

ACA Upper School Summer Reading List

Summer of 2024 / English 9 Honors

REQUIRED READING

Descriptions and Notes for each work 1 – 5 are printed below.

Read each of the following:

1. Genesis Chapters 37-50 Your preferred translation of the Bible
2. *A Walk Across America* By Peter Jenkins

Readings 3, 4 and 5 are contained in this document which you are currently reading! They are also available on the ACA Website.

3. “Rhetoric”
4. “The Rhetorical Triangle”
5. “The Hero’s Journey” All content adapted from Joseph Campbell’s writing

Reading 1 You may read whatever translation you prefer.

Reading 2 Peter Jenkins’ account of his hike from New York state through the Appalachians (along the A. T.) and, ultimately, to New Orleans allows students to see a man’s unexpected faith journey and a parallel to Campbell’s idea of the Hero’s Journey. Jenkins’ book, entitled *A Walk Across America*, was written in 1979 and so can be found on many sites that sell used books. Further, it is often in stock at Mr. K’s (though not in remotely sufficient numbers to cover every incoming ACA 9th Grader). You will need to know the book well but will NOT be given a detailed, point-by-point quiz early in the school year, and you will be able to use the text itself when we discuss it in class and you answer questions about it.

Reading 3 ***Included in this Word Document and on the ACA Website and available via e-mail*** from Mr Green. This document contains Readings 3, 4 & 5. Ninth Grade English begins with an examination of Rhetoric and the three most influential Classical philosophers (Socrates, Plato & Aristotle) whose work helped form rhetorical structure and strategies in Western writing.

***** Print the Rhetoric & Hero’s Journey documents, read them with care, and take notes as you see fit.***

Reading 4 The Rhetorical Triangle and the Rhetorical Chart (pages 7-8 of the Rhetoric Document) offer a visual depiction of the three primary elements of Rhetoric and is a tool which we will use heavily in writing and discussion this coming academic year.

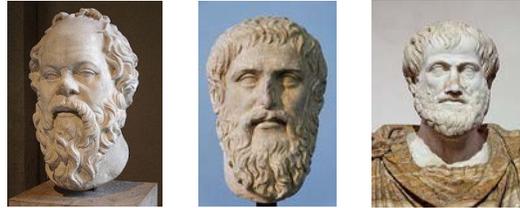
Reading 5 “The Hero’s Journey” reading is on pages 9 – 13 of this document.

“The Hero’s Journey” is a concept that grew out of Joseph Campbell’s 1949 book of comparative mythology entitled *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* and posits that every hero travels the same path of adventure: departure from a known place to an unknown, a gathering of allies and friends, guidance from a mentor, battles against enemies and evil, a descent into hell or death, loss, redemption, victory ... and more. We will apply this template to many stories we read this year, ranging from tales from *Gilgamesh* to Perseus to *The Odyssey* to a recent account of a man’s physical and spiritual journey across America in Peter Jenkins’ non-fiction *A Walk Across America*, which is a Summer Reading assignment. The Hero’s Journey reading follows “Rhetoric” below and is on pages 9 – 13 (please view the circular representation of the ‘Journey’ on page 13).

***** Print the Rhetoric and Hero’s Journey Document (Pages 2–13 below), take notes on it as you see fit, and have the reading with you on the first day of class in August.***

Rhetoric

The Art of Persuasion



Socrates / Born 469 B.C. (Athens) – 399 B.C. (Athens)

Plato / Born 427 B.C. (Athens) – 347 B.C. (Athens)

Aristotle / Born 384 B.C. (Stagira) – 322 B.C. (Euboea)

Note the title of this handout. It defines **RHETORIC** as “The *Art* of Persuasion.” The word “Art” matters, for that word can mean many things. For some, the word embraces the love, pursuit, and creation of beauty, where Beethoven’s *Ode to Joy* or Van Gogh’s “Starry Night” or Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* may represent the finest achievement of artistic inspiration. For other and, perhaps, more cynical people, the term suggests allegiance to its cousin word “Artifice,” which means a trick, a stratagem, a cunning device. The word “Art,” then, becomes the first word we’ll weigh this year among many pending debates and conversations. And once we have settled on a definition for “Rhetoric” with which we can all live, you will strive to craft spoken and written language this academic year which reflects not only a growing command of the language, but, more vitally, a desire for foundational truth that demands expression in a way that the world (starting with your immediate readers and hearers) needs and wants to hear and read. As you become a more mature and thoughtful Christian and person, so your thinking, speaking, and writing must reflect the mighty themes and issues with which you will wrestle this year in class and in life.

