

Journey

RATIONALE FOR THIS LESSON: Why are you teaching this lesson?

A trope that we come across in many different mediums of literature is the monomyth, or The Hero's Journey. A character embarks, often reluctantly, on a journey. The character overcomes a conflict and eventually returns home with a better understanding of the world they live in. This trope can be found books like Harry Potter, The Hunger Games, The Lord of the Rings; as well as in movies like The Lion King, Hercules, Star Wars, and the entire Marvel Cinematic Universe. In each story, there is a character/s who departs on an adventure, face a crisis, and come home a changed or transformed. The Hero's Journey may no longer be original, but the story beats remain incredibly popular.

The monomyth is also consistently apparent in video games. One game that is more subtle in its depiction of The Hero's Journey is the aptly named *Journey*. Developed by thatgamecompany, *Journey* is a very simple story. A robed figure departs on an adventure to reach the top of a mountain. The journey will not be an easy one, but in the end the robed figure returns with more knowledge of the world. The game communicates through its visuals as there is zero dialogue. *Journey* is a great game to teach The Hero's Journey. Not everyone will agree whether or not the robed figure is a hero, but it will force the students to focus more on the character's literal actions since the robed figure never really speaks with another character.

[I recommend reading this blog post from AmbiGamingCorener for a step by step analysis of how The Hero's Journey is portrayed throughout *Journey*.](#)

*Note - There is an online component to this game where you may bump into another player while playing. My console is usually not connected to my school's internet, so I am making this lesson with the assumption that we are playing normally without being connected online.

CONTENT AIM (content)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should the Robed Figure in <i>Journey</i> be considered a hero?
WHAT QUESTIONS will SUPPORT THE AIM and DEEP, COMPLEX THINKING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is a video game? What can video games teach us?
LESSON OBJECTIVES <i>What should students know or be able to do at the end of the lesson that they couldn't do before that will help them answer the aim.</i> *Note: Learning objectives should be about student performance.)	<i>Students will:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define what makes a person a hero. Follow The Hero's Journey in <i>Journey</i> Play through <i>Journey</i>. Create their own definition of "hero."
LANGUAGE AIM (reading, writing, speaking and writing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen to classmates in conversation. Speak with other students in conversation. Watch/Play <i>Journey</i>. Write a definition for hero.



STUDENT WORK as EVIDENCE OF LEARNING and TOOL for Future Learning and Project Completion

- Students will complete attached Graphic Organizer.

TEXTS TO BE USED

- *Journey*.
 - Available on PlayStation 3, PlayStation 4, Microsoft Windows
 - Developed by thatgamecompany

MATERIALS NEEDED

- One means of playing *Journey*.
 - I will be playing on a Playstation 4.
- Graphic Organizer.
- Accompanying presentation

LESSON PLAN**DO NOW: (5 min)
The HOOK!**

- Do Now: What does it mean to be a hero?
- Have a short 2-3 min conversation about the student responses.

**MODEL/SET THE
CONTEXT/ACTIVATE
AND ASSESS PRIOR
KNOWLEDGE (10 min)**

- Read the Aim: Should the Robed Figure in *Journey* be considered a hero?
- In narratology and comparative mythology, the **monomyth**, or the **hero's journey**, is the common template of a broad category of tales and lore that involves a hero who goes on an adventure, and in a decisive crisis wins a victory, and then comes home changed or transformed. - [Wikipedia](#)
- The Hero's Journey can be found across many different mediums and pieces of literature.
 - Show examples in slides.
- There are 17 stages in The Hero's Journey. Not all stories necessarily contain all 17 stages. Some may focus on only a few of the stages.
 - I will include slides for the 17 stages, but it is up to the teacher to decide whether or not to go through them.
 - There is an included handout that should be passed out to students now to use as a reference when playing the game and taking notes/answering questions.
 - The call to adventure
 - The hero begins in a situation of normality from which some information is received that acts as a call to head off into the unknown.
 - Refusal of the call
 - Often when the call is given, the future hero first refuses to heed it. This may be from a sense of duty or obligation, fear, insecurity, a sense of inadequacy, or any of a range of reasons that work to hold the person in his current circumstances.
 - Supernatural aid
 - Once the hero has committed to the quest, consciously or unconsciously, his guide and magical helper appears or becomes known.



