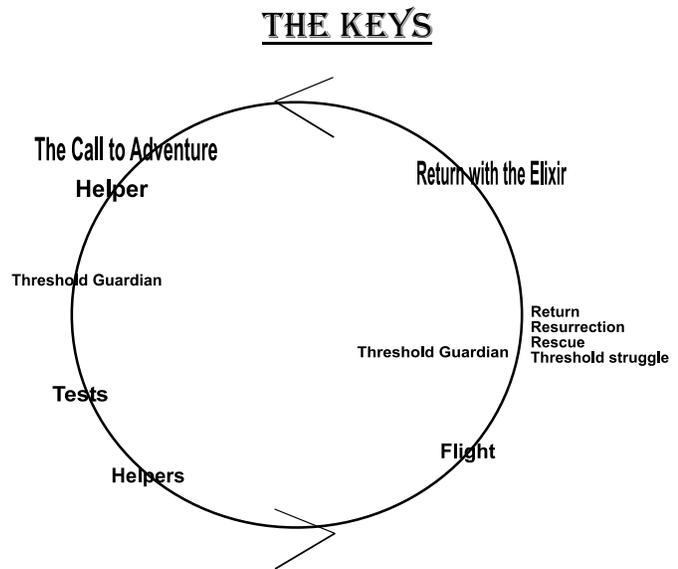
- The Road of Trials
- The Meeting with the Goddess
- Woman as the Temptress
- Atonement with the Father
- Apotheosis
- The Ultimate Boon

III.

Return

- Refusal of the Return
- The Magic Flight
- Rescue from Without
- The Crossing of the Return Threshold
- Master of the Two Worlds
- Freedom to Live

Threshold Crossing
 Brother-Battle
 Dragon-Battle
 Dismemberment
 Crucifixion
 Abduction
 Night-Sea Journey
 Wonder Journey
 Whale's Belly



1. SACRED MARRIAGAE
2. FATHER ATONEMENT
3. APOTHEOSIS
4. ELIXIR THEFT