This brief primer on **RHETORIC** is designed to offer you an understanding of the role Rhetoric has played in the historical shaping of American philosophy, because Western thought in politics and conduct continues to see – as a whole – its highest achievement in American society, low though that bar seems to be set nowadays. But as we study Greek and Roman thought and the birth of democracy in those ancient cultures, we can see how American government and society formed with those classic societies in mind. So it’s beneficial when a nuisance to society such as Socrates, the self-proclaimed “Gadfly of Athens,” wanders that city and questions all he sees; even if he did not always see the truth himself, he did force his fellow Athenians to examine themselves and improve their conduct. Similarly, the proliferation of political and topical magazines and news broadcasts and satirical shows and forums (*Slate*, *National Review*, *The New Yorker*, *NPR*, *Fox News*, *The Huffington Post*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New Yorker*, *Saturday Night Live*, a host of left-leaning late-night entertainment and talk shows, and more sources ...) dedicated to analyzing, satirizing, questioning, spoofing, and criticizing American politics and culture allows or pushes people to engage and understand issues and sharpen their ability to discern truths from half-truths and lies.

*[** Understand: the word “truth” is relative here because most of the verbiage that fills the airwaves and internet from the sources named above and others like those are decidedly un- or even anti-Christian, so “truth” here and in Socratic dialogues and in other texts we’ll encounter this year is not TRUTH as only God provides through the Holy Spirit and the Bible.]*

A Manageable Definition of Rhetoric

Rhetoric is the art of persuasion which incorporates principles and theories related to the presentation of facts and ideas in clear, convincing, and attractive language. That is an uncontroversial and standard dictionary definition of a complicated word. But the word **RHETORIC** has a second and more cynical definition, as well. In fact, rhetoric is defined as both “the effective use of language” AND “the undue use of exaggeration or display in speech; bombast; insincere language.”

For two reasons, we will use the term **RHETORIC** to mean, as a whole, “the art of persuasion” achieved through “the effective use of language.” One reason is that because we aim for a classical approach to education, we will embrace what Aristotle saw as the higher aim of rhetoric (even as we acknowledge and try to become expert in recognizing the “bombast” of rhetoric as well). The other reason is that the word **RHETORIC** and the idea of someone being a “Rhetorician” have evolved, in modern times, to represent the more positive connotations of the word and its associated ideas.

Rhetoric and the Big Three of Greek Philosophy

The United States – the last great hope for Western culture – owes much to Greek and Roman thought. And three men dominate Greek and Roman thought: Socrates ... Plato ... Aristotle. Here, then is a woeful and scattered effort at providing a synopsis of the three philosophers’ thoughts and influences, especially as they relate to **RHETORIC** and the proper formation of argument and articulation of thought.

Socrates / Born 469 B.C. (Athens) – 399 B.C. (Athens)

Though Socrates himself left no writing behind, he is well-known to the world through the Dialogues of his student Plato, Aristotle’s treatises, and other ancient sources. His interest was in **ETHICS**. He is represented faithfully and reliably as believing that virtue is knowledge: all wickedness is due to ignorance. In his teaching, Socrates sought the universal definition of virtue through particular cases and examples. Aristotle claims that Socrates was the founder of Inductive Reasoning (see “An Afterthought” at the end of this handout). With self-knowledge the basis for inquiry, Socrates sought to save men from leading an unexamined life. The Socratic method of teaching consisted in asking questions and drawing answers from students. Socrates feigned ignorance of the subject itself. The purpose of the method, which Plato called “midwifery,” was to show the student that the answer was already in the student’s mind. Socrates always understated the truth himself, leading to the phrase “Socratic irony.” In 399 B.C., Athenians – pushed by sophists who hated Socrates – tried Socrates on a charge of impiety and corruption of the youth of Athens. He was sentenced to death and drank hemlock, a poison which killed him.

Plato / Born 427 B.C. (Athens) – 347 B.C. (Athens)

Born to a noble family, Plato aspired to political activity. Dismayed at tyranny in Athenian democracy, and later at the execution of Socrates, Plato turned to philosophy in search of an alternative to the unstable and unjust life of the time. After Socrates’ death, Plato traveled (to Megara and, possibly, to Egypt and Cyrene), during which time he wrote his Dialogues which feature Socrates. At age 40, Plato visited

Sicily, trying (futilely) to influence the tyrant King Dionysus II to establish a Platonic government (see Plato's dream of a **PHILOSOPHER KING** as posited in *The Republic* – a reading which awaits the Freshman classes). On his return to Athens, Plato founded his school, called The Academy.

