



THE HERO'S JOURNEY

Marc Bruyère (ISSUE LESSON)

{Note to CRP: VAKT requires tea bag, blank page and an open flame UNDER SUPERVISION}

What do Simba, Harry Potter, Elsa, FRODO BAGGINS and you all have in common with the heroes of ancient myths and legend? All of them, including you, are all variants of the same hero. The stories of brave heroes who venture into dangerous territory to CONQUER monsters and return home TRIUMPHANT (victorious), is the story of us all. Stories can be powerful motivators for change, impart valuable knowledge about the real world and be used to address personal issues through the use of metaphor. In 1949 JOSEPH CAMPBELL wrote *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, where he compared myths and legends from stories of old and found a common idea, a common set of experiences which seem to RESONATE (to relate harmoniously, deeply echo) within all of us and he called it the MONO-MYTH or “The Hero’s Journey”.

SPELL: KNOWLEDGE

SPELL: LEGEND

SPELL: EXPERIENCE

What is this lesson about? THE HERO'S JOURNEY

Name one of the hero characters mentioned in the text. SIMBA / HARRY POTTER / ELSA / FRODO BAGGINS / ME

Name the Disney story in which Simba is the hero. THE LION KING

What word was given that means the same as triumphant? VICTORIOUS

Stories can be powerful motivators for _____. CHANGE

Who compared myths and legends from the stories of old and found a common idea? JOSEPH CAMPBELL

How many years ago was *The hero with a Thousand Faces* written? CURRENT YEAR – 1949 = (e.g. 2021 – 1949 = 72)

What word from the text means to relate harmoniously or deeply echo? RESONATE

Question Type Key

1

KNOWN - SEMI OPEN - PRIOR KNOWLEDGE - MATH - OPEN - VAKT



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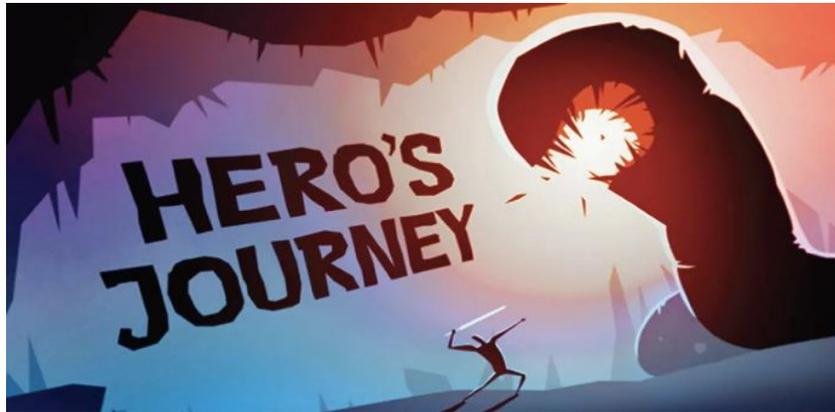




Give another meaning for the word **resonate**? TO RELATE HARMONIOUSLY / DEEPLY ECHO

What is another name for The Hero's Journey? THE MONO-MYTH

Name a hero that you resonate with.



The journey can be seen as a cycle that moves through 12 stages that are divided into 3 acts. Act 1 of the story is called "*SEPARATION*" and begins with the first stage, the ORDINARY WORLD. This is where we get to know our hero, their drives, urges and character. We get insight into the routine lives of the hero and those around them. Every story involves a problem or central DRAMATIC question that disturbs the hero's "normal" life and it is this that sets the scene for the next stage, "*The Call to Adventure*". The realization and recognition that something is "wrong" causes discomfort in our hero, which SPURS (to prompt and encourage) them to action, it creates the counterpoint that provides the energy which drives the story forward.

