

Summer Reading Activity Instructions – The Archetype of the Hero's Journey

In literature, an **archetype** is a character, symbol, story pattern, or other element that is common to human experience across cultures. It refers to a common plot pattern or to a character type, such as the Innocent, the Mother Figure, or the Hero, or to images that occur in the literature of all cultures.

The archetype of the **Hero's Journey** describes a plot pattern that shows the development of a hero. The information below describes the structure of a Hero's Journey.

Joseph Campbell, an American anthropologist, writer, and lecturer, studied the myths and stories of multiple cultures and began to notice common plot patterns. In *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, Campbell defines common elements of the Hero's Journey. Campbell found that most journey myths had three parts:

- Departure: The hero leaves home to venture into the unknown on some sort of quest.
- Initiation: The hero faces a series of problems.
- Return: With the help of a friend, the hero returns home successfully.

While these elements may be referred to as the stages of the Hero's Journey, these stages may not always be presented in the exact same order, and some stories do not contain every element of the journey.

In this activity, you will learn the stages of the Hero's Journey (2-page graphic organizer). Then you will choose a book from the list and think about how the hero (protagonist/main character) fits into the archetype of the Hero's Journey. Fill out the graphic organizer as you read about your character and their journey.

If you have any questions, please email me at heather.hafner@cobbk12.org

McCleskey Middle School 8th Grade Summer Reading List and Assignment

This list, divided into the categories of **Literature** and **Nonfiction/Informational Text**, comprises titles related to the themes and content of Unit 1 – The Challenge of Heroism.

When you think of **Heroism**, you might think of great acts of bravery, such as rushing into burning buildings and facing danger in battle. *Heroism* consists of putting others first, even at your own peril.

The Hero's Journey Archetype is the common template of a broad category of tales that involve a **hero** who goes on an adventure, and in a decisive (determining) crisis wins a victory, and then comes home changed or transformed.

For summer reading, **select one book from this wide array of titles**, which have been chosen based on complexity and interest.

The book you choose from the list below will take you on a Hero's Journey which you will track - see assignment attachment.

Unit 1: The Challenge of Heroism		
Literature		
Author	Title	Lexile
Alexie, Sherman	<i>Reservation Blues</i>	670L
Alvarez, Julia	<i>Before We Were Free</i>	890L
Anderson, Laurie Halse	<i>Fever 1793</i>	580L
Avi	<i>Crispin: The Cross of Lead</i>	780L
Butler, Octavia	<i>The Parable of the Sower</i>	710L
Coelho, Paul	<i>The Alchemist</i>	910L
Crew, Linda	<i>Children of the River</i>	700L
Crutcher, Chris	<i>Whale Talk</i>	1000L
Ellis, Deborah	<i>The Breadwinner</i>	630L
Jeffrey, Gary	<i>African Myths</i>	N/A
Johnston, E.K.	<i>The Story of Owen: Dragon Slayer of Trondheim</i>	1020L

Jones, Diana Wynne	<i>Howl's Moving Castle</i>	800L
L'Engle, Madeline	<i>A Wrinkle in Time</i>	740L
Lewis, C.S.	<i>The Chronicles of Narnia series</i>	N/A
Lewis, Richard	<i>The Killing Sea</i>	760L
Lupica, Mike	<i>Hero</i>	730L
O'Connor, George	<i>Athena: Grey-Eyed Goddess</i>	720L
Park, Linda Sue	<i>When My Name Was Keoko</i>	610L
Paulsen, Gary	<i>Soldier's Heart</i>	1000L
Pierce, Tamora	<i>Alanna of Trebond</i>	690L
Riordan, Rick	<i>Heroes of Olympus series</i>	N/A
Robbins, Trina	<i>Freedom Songs: A Tale of the Underground Railroad</i>	580L
Robbins, Trina	<i>Lily Renee, Escape Artist: From Holocaust Survivor to Comic Book Pioneer</i>	510L
Selznick, Brian	<i>The Invention of Hugo Cabret (Graphic Novel)</i>	820L
Sepetys, Ruta	<i>Between Shades of Gray</i>	490L
Storrie, Paul	<i>Hercules: The 12 Labors</i>	N/A
White, T.E.	<i>The Once and Future King</i>	1080L

Nonfiction/Informational Text

Author	Title	Lexile
Bardhan-Quallen, Sudipta	<i>Up-Close: Jane Goodall</i>	N/A
Beales, Melba Pattilo	<i>Warriors Don't Cry</i>	N/A
Bradley, James	<i>Flags of Our Fathers</i>	950L
Freedman, Russell	<i>Eleanor Roosevelt: A Life of Discovery</i>	1100L