All of Plato's writing (other than "The Apology" and some letters) are in the form of Dialogues (29 exist). In the early dialogues, such as *Crito*, *Ion*, and *Lysis*, Socrates is the primary figure. *The Apology* records Socrates' defense of himself at his trial; these early dialogues and *The Apology* represent Socrates' personality faithfully. In a second, later group of dialogues, Plato uses Socrates as a spokesman for Plato's own views and ideals. These works include *Alcibiades*, *Gorgias*, *Parmenides*, *Phaedo*, *Symposium*, and Plato's most complete work, *The Republic*.

The core of Plato's philosophy is the evaluation and idealization of **Ideas** or **Forms**. Plato's theory of **FORMS** posits (claims) an ideal world of universals that the material world (our tangible world we live in) copies - though our copies are shadowy and poor compared to the perfect universal **Form**. A **Form** is, therefore, something concrete and real and outside the human mind; **the Allegory of the Cave** is the single best example of Plato's veneration of the concrete Form. He posits a realm of truth or being in which the Form resides, as distinct from the world of opinion or argument. Through the Soul, which mediates between Forms and mere appearances, we may obtain TRUTH or knowledge.

Among all of the ancient world's pagan thinkers, Plato may have come closest to grasping some kernel of Christianity and our worship of the one true God because Plato also postulated one supreme or absolute **FORM** – this **FORM** represented the absolute **GOOD**, called **THE ONE**.

In fact, Plato's search for the absolute supreme **GOOD** reminds me of Paul's sermon on the Aeropagus in Acts when he tells the people of Athens (Acts 17:23):

“For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. Now what you worship as something unknown I am going to proclaim to you.”

Aristotle / Born 384 B.C. (Stagira) – 322 B.C. (Euboea)

Aristotle went at age eighteen to study in Plato's Academy, where he remained for 20 years, until Plato's death. Eventually Aristotle settled in Macedon, where he was invited by King Philip to tutor the young Alexander (who became "the Great" conqueror). After Philip's assassination and Alexander's ascension eight years later, Aristotle left Macedon and returned to Athens to teach at the Lyceum.

While most of Aristotle's writing has been lost, the writing that remains is known as his "esoteric" work, designed for the use of his students at the Lyceum. These works include his works in LOGIC, which Aristotle saw as preparation for scientific knowledge; he was the first teacher to insist on rigorous scientific procedure. His method of demonstration by the syllogism and by dialectic (reasoning from the opinion of others), became standard philosophic method.

Aristotle maintained that all human knowledge originates in sensible (as in "of the senses") experiences, out of which the soul perceives the universal.

Aristotle's massive work *Physics* examines the physical universe; works under that title include *On the Heavens*, *On Coming Into Being and Passing Away*, and *Meteorology*. His *Historia Animalium* classified animals and their reproduction and evolution. His treatise called *Metaphysics* discussed

theology – what he called Primary Philosophy – which he considered the highest type of theoretical science.

According to Aristotle's ethical treatise *Nicomachean Ethics*, happiness is the goal of life. Pleasure, fame, and wealth will not bring one the highest happiness, which is achieved only through the contemplation of philosophical truth, which exercises man's peculiar (meaning only humans have this) virtue: the rational principle.

Aristotle's *Politics* identifies the good of the individual with the good of the state; the study of human good is, therefore, a political inquiry as well, as it is in Plato's thought. Aristotle preferred monarchy or an aristocracy of men of virtue to rule over the masses. Aristotle saw slavery as a natural outgrowth of any society because some men are adapted by nature to be physical instruments of other men. Aristotle's theories on the subject of rhetoric are still heavily influential today. According to the Aristotelian conception, **RHETORIC** was a manner of effectively organizing material for the presentation of truth, for an appeal to the intellect through speech, and it was distinct from **POETICS**, which was a manner of composition which presented ideas emotionally and imaginatively.

Obviously, Aristotle was a fallen, flawed, non-Christian thinker; clearly, also, he was a genius of great and broad intellectual power who considered and produced works investigating almost every major field of thought that mankind cares about. The great Renaissance poet Dante (author of the magnificent epic poem *The Divine Comedy*, which includes *The Inferno*) called Aristotle "the master of those who know" Aristotle also influenced the towering medieval Christian scholar St. Thomas Aquinas specifically, and the Middle Ages and Renaissance as a whole.