SPELL: CYCLE

SPELL: CHARACTER

SPELL: QUESTION

What is Act 1 of the story called? SEPARATION

What is the first stage of the journey? THE ORDINARY WORLD

If the 12 stages of the journey were divided equally into the acts, give the equation that calculates how many stages would be in each act. $12 \div 3 = 4$

Question Type Key

2

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Name a common object that also moves through a cycle divided into 12 parts. (HINT: It is often found on a wall or a wrist). A CLOCK / A WATCH / A CLOCK FACE

Name one of the things we get to know more about during the ordinary world stage. OUR HERO / THEIR DRIVES / URGES / CHARACTER

Every story involves a _____ or central dramatic question. PROBLEM

Name the next stage after the ordinary world stage. THE CALL TO ACTION

What does the realization and recognition that something is “wrong” cause our hero? DISCOMFORT

Describe something from your life that you consider a “call to adventure”.

{VAKT} – In the image below, point to the Ordinary world hemisphere. Then lay the pencil down so that it points to stage 2: Call to Adventure, like a clock hand.

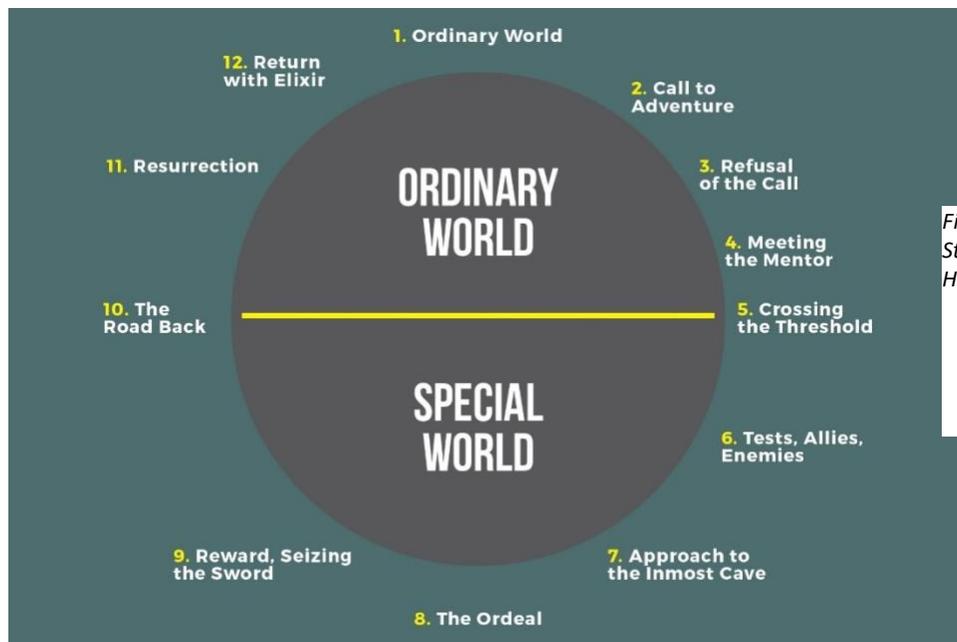


Figure 1: 12 Stages of The Hero's Journey

The solution to the hero’s discomfort cannot be found within their ordinary world and requires them to leave their place of comfort and venture into the unknown or SPECIAL WORLD. Initially this call to adventure is met with resistance, the hero wrestles with their own fears and INSECURITIES, preferring the comfort and safety

Question Type Key

3

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of their ordinary world, this is the third stage “*Resisting the Call*”. The call to adventure may start as a WHISPER and each time it is not HEEDED (paid attention to), gets louder and harder to resist, until finally the problem of staying the same becomes larger than the problems of change. It is at this stage that we “*Meet the Mentor*”.

SPELL: SOLUTION SPELL: ADVENTURE SPELL: WRESTLES

The hero needs to leave their place of comfort and venture into the unknown or _____ world. SPECIAL

Initially this call to adventure is met with _____. RESISTANCE

What is the third stage of the journey called? RESISTING THE CALL

Name one of the things in their ordinary world that the hero may prefer. COMFORT / SAFETY

The call to adventure may start as a _____. WHISPER

What word from the text means “paid attention to”? HEEDED

What does the word heeded mean? PAID ATTENTION TO

Describe how you think one fear or insecurity, can keep someone from answering the “call to adventure”.