Freedman, Russell	<i>Kids at Work: Lewis Hine and the Crusade Against Child Labor</i>	1140L
Hillenbrand, Laura	<i>Unbroken: An Olympian's Journey from Airman to Castaway to Captive (Young Adult Adaptation)</i>	850L
Hurley, Michael	<i>World's Greatest Olympians</i>	960L
Krull, Kathleen	<i>Lives of Extraordinary Women: Rulers, Rebels (and What the Neighbors Thought)</i>	1150L
Myers, Walter Dean	<i>The Greatest: Muhammad Ali</i>	N/A
Peet, Mal	<i>The Keeper</i>	780L
Wells, Susan	<i>Amelia Earhart: The Thrill of it All</i>	N/A

Hero's Journey Archetype		
Steps	Explanation	Example
Stage 1: Departure		
<p>1. The Call to Adventure The future hero is first given notice that his or her life is going to change.</p>	<p>The story's exposition introduces the hero, and soon the hero's normal life is disrupted. Something changes; the hero faces a problem, obstacle, or challenge.</p>	
<p>2. Refusal of the Call The future hero often refuses to accept the Call to Adventure. The refusal may stem from a sense of duty, an obligation, a fear, or insecurity.</p>	<p>At first the hero is reluctant to accept the change. Usually this reluctance presents itself as second thoughts or personal doubt. Hesitation, whether brief or lengthy, humanizes the hero for the reader.</p>	
<p>3. The Beginning of the Adventure The hero begins the adventure, leaving the known limits of his or her world to venture into an unknown and dangerous realm where the rules and limits are unknown.</p>	<p>The hero finally accepts the call and begins a physical, spiritual, and/or emotional journey to achieve a boon, something that is helpful or beneficial.</p>	
Stage 2: Initiation		
<p>4. The Road of Trials The hero experiences and is transformed by a series of tests, tasks, or challenges. The hero usually fails one or more of these tests, which often occur in threes.</p>	<p>The story develops rising action as the hero faces a series of challenges that become increasingly difficult as the story unfolds.</p>	
<p>5. The Experience with Unconditional Love During the Road of Trials, the hero experiences support (physical and/or mental) from a friend, family member, mentor, and so on.</p>	<p>This love often drives the hero to continue on the journey, even when the hero doubts him/herself.</p>	

Hero's Journey Archetype	
<p>6. The Ultimate Boon The goal of the quest is achieved. The boon can be a physical object or an intangible item, such as knowledge, courage, or love. The Road of Trials makes the hero strong enough to achieve this goal.</p>	<p>The story reaches the climax as the hero gains what he or she set out to achieve. The Call to Adventure (what the hero is asked to do), the Beginning of the Adventure (what the hero sets out to do), and the Ultimate Boon (what the hero achieves) must connect.</p>
Stage 3: Return	
<p>7. Refusal of the Return When the goal of the adventure is accomplished, the hero may refuse to return with the boon or gift, either because the hero doubts the return will bring change or because the hero prefers to stay in a better place rather than return to a normal life of pain and trouble.</p>	<p>The falling action begins as the hero begins to think about the Return. Sometimes the hero does not want to look back after achieving the boon. Sometimes the hero likes the "new world" better. This step is similar to the Refusal of the Call (in both cases, the hero does not take action right away).</p>
<p>8. The Magic Flight The hero experiences adventure and perhaps danger as he or she returns to life as it was before the Call to Adventure.</p>	<p>For some heroes, the journey "home" (psychological or physical) can be just as dangerous as the journey out. Forces (sometimes magical or supernatural) may keep the hero from returning. This step is similar to the Road of Trials.</p>
<p>9. Rescue from Without Just as the hero may need guides and assistance on the quest, oftentimes he or she must have powerful guides and rescuers to bring him or her back to everyday life. Sometimes the hero does not realize that it is time to return, that he or she can return, or that others are relying on him or her to return.</p>	<p>Just as it looks as if the hero will not make it home with the boon, the hero is "rescued." The rescuer is sometimes the same person who provided love or support throughout the journey.</p>
<p>10. The Crossing or Return Threshold At this final point in the adventure, the hero must retain the wisdom gained on the quest, integrate that wisdom into his or her previous life, and perhaps decide how to share the wisdom with the rest of the world.</p>	<p>The final step is the story's resolution, when the hero returns with the boon. The theme is typically revealed at this point. To determine theme, think about the hero's struggles, transformation, and achievement. The reader is expected to learn a lesson about life through the hero's experience.</p>