Aristotle and Formal Rhetoric

Plato wrote two major dialogues on Rhetoric. The first is entitled *Gorgias*, while the second, *Phaedrus* (ca. 370 BC), offered a more moderate view of rhetoric, acknowledging its value in the hands of a true philosopher (the "midwife of the soul") for "winning the soul through words." This statement matters, for it allows for persuasion ("winning" means convincing) and it allows for philosophy / religion ("the soul"). Unlike his enemies the Sophists, Plato believed there was objective truth to be found.

In *Phaedrus*, Plato (through the voice of Socrates) asks, "Is not rhetoric in its entire nature an art which leads the soul by means of words ...?"

Aristotle is generally credited with developing the basics of the system of rhetoric which influenced the development of rhetorical theory from ancient through modern times. His *Ars Rhetorica* is regarded by most rhetoricians as "the most important single work on persuasion ever written." One modern text stated that, just as Alfred North Whitehead considered all Western philosophy a footnote to Plato, "all subsequent rhetorical theory is but a series of responses to issues raised" by Aristotle's *Ars Rhetorica*.

The study of rhetoric was contested in classical Greece: on the one side were the Sophists, and on the other side were Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. The trio saw rhetoric and poetry as tools that were too often used to persuade others by manipulating emotion and omitting facts. They particularly accused the Sophists, including Gorgias and Isocrates, of this manipulation. Plato, particularly, laid the blame for the arrest and the death of Socrates at the feet of the Sophists' manipulative rhetoric.

In stark contrast to the emotional rhetoric and poetry of the Sophists was a rhetoric grounded in philosophy and the pursuit of enlightenment. One of the most important contributions of *Aristotle's*

approach was that he identified rhetoric as one of the three key elements--along with logic and dialectic--of philosophy. Indeed, the first line of the *Ars Rhetorica* is "Rhetoric is the counterpoint of dialectic." According to Aristotle, logic is concerned with reasoning to reach scientific certainty while dialectic and rhetoric are concerned with probability and, thus, are the branches of philosophy that are best suited to human affairs. Dialectic is a tool for philosophical debate; it is a means for skilled audiences to test probable knowledge in order to learn. Conversely, rhetoric is a tool for practical debate; it is a means for persuading a general audience using probable knowledge to resolve practical issues. *Dialectic and rhetoric create a partnership for a system of persuasion based on knowledge instead of upon manipulation and omission.*

Aristotle's *Ars Rhetorica* consists of three books. Book I offers a general overview, presenting the purposes of rhetoric and a working definition; it also offers a detailed discussion of the major contexts and types of rhetoric.

In a passage that has survived and which presents current rhetoricians with tools that help them construct sound and winning thinking, Book II of *Ars Rhetorica* discusses in detail the three means of persuasion on which a writer or an orator must construct his argument:

1. Those arguments grounded in the credibility and moral appeal of the speaker – called **ETHOS**.
2. Those arguments grounded in the emotions and psychology of the audience – called **PATHOS**
3. Those arguments grounded in reasoning or logic – called **LOGOS**.

Aristotle said that "Rhetoric is the power of discovering in any given case all the available means of persuasion."

The Syllogism

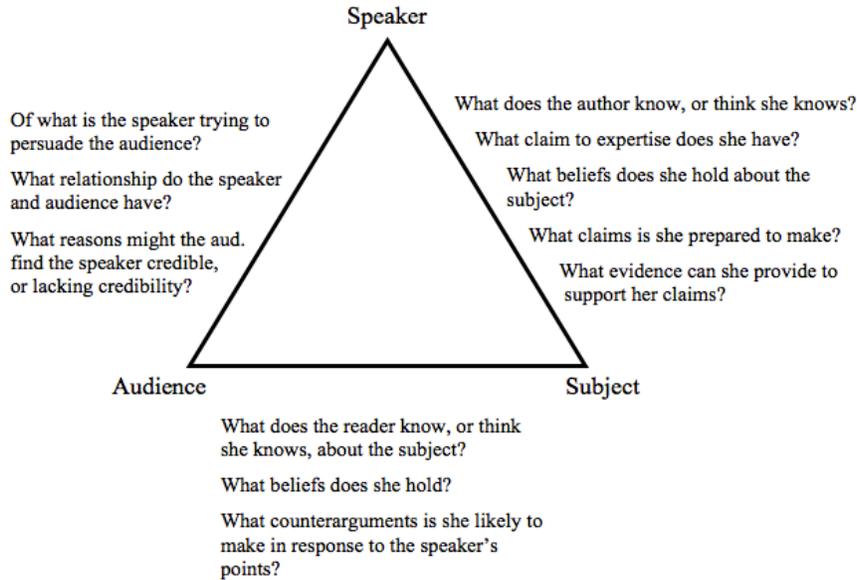
A Syllogism is a term used in logic and is an example of deductive reasoning. It is an argument the conclusion of which is supported by two premises, of which one (**major premise**) contains the term (**major term**) that is the predicate of the conclusion, and the other (**minor premise**) contains the term (**minor term**) that is the subject of the conclusion; common to both premises is a term (**middle term**) that is excluded from the conclusion. A typical form is "All A is C; all B is A; therefore all B is C."