The hero has become aware of a problem, but has no idea how to solve it. This is when our hero encounters a MENTOR who can educate, prepare and train them for their initial journey. Mentors have left the ordinary world before and can impart valuable KNOWLEDGE and lessons about the special world, thereby helping the hero overcome their initial fears and uncertainty. The mentor represents the knowledge of the special world and can take the form of a wise person or an ALLURING (powerfully and mysteriously attractive or fascinating) object, like a treasure map. From their ordinary world, the hero experiences a call to adventure; they seek out a mentor which prepares them for the second act “*DESCENT AND INITIATION*”.

SPELL: ENCOUNTER SPELL: UNCERTAINTY SPELL: TREASURE

Question Type Key



The hero becomes aware of a problem, but has _____ how to solve it. NO IDEA

Name one way in which a mentor can help our hero. EDUCATE / PREPARE / TRAIN / IMPART KNOWLEDGE / OVERCOME FEAR

Name one form a mentor could take in a story. WISE PERSON / ALLURING OBJECT / TREASURE MAP

What do mentors represent? KNOWLEDGE OF THE SPECIAL WORLD

Name a mentor from a famous story. EG: RAFIKI (lion king) / YODA (star wars) / EDNA MOLE (incredibles) / MORPHEUS (matrix) etc.

What is the second act called? DESCENT AND INITIATION

Name someone who you would consider a good mentor.

The first stage of the second act is called “*Crossing the THRESHOLD*”; a threshold is a strip of wood lining the bottom of a doorway. This stage signifies the hero finally committing to the journey. They are prepared to leave their ordinary world in order to seek a solution outside in the “*special world*”. This stage could be ACCOMPANIED by an event which removes all uncertainty and solidifies the hero’s resolve. The next stage of the journey is that of “*Tests, Allies and Enemies*” and introduces the hero to the special world and some of its INHABITANTS. The hero needs to solve riddles, escape traps or slay monsters. They determine who they can trust and rely on and as a result allies may be RALLIED. They may also encounter those who oppose the hero’s quest and so we establish a NEMESIS (rival or arch-enemy).

SPELL: SIGNIFIES SPELL: RIDDLE SPELL: QUEST

What is the first stage of the second act called? CROSSING THE THRESHOLD

What does this stage signify? THE HERO FINALLY COMMITTING TO THE JOURNEY

This stage could be accompanied by an event which removes all uncertainty and _____ the hero’s resolve. SOLIDIFIES



Name one of the things a hero may need to do during the “Tests, Allies and Enemies” stage. SOLVE RIDDLES / ESCAPE TRAPS / SLAY MONSTERS

What word used refers to a rival or arch-enemy? NEMESIS

Give a synonym for nemesis. RIVAL / ARCH-ENEMY

Give the name of one of your favourite villains or nemeses. SCAR / JAFAR / THE JOKER / DARTH VADER / VOLDEMORT / SAURON

Give the name of an “ally” character you like, from a story of your choice. Explain what you like about this character.

The appearance of a rival moves the story along to the next stage, the “*Approach to the Inner Most Cave.*” It is now time for the hero to face their CRISIS, to face one of their most difficult ordeals. They enter the lair of the beast and seek to VANQUISH (to utterly defeat) the awaiting foe. This seldom goes according to plan the first time the hero tries, which leads them to the next stage of “*The Ordeal*”. This stage is the hero’s darkest and most challenging hour, as they are required to face their worst fears. They will be STRETCHED and tested to their very limits. They may need to face death and part of the hero’s previous IDENTITY may even need to be killed off in order for them to rise to the occasion and be the hero they need to become.