- Crossing the threshold
 - This is the point where the hero actually crosses into the field of adventure, leaving the known limits of his world and venturing into an unknown and dangerous realm where the rules and limits are unknown.
- Belly of the whale
 - The belly of the whale represents the final separation from the hero's known world and self. By entering this stage, the person shows willingness to undergo a metamorphosis.
- The road of trials
 - The road of trials is a series of tests that the hero must undergo to begin the transformation. Eventually the hero will overcome these trials and move on to the next step.
- The meeting with the goddess
 - This is where the hero gains items given to him that will help him in the future.
- Woman as temptress
 - In this step, the hero faces those temptations, often of a physical or pleasurable nature, that may lead him to abandon or stray from his quest, which does not necessarily have to be represented by a woman.
- Atonement with the father
 - In this step the hero must confront and be initiated by whatever holds the ultimate power in his life. This is the center point of the journey. All the previous steps have been moving into this place, all that follow will move out from it.
- Apotheosis
 - This is the point of realization in which a greater understanding is achieved. Armed with this new knowledge and perception, the hero is resolved and ready for the more difficult part of the adventure.
- The ultimate boon
 - The ultimate boon is the achievement of the goal of the quest. It is what the hero went on the journey to get.
- Refusal of the return
 - Having found bliss and enlightenment in the other world, the hero may not want to return to the ordinary world to bestow the boon onto his fellow man.
- The magic flight
 - Sometimes the hero must escape with the boon, if it is something that the gods have been jealously guarding. It can be just as adventurous and dangerous returning from the journey as it was to go on it.
- Rescue from without
 - Just as the hero may need guides and assistants to set out on the quest, often he must have powerful guides and rescuers to bring them back to everyday life.



<p>CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING #1 How will you assess or gauge if students are making progress towards the lesson objectives?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Check that everyone in class understands the basic concept of the game. Ask individually, or as a class, or in whichever way your class typically responds to you.
<p>PRACTICE TASK (This will depend on how long it takes to play the game. Probably around 2½ hours of gameplay) (Independent, Pair and/or small group task) <i>What activities are planned that align to the lesson objectives?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Have the students answer the questions on the worksheet as the class progresses through the game. ● Have students take turns playing the game. There are eight levels in the game of which students can rotate through. Each level ends with the screen fading to white. This is when you should switch students. ● First level in Journey. It is mainly used to show the player how to play the game, and to introduce certain elements of gameplay, such as the Scarf and Glowing Symbols. The feeling of intense loneliness and mystery engulfs the player. ● The game has optional collectables. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Symbols will increase the Robed Figure’s scarf which will let the player jump further. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ These help with gameplay, but there is no need to go out of our way to find all of these. ○ Ancient Glyphs add to the lore. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Not necessary for this lesson. ● Students will fill out the accompanying graphic organizer. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 1) Fill in the following chart based on The Hero’s Journey. Take notes while the class plays through <i>Journey</i>. Which parts/scenes in the game resemble the different stages of The Hero’s Journey? Remember that The Hero’s Journey does not need to include all seventeen stages. ● Have students answer the following questions after completing the game and filling out the graphic organizer. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 2) Most heroes return from their journey having learned a lesson. What lesson do you think was learned by playing the game <i>Journey</i>. What is the moral of the story? ○ 3) There are different types of heroes. Circle the definition that best suits the story being told in <i>Journey</i>. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Hero - In mythology a mighty warrior who is often the son of a god or king and goes on an epic quest ■ Hero (2) - Main character of a story who often displays admirable qualities ■ Anti-hero - Main character of a story who is flawed in some way and often does not display admirable qualities ■ Tragic hero - Main character of a tragedy whose tragic flaw leads to his or her destruction ■ Byronic hero - Rebellious main character who has a troubled past and indulges in self destructive behaviors that threaten to doom him or her. ○ 4) Why did you choose this definition? ○ 5) There is a moment towards the end of the game where the Robed Figure seemingly dies while attempting to make it to the summit of the mountain. What happens after this scene? How does this scene service the overall story? ● Move on to Wrap-Up