The example below makes the idea of a logical syllogism more clear:

1. *Those who perjure themselves cannot be trusted.* (Major premise)
2. *This man has perjured himself in the past.* (Minor premise)
3. *This man is not to be trusted.* (Conclusion)

THE RHETORICAL TRIANGLE

The Rhetorical Triangle



SPEAKER: Persona (can be an adopted, stylized persona)

AUDIENCE: Imagined or target audience

SUBJECT: And the means of framing the subject

Between SPEAKER and AUDIENCE: **PURPOSE** (the Reason the Speaker writes what he writes)

Between AUDIENCE and SUBJECT: **MEDIUM**

(Medium means the genre of writing, the level of language, the vehicle of that language – such as essay, film, literature (novel, poem, drama), advertising, music)

Between SUBJECT and SPEAKER: **TONE** (the Voice of the Speaker; the Attitude of the Speaker toward his Subject and toward his Audience)

CATEGORIES OF ESSAYS

Within Aristotle’s framework of Rhetoric, he held that there were Forms of Argument – that is, ways to structure an argument. For our purposes, the following categories are commonly used as the types of essays you might read or be called on to write:

<u>TYPE</u>	<u>PURPOSE</u>
<u>Narration</u>	To TELL (Narrate) a story – usually to illustrate a point
<u>Description</u>	To DESCRIBE how something was perceived and the impact it had
<u>Exposition</u>	To EXPLAIN or CLARIFY something
a. Classification	To place similar items into categories or groups
b. Comparison / Contrast	To display similarities / differences between items
c. Process	To show how something works
d. Cause and Effect	To identify causes of an event and its effects
e. Definition	To provide an explanation for a word, concept, or event
<u>Argumentation</u>	To PERSUADE a reader to agree with your position on an issue

THE CHART: EXPANDED TERMINOLOGY from the RHETORICAL TRIANGLE

MEANS of PERSUASION

(Kinds of Appeals the Speaker must master as a Rhetorician)

MODES of PERSUASION

(Qualities Speaker needs to persuade audience beyond merits of argument)

ETHOS:

Ethical Appeal

Understanding the good: not knowing Right and Wrong, but what audience cherishes / values

Personal Character of the Speaker

What accomplishments, record, charisma, integrity, skill (and etc.) does the speaker bring to the argument?

LOGOS:

Logical Appeal

Ability to think clearly or, at least, to appear to the audience that you are thinking clearly

Offer of Proof or Apparent Proof

Solid enough that no one contests it (even if it isn't enough to win the argument); argument/proof can be spun / manipulated

PATHOS:

Emotional Appeal

Knowing audience needs and emotions and how to evoke them

Placement of the Audience

Nursing the audience's reception of ideas, placing audience in desired frame of mind

Think about these questions and others which you will train yourself to ANSWER:

1. What does the Speaker (writer, voice ...) want out of this piece of writing?
 - a. When addressing literature, this question may be phrased as:
 - i. About what does the Speaker care?
 - ii. What is his THESIS? (His strongest statement about his position)
 - iii. With what THEME(s) does he wrestle?
2. Who is the Speaker's Audience?
3. What TONE do I hear in the Speaker's Voice?
 - a. ** **LEARN TO BE PRECISE and ABLE TO DEFEND** your statement of the Speaker's TONE – I will always want you to articulate this *Precisely*.
4. How does the Audience (including me) perceive this Speaker?
5. How does the Audience (including me) perceive this Passage?
6. What strategies does the Speaker employ to make his case / win his argument?
7. Do I leave this Passage with a changed view / deeper understanding / greater appreciation for the Subject about which the Speaker is writing?

You have important things to say. Find your voice!