SPELL: APPEARANCE SPELL: SELDOM SPELL: OCCASION

The appearance of a _____ moves the story along. RIVAL

What word from the text means to utterly defeat? VANQUISH

What does the word vanquish mean? TO UTTERLY DEFEAT

This stage is the hero’s _____ and most challenging hour? DARKEST

What do we call the stage of the hero’s darkest and most challenging hour?
THE ORDEAL

During “The Ordeal” stage, the hero is required to face their _____
_____. WORST FEARS





What may need to be killed off in order for the hero to rise to the occasion? PART OF THE HERO'S PREVIOUS IDENTITY

The next stage is that of the “*Reward or Treasure*”, where our hero RETRIEVES some reward in the form of a powerful item, RECOGNITION, new powers or understandings. This stage provides the hero an opportunity to recover from their trials and celebrate their PROGRESS, before they return to their ordinary world with their new found rewards. The third act begins with the “*Road back*” and involves the hero’s return journey from the special world. They may need to defend their reward against dark forces that seek to keep the reward from the ordinary world. The hero’s RESOLVE (commitment or determination) could be tested by an event that requires the hero to recommit to the completion of the journey.

SPELL: REWARD SPELL: CELEBRATE SPELL: COMPLETION

The next stage of the journey is called the “Reward or _____”. TREASURE

Name one of the forms a hero’s reward or treasure could take. A POWERFUL ITEM / RECOGNITION / NEW POWERS / UNDERSTANDINGS

This stage provides the hero an opportunity to _____ from their trials. RECOVER

Name one thing this stage provides the hero. AN OPPORTUNITY TO RECOVER / CELEBRATE THEIR PROGRESS

Give a synonym from the passage for the word resolve. COMMITMENT / DETERMINATION

Give a reason why you think, dark forces from the “special world” may seek to keep the rewards heroes find there, from reaching the ordinary world.

{VAKT: The image below is from a famous 1970’s movie called “Rocky”. The story of an underdog boxer. Here, he celebrates completing his training. Stand up and move around like a practicing boxer, phantom boxing (punching the air), pretend to skip rope for 10 hops and run on the spot for ten counts. Celebrate by finishing with the pose below.}

Question Type Key

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Figure 2: Rocky Balboa

Once back in the ordinary world, the hero enters the “RESURRECTION” stage. This stage can represent a PURIFICATION the hero has to go through. The hero has been transformed by the journey and needs to adjust and adapt their new way of being with their ordinary world. The journey has changed them and they are no longer the same person that left. The resurrection may be accompanied by a final ordeal: a physical trial, an emotional growth or it could take the form of a final battle between the hero and the darkness. An ordeal that takes place in the ordinary world and where the STAKES are too high for the hero to fail. Allies may come to the hero’s side at the last minute, but the final blow must be delivered by the hero.

SPELL: TRANSFORMED SPELL: DARKNESS SPELL: DELIVERED

The resurrection stage, can represent a _____ the hero has to go through. PURIFICATION

The _____ has changed them and they are no longer the same. JOURNEY

Name one of the final ordeals that may accompany the resurrection stage. PHYSICAL TRIAL / EMOTIONAL GROWTH / FINAL BATTLE BETWEEN THE HERO AND THE DARKNESS

What are too high for the hero to fail during this stage? THE STAKES

Who may come to the hero’s side at the last minute? ALLIES

Question Type Key

8

KNOWN - SEMI OPEN - PRIOR KNOWLEDGE - MATH - OPEN - VAKT



What must be delivered by the hero? THE FINAL BLOW

Give an example of something that you feel is too important, to not try to do.

The last stage of the hero's journey is the "Return with the ELIXIR". The hero has been resurrected, purified and has earned the right to return to the ordinary world and share the elixir of the journey with others or use it to heal a wounded land. It could take the form of a great treasure or magic potion, it could be love, wisdom or simply the experience of SURVIVING the special world. The elixir can bring closure to the journey and restore balance to the hero's ordinary world. It may leave the hero and audience with a LINGERING question or hint at the next adventure, a SEQUEL yet to be written. In most cases the return with the elixir represents the hero settling back into their ordinary world, forever altered by the journey they have taken.

SPELL: PURIFIED SPELL: WOUNDED SPELL: AUDIENCE

What is the last stage of the hero's journey called? RETURN WITH THE ELIXIR

What can the hero do with the elixir once they have returned? SHARE IT WITH OTHERS / USE IT TO HEAL A WOUNDED LAND

Name one form the elixir can take. GREAT TREASURE / MAGIC POTION / LOVE / WISDOM / EXPERIENCE

The elixir can bring _____ to the journey. CLOSURE

What could the last stage of the journey leave the hero and audience? A LINGERING QUESTION / A HINT AT THE NEXT ADVENTURE / A SEQUEL YET TO BE WRITTEN

Name a Movie title that had a sequel. E.G. LION KING / MATRIX / THE LORD OF THE RINGS / ICE AGE / ROCKY etc.