<p>CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING #2 <i>How will you assess or gauge if students are making progress towards the lesson objectives?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circulate as students play and make sure that they understand what is going on in the game. • Ask the class if they have any clarifying questions about this specific event.
<p>WRAP-UP AND FINAL ASSESSMENT #3 (15 min) <i>How are students returning to the lesson objective?</i> <i>How are students self-assessing or engaging in peer assessment of each other's progress towards outcome mastery?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Answer the final questions together as a class. Give students 10 minutes to write silently and then come back together to have a class discussion. • Aim: Should the Robed Figure in <i>Journey</i> be considered a hero? Why, or why not? • Show students the two definitions of hero. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Here are two famous definitions of “hero.” The first is from Christopher Reeve, an actor famous for portraying Superman in multiple films. The second from Joseph Campbell, an American mythological researcher, wrote a famous book entitled <i>The Hero with a Thousand Faces</i>. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ “A hero is an ordinary individual who finds the strength to persevere and endure in spite of overwhelming obstacles.” - Christopher Reeve ■ “A hero is someone who has given his or her life to something bigger than oneself.” - Joseph Campbell ○ 7) Reflect on all of our conversations about what it means to be a hero. Think about which aspects of heroism are important for you and write your own definition for “hero.”
<p>DIFFERENTIATION/MULTIPLE POINTS OF ENTRY <i>What are the learning styles of your students? How can you support and extend learning for students?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will work together as a class so that they can help each other when needed. This can be for content comprehension, or interface comprehension. • Students will take turns reading the questions out loud as they play. • The game has zero spoken dialogue. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Students of all English language mastery will be able to access the text.
<p>HOMEWORK (if applicable)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Homework
<p>Common Core Standards</p>	<p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.2 Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.1 Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.6.2</p>



Determine a theme or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.11-12.4

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.3

Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).