The Hero's Journey

This handout borrows heavily from Joseph Campbell's 1949 book *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*. This material attempts to express Campbell's view of the archetypal hero and the quest or journey the character undertakes in his or her story. Campbell's basic premise in that book is that in all myths and epic adventures and hero's journeys are, in their essence, the same story – a Monomyth. Gilgamesh, Odysseus and Aeneas all undertake the same journey structurally – as do Frodo, Dorothy, Harry Potter and Luke Skywalker – and most Disney princesses – and Westley – and so on. The “Elements” below represent the steps in the Hero's Journey which create a foundational story-telling pattern.

The Elements of the Hero's Journey

1. The Ordinary World: This step refers to the hero's normal life at the start of the story, before the adventure begins.
2. Call to Adventure: The hero is faced with something that makes him begin his adventure. This might be a problem or a challenge he needs to overcome.
3. Refusal of the Call: The hero attempts to refuse the adventure because he is afraid.
4. Meeting with the Mentor: The hero encounters someone who can give him advice and ready him for the journey ahead.
** Catalyst – An outside and compelling force causes the Hero to leave the Ordinary World and venture into the Unknown World.
5. Crossing the First Threshold: The hero leaves his ordinary world for the first time and crosses the threshold into adventure / the unknown.
** Talisman – Often, the Hero receives a weapon, gift, symbol or some talisman that offers power or inspiration to the Hero during her or his Quest.
6. Tests, Allies, Enemies / Challenges and Temptations: The hero learns the rules of his new world. During this time, he endures tests of strength of will, meets friends, and comes face to face with foes.
7. Approach: Setbacks occur, sometimes causing the hero to try a new strategy or adopt new ideas.
8. Supreme Ordeal: The hero experiences a major obstacle, such as a life-or-death crisis.
9. Reward: After surviving death, the hero earns his reward (a gift, the object he has sought, a victory, love ...) or accomplishes his goal.
10. The Road Back: The hero begins his journey back to his ordinary life.
11. Resurrection Hero: The hero faces a final test where everything is at stake and he must use everything he has learned
12. Return with Elixir: The hero brings his knowledge – the “elixir” back to the ordinary, known world, where he applies it to help all who remain there. It can be a tangible reward or new-found wisdom that heals the known world to which the hero returns.

Joseph Campbell, an American psychologist and mythological researcher, wrote a famous book entitled *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*. In his lifelong research Campbell discovered many common patterns running through hero myths and stories from around the world. Years of research led Campbell to discover basic and common stages that almost every hero-quest goes through (no matter what culture the myth is a part of). He calls this common structure “the monomyth” – meaning the single myth that all cultures recognize and enjoy and which unifies mankind through myth and stories.

George Lucas, the creator of *Star Wars*, claims that Campbell's monomyth was the inspiration for his groundbreaking films. Lucas also believes that *Star Wars* is such a popular saga because it taps into a timeless story-structure which has existed for thousands of years.

Many followers of Campbell have defined the stages of his monomyth in various ways, sometimes supplying different names for certain stages. For this reason there are many different versions of the Hero's Journey that retain the same basic elements, as we will see as we read and discuss both ancient stories and more modern tales.

The Steps in the Hero's Journey:

The ORDINARY WORLD

Heroes exist in a world that is considered ordinary by those who live there. Often the heroes are considered odd by those in the known world and possess some ability or characteristic that makes them feel out-of-place.

- *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*: Dorothy in Kansas
- *The Hobbit*: Bilbo Baggins in Hobbiton
- *Star Wars*: Luke Skywalker on Tatooine
- *The Lion King*: Simba at Pride Rock
- *Inside / Out*: Riley in Minnesota

The CALL to ADVENTURE

For heroes to begin their journeys, they must be called away from the ordinary world. Fantastic quests don't happen in everyday life. Heroes must be removed from their typical environment. Most heroes show a reluctance to leave their home, friends, and life to journey on a quest. But in the end they accept their destiny.

Usually there is a discovery, some event, or some danger that starts them on the heroic path. Heroes find a mystic object or discover their world is in danger. In some cases, heroes happen upon their quest by accident. Campbell puts it like this, "A blunder—the merest chance—reveals an unsuspected world."

The new world the hero is forced into is much different than the old one. Campbell describes this new world as a "fateful region of both treasure and danger ... a distant land, a forest, a kingdom underground, beneath the waves, or above the sky, a secret island, lofty mountaintop, or profound dream state ... a place of strangely fluid and polymorphous beings, unimaginable torments, superhuman deeds, and impossible delight." This description may seem pretty vague, but think of all the various fantasy realms characters have entered throughout the years: Middle-Earth, Narnia, Hogwarts, Wonderland. It could even be outer space, a haunted house, or the Matrix. Regardless of the details, the new world is sure to be filled with adventure.