Harry, Frodo, Elsa, you and me, all face challenges in our lives. Challenges which require us to become heroes, in order to OVERCOME these difficulties. Sometimes the troubles in our lives seem like unconquerable monsters, issues weigh us down to the point of EXHAUSTION and we avoid dealing with them due to the discomfort they cause. We can get so caught up in our current stage of the journey that we forget it is a cycle, that what came before will come again and where we are going, we have been before and will go again in the future. We forget, that we are the heroes of our own stories; that we are on a quest through life. We forget that it is by facing our fears, by VENTURING into our darkest unknowns, that we grow.

SPELL: CHALLENGES

SPELL: DISCOMFORT

SPELL: UNKNOWN

What do challenges require us to become? HEROES

Sometimes the troubles in our lives seem like _____? UNCONQUERABLE MONSTERS

What do we sometimes do with our troubles due to the discomfort they cause? AVOID THEM / AVOID DEALING WITH THEM

Give an example of something you have to do every day, which can be considered a cycle. E.G. BATH / SHOWER / EAT / SLEEP / WAKE UP / BRUSH TEETH etc.

Name a cycle in nature which repeats itself regularly. E.G. A YEAR / A DAY / A MONTH / LUNAR(MOON) CYCLE / SEASONS / TIDES etc.

What could be an example of a trouble someone might avoid facing, due to the discomfort it causes?

In these dark times, when we feel lost in our own lives, we can use the hero's journey as a GUIDE. We can use it to determine which stage of our own journey we may be in. Once we know which stage we are in we have an idea of what needs to be faced and what needs to be done. It can serve to organise our thoughts and actions; it places our current SITUATION into context on a CONTINUUM. It gives us some idea of what we should have achieved by this stage and helps us plan for the following stage. We can use the hero's journey as a



guide on our own adventures, when we feel lost, overwhelmed and defeated, we can find SOLACE (comfort or consolation) in the fact that, we are not alone in our struggles, that countless heroes before us have faced and indeed overcome similar challenges. We can dust ourselves off, raise our heads high, pull our shoulders back and get back out there. We have adventures to go on and problems to solve.

SPELL: ADVENTURES **SPELL: CHALLENGE** **SPELL: OURSELVES**

We can use the hero’s journey as a guide when we feel _____ in our own lives.
LOST

Name one of the things the hero’s journey can serve to organise. **THOUGHTS / ACTIONS**

The hero’s journey places our situation into _____ on a continuum. **CONTEXT**

What stage of The Hero’s Journey is the “*Reward or Treasure*” stage? 9

If you were undergoing the “*Reward or Treasure*” stage, how many stages are there before the end of the journey? $12 - 9 = 3$

Name something that gives you solace.



{VAKTivity} Make a treasure map. Use a blank piece of paper. Draw an imaginary treasure map, complete with obstacles, a dotted line to indicate your path and an “X” to demarcate your treasure’s location. You can use an old tea bag to lightly



stain and colour the paper. You can rub the map in a sandy patch of ground to discolour and dirty it. UNDER SUPERVISION you can burn or brown the edges of the paper to add a little damage and age to the map.

CREATIVE WRITING:

Choose a movie and write an analysis, comparing the movie's storyline to the hero's journey. Identify the characters, stages of the journey and metaphors used in the story. You can use the image on page 2 of this lesson to help structure your comparison.

OR

Write a fictional tale which follows the stages of the hero's journey. Use the story to tell a tale of a person that has to become a hero to resolve a problem that many people may similarly commonly encounter. You can use the image on page 2 of this lesson to help structure your tale.



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References

<https://youtu.be/Hhk4N9A0oCA>

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Question Type Key

12

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