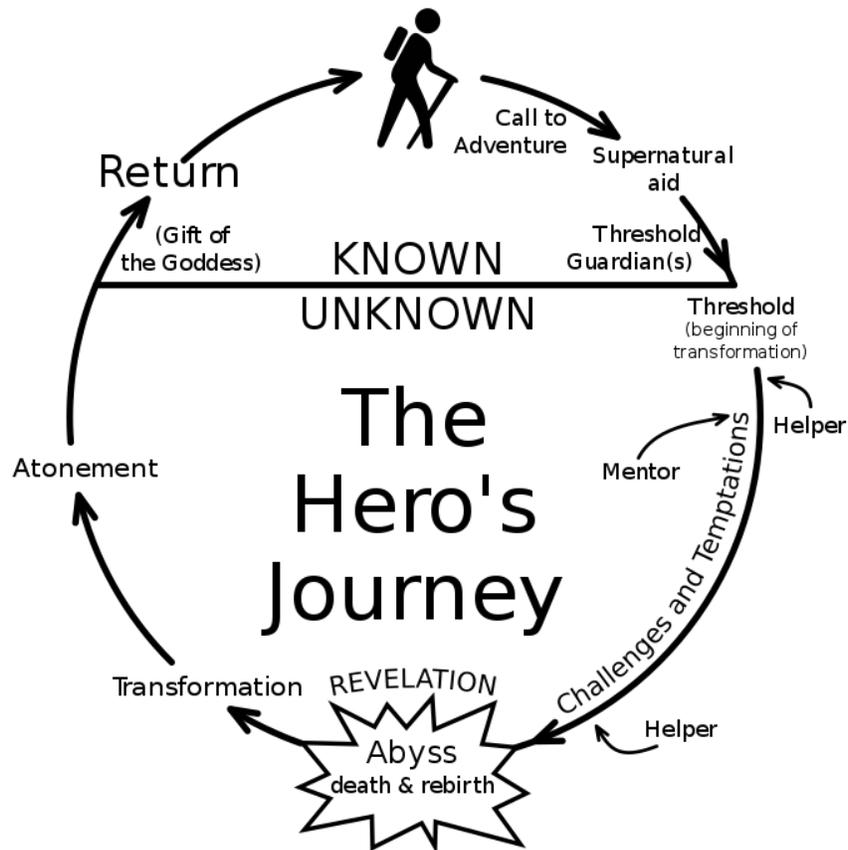


The Hero's Journey

Act	Stage	Definition
1) The Departure	1) The call to adventure	The hero begins in a situation of normality from which some information is received that acts as a call to head off into the unknown.
	2) Refusal of the call	Often when the call is given, the future hero first refuses to heed it. This may be from a sense of duty or obligation, fear, insecurity, a sense of inadequacy, or any of a range of reasons that work to hold the person in his current circumstances.
	3) Supernatural aid	Once the hero has committed to the quest, consciously or unconsciously, his guide and magical helper appears or becomes known.
	4) Crossing the threshold	This is the point where the hero actually crosses into the field of adventure, leaving the known limits of his world and venturing into an unknown and dangerous realm where the rules and limits are unknown.
	5) Belly of the whale	The belly of the whale represents the final separation from the hero's known world and self. By entering this stage, the person shows willingness to undergo a metamorphosis.
2) The Initiation	6) The road of trials	The road of trials is a series of tests that the hero must undergo to begin the transformation. Eventually the hero will overcome these trials and move on to the next step.
	7) The meeting with the goddess	This is where the hero gains items given to him that will help him in the future.
	8) Woman as temptress	In this step, the hero faces those temptations, often of a physical or pleasurable nature, that may lead him to abandon or stray from his quest, which does not necessarily have to be represented by a woman.
	9) Atonement with the father	In this step the hero must confront and be initiated by whatever holds the ultimate power in his life. This is the center point of the journey. All the previous steps have been moving into this place, all that follow will move out from it.
	10) Apotheosis	This is the point of realization in which a greater understanding is achieved. Armed with this new knowledge and perception, the hero is resolved and ready for the more difficult part of the adventure.
	11) The ultimate boon	The ultimate boon is the achievement of the goal of the quest. It is what the hero went on the journey to get.



3) The Return	12) Refusal of the return	Having found bliss and enlightenment in the other world, the hero may not want to return to the ordinary world to bestow the boon onto his fellow man.
	13) The magic flight	Sometimes the hero must escape with the boon, if it is something that the gods have been jealously guarding. It can be just as adventurous and dangerous returning from the journey as it was to go on it.
	14) Rescue from without	Just as the hero may need guides and assistants to set out on the quest, often he must have powerful guides and rescuers to bring them back to everyday life.
	15) The crossing of the return threshold	The trick in returning is to retain the wisdom gained on the quest, to integrate that wisdom into a human life, and then maybe figure out how to share the wisdom with the rest of the world.
	16) Master of two worlds	It may mean achieving a balance between the material and spiritual. The person has become comfortable and competent in both the inner and outer worlds.
	17) Freedom to live	Mastery leads to freedom from the fear of death, which in turn is the freedom to live. This is sometimes referred to as living in the moment, neither anticipating the future nor regretting the past.



Name: _____



Aim: Should the Robed Figure in *Journey* be considered a hero?

Directions: Play *Journey* with your classmates and answer the questions below.



1) Fill in the following chart based on The Hero's Journey. Take notes while the class plays through *Journey*. Which parts/scenes in the game resemble the different stages of The Hero's Journey? Remember that The Hero's Journey does not need to include all seventeen stages.

Act	Stages	Moments from <i>Journey</i>
<p>1) The Departure</p>	<p>1) The call to adventure 2) Refusal of the call 3) Supernatural aid 4) Crossing the threshold 5) Belly of the whale</p>	
<p>2) The Initiation</p>	<p>6) The Road of Trials 7) The Meeting with the Goddess 8) Woman as Temptress 9) Atonement with the Father 10) Apotheosis 11) The Ultimate Boon</p>	



3) The Return	12) Refusal of the Return 13) The Magic Flight 14) Rescue from Without 15) The Crossing of the Return Threshold 16) Master of Two Worlds 17) Freedom to Live	
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2) Most heroes return from their journey having learned a lesson. What lesson do you think was learned by playing the game *Journey*? What is the moral of the story?

3) **There are different types of heroes.** Circle the definition that best suits the story being told in *Journey*.

Hero - In mythology a mighty warrior who is often the son of a god or king and goes on an epic quest

Hero (2) - Main character of a story who often displays admirable qualities

Anti-hero - Main character of a story who is flawed in some way and often does not display admirable qualities

Tragic hero - Main character of a tragedy whose tragic flaw leads to his or her destruction

Byronic hero - Rebellious main character who has a troubled past and indulges in self destructive behaviors that threaten to doom him or her.



Here are two famous definitions of “hero.” The first is from Christopher Reeve, an actor famous for portraying Superman in multiple films. The second from Joseph Campbell, an American mythological researcher, wrote a famous book entitled *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*.

“A hero is an ordinary individual who finds the strength to persevere and endure in spite of overwhelming obstacles.”

-Christopher Reeve-

“A hero is someone who has given his or her life to something bigger than oneself.”

-Joseph Campbell-

7) Reflect on all of our conversations about what it means to be a hero. Think about which aspects of heroism are important for you and write your own definition for “hero.”