- *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*: The tornado
- *The Hobbit*: Gandalf the wizard arrives
- *Star Wars*: R2D2's cryptic message
- *Hogwarts*: Owls and Hagrid seek Harry out

REFUSAL of the CALL (Refusal of the Quest)

During the *Call to Adventure* heroes are given a task or quest which only they can complete. They are faced with a choice: accept the quest or deny it. Their choice might seem like a no-brainer. If they don't accept the quest, there won't be much of a story—or will there? Actually there are stories where heroes *don't* accept their destinies. When this happens, the stage is set for disaster. There's a reason why the powers-that-be have chosen a particular hero. A refusal of the quest brings only trouble.

King Minos, the monarch of Crete who antagonizes the Greek hero Theseus, does not do what the gods ask of him. Poseidon, Lord of the Seas, sends him a beautiful white bull. The god's only order is that Minos must sacrifice the creature back to him. After seeing the magnificent beast, Minos decides he just can't bring himself to do what the god asks and keeps the bull as a personal trophy.

Enraged, Poseidon vows revenge and causes Minos' wife to burn with lust for her husband's prized beast. The rest of this story is strictly NC-17. It results in the birth of the Minotaur, a creature half-bull, half-human, a curse to his father King Minos.

Campbell notes that heroes who refuse their quest often become characters in need of rescuing or in Minos' case, the villain of another hero's journey.

- *Star Wars*: Luke refuses the quest until he learns his aunt and uncle are dead
- *The Hobbit*: Bilbo only reluctantly agrees to join the Dwarves and many times regrets it
- *The Lion King*: Simba refuses to return to Pride Rock and accept his destiny
- *Groundhog Day*: Example of the negative cycle caused by refusing the call

MEETING THE MENTOR

The Hero meets and receives aid and the urge to take on his or her Quest from a mentor; this is a wiser and even supernatural figure. *Supernatural* doesn't have to mean *magical*. There are plenty of hero stories that don't have wizards or witches per se. *Supernatural* simply means "above the laws of nature." Heroes are almost always started on their journey by a character who has mastered the laws of the outside world and come back to bestow this wisdom upon them. This supernatural character often gives them the means to complete the quest. Some of the time the gift is simply wisdom. Other times it is an object with magical powers. In every instance it is something the hero needs to succeed. As Campbell says, "One has only to know and trust, and the ageless guardians will appear." The job of the supernatural assistant is to give the heroes what they need to finish the quest—not finish it for them.

- *The Hobbit & The Lord of the Rings*: Gandalf
- *Star Wars*: Obi-Wan Kenobi
- *Cinderella*: Fairy Godmother

THE CATALYST

While not officially part of Campbell's Hero's Journey, a Hero's Quest often starts because an outside event or force changes the life of the Hero and demands a response. This response – action that takes the Hero into his adventure – begins the Hero's Journey outside the Ordinary World.

- The tornado in *The Wizard of Oz*
- The arrival of new threats (the Black Riders) that require the Ring be destroyed in *The Lord of the Rings*
- Hagrid and others summoning Harry to Hogwarts (as a prelude to him becoming Voldemort's foe).
- The Droids' arrival – and R2's playing of the message from Leia – as a means of alerting Luke to the greater life in the galaxy and his need to fight the Empire.

CROSSING THE THRESHOLD / ENTERING the UNKNOWN

As they embark on their journey, the heroes enter a world they have never experienced before. Very often it is filled with supernatural creatures, breathtaking sights, and the constant threat of death. Unlike the heroes' home, this outside world has its own rules, and they quickly learn to respect these rules as their endurance, strength, and mettle are tested time and time again. After all, it is not the end of the journey which teaches, but the journey itself.

- *The Wizard of Oz*: Dorothy must learn the rules of Oz
- *The Matrix*: Neo must come to grips with the realities and unrealities of the Matrix
- *Star Wars: A New Hope*: Luke Skywalker joins Obi-Wan aboard the Millennium Falcon

TALISMAN

A Special (and often magical) item that assists the heroes on their quest.

- *The Wizard of Oz*: Ruby Slippers
- *The Hobbit*: The Ring
- *Star Wars*: Lightsaber
- Arthurian Legends: Excalibur / The Holy Grail
- 1st and 3rd Indiana Jones movies: the Ark of the Covenant / The Holy Grail

TESTS, ALLIES & HELPERS

Tests – threats, fights, moral choices, demands of the Hero's body and soul – await the Hero as he ventures into the Unknown World. As a counter-balance to new threats and tests, Heroes meet and receive help from Allies and Helpers. Every hero needs a helper, much like every superhero needs a sidekick. Without the assistance of their

companions and helpers along the way, most heroes would fail miserably. For example, in the Greek hero story of Theseus, Minos' daughter Ariadne, after falling hopelessly in love, helps Theseus navigate the Labyrinth. She does this by holding one end of a golden thread while Theseus works his way inward to slay the Minotaur. Without her help, Theseus would never have fulfilled his quest or found his way out of the maze once he did so.

- *Lord of the Rings*: The Black Riders, orcs, trolls and a Balrog ... and a trek across all of Middle Earth / Gandalf, Sam, Merry, Pippin, Aragorn, Legolas, Gimli, Boromir
- *The Wizard of Oz*: Winged Monkeys and a perilous Journey / The Tin Woodsman, Scarecrow, and Cowardly Lion
- *Star Wars*: Stormtroopers, Darth Vader, the Death Star / Ben Kenobi, Han Solo, Leia, Chewbacca, R2D2, C-3PO

APPROACH

The Hero and his/her Allies prepare for the Supreme Ordeal.

- Luke, Leia and others plan their assault on the Death Star
- Woody and Buzz figure out how to defeat Sid and scare him straight in his backyard
- Aragorn plans an attack on Mordor to draw attention from Mt Doom
- King Peter plans for his single combat against King Miraz of the Telmarines

TESTS & The SUPREME ORDEAL (Descent into Hell)

The heroes progress through a series of tests, a set of obstacles that make them stronger, preparing them for their final showdown. At long last they reach the Supreme Ordeal, the obstacle they have journeyed so far to overcome.

All the heroes' training and toil comes into play now. The journey has hardened them, and it's time for them to show their prowess. Once this obstacle is overcome, the tension will be relieved. The worst is past, and the quest, while not officially over, has succeeded.

- *Star Wars*: Blowing up the Death Star
- *Lord of the Rings*: Mount Doom
- *The Wizard of Oz*: Defeating the Wicked Witch
- *The Odyssey, the Aeneid, Percy Jackson books*: the hero journeys literally into Hell

REWARD and the ROAD BACK

Typically, there is a reward given to heroes for passing the Supreme Ordeal. It could be a kingdom. It could be the hand of a beautiful princess. It could be the Holy Grail. Whatever it is, it is a reward for the heroes' endurance and strength.

After the heroes complete the Supreme Ordeal and have the reward firmly in hand, all that is left is for them to return home. Just because the majority of the adventure has passed doesn't mean that the return journey will be smooth sailing. There are still lesser homebound obstacles to overcome.

- *The Hobbit*: The Battle of Five Armies
- *The Lord of the Rings*: Return to Hobbiton

THE RESURRECTION / RESTORING the WORLD / ELIXIR

The Hero is severely tested once more on the threshold of home. He or she is purified by a last sacrifice, another moment of death and rebirth, but on a higher and more complete level. Overcoming this last test and the subsequent purification are a form of resurrection.

Success on the heroes' quest is life-changing, for them and often for many others. By achieving victory, they have changed or preserved their original world. Often they return with "the exilir," an object or personal ability that allows them to save their world.

The heroes have also grown in spirit and strength. They have proved themselves worthy for marriage, kingship, or queenship. Their mastery of the outside world qualifies them to be giants in their own.

- *The Lord of the Rings*: Frodo saves the Shire
- Indiana Jones saves his father through the use of the Holy Grail in *The Last Crusade*
- Harry defeats Voldemort but at the cost of his own life; he receives life again
- *The Wizard of Oz*: Dorothy rids Oz of the Wicked Witch
- In Disney films, characters often die momentarily – Flynn Rider, Elsa, Sleeping Beauty (whose 100-year sleep is like a death) – only to return from the dead through the power of love or some other talisman

FINAL IDEAS:

The MONOMYTH: Another Name for The Hero's Journey

The Monomyth refers to the idea that there is ONE (Mono-) story that is the central and recurring template for all Heroes' Journeys. While Joseph Campbell's monomyth works best with the traditional form of the quest—folk and fairy tales, myths, legends, and other fantasies—it can be applied to many different genres or types of stories. A quest does not have to include swords and monsters. It can just as easily occur in the *real world*. The monomyth, ageless and universal, exists anywhere and everywhere.

The Hero's Journey: A Visual Template

[This is a useful guide, but note that the phrasing below does not match up precisely with the terms from the text above.]

