

The Hero Journey

Question:
What is a hero?



The Hero Journey

The Hero Journey is a paradigm. A paradigm is a *model* or *standard form* that governs our experience and sense of reality. The Hero Journey is both a physical as well as a psychological or emotional experience. The following paradigm is the most common paradigm in mythology.

Note: not all hero journeys will follow this paradigm *exactly*.

The Stages of the Hero's Journey

Stage 1:

THE ORDINARY WORLD

- **Get to know and identify with the Hero's drives, urges, and problems**
- **Identify the problem (outer or inner) which disrupts the Ordinary World**
- **This is the Hero's home, the safe haven from which he must leave and seek to return to**

The Stages of the Hero's Journey

Stage 2:

THE CALL TO ADVENTURE

- **Disrupts the comfort of the Hero's Ordinary World**
- **Often delivered by the Herald archetype**
- **May come in different forms (a message, an action, an arrival, etc.)**

The Stages of the Hero's Journey

Stage 3:

REFUSAL OF THE CALL

- **The Hero has fears or insecurities**
- **The Hero prefers the safe haven of the Ordinary World**
- **The refusal demonstrates the risks involved in the Journey**
- **Each call and refusal escalates the stakes until the Hero has no choice but to accept**

The Stages of the Hero's Journey

Stage 4:

MEETING THE MENTOR

- **The Mentor provides confidence, insight, advice, training, or magical gifts**
- **The Mentor may not be a person. It could be an object or an inner force such as a code**

The Stages of the Hero's Journey

Stage 5:

CROSSING THE THRESHOLD

- **Signifies that the Hero has finally committed to the journey**
- **The threshold separates the Ordinary World from the Special World**
- **There is no turning back**

The Stages of the Hero's Journey

Stage 6:

TESTS, ALLIES, ENEMIES

- **The Hero learns the rules of the Special World**
- **The Hero must learn who can be trusted**
- **The Hero needs this stage to test his skills and powers**

The Stages of the Hero's Journey

Stage 7:

APPROACH TO THE INMOST CAVE

- **The Inmost Cave leads to the journey's heart or central Ordeal**
- **The Hero has survived his descent into the Special World**
- **The Hero often takes a respite before facing the Ordeal**

The Stages of the Hero's Journey

Stage 8:

THE ORDEAL

- **The central life-or-death crisis or crises**
- **The Hero faces his greatest fear; experiences “death”**
- **Only through “death” can the Hero be reborn**
- **The resurrection grants greater powers or insight**

The Stages of the Hero's Journey

Stage 9:

REWARD

- **Having survived “death”, the Hero receives what he sought**
- **It comes in many forms (a magical sword, an elixir, knowledge, reconciliation)**
- **This allows the Hero to replenish himself and the audience to “catch its breath”**

The Stages of the Hero's Journey

Stage 10:

THE ROAD BACK

- **The Hero must accept the Road Back to Ordinary World**
- **Like crossing the threshold, the Hero needs an event that will push him back (a force to chase him out of the Special World)**

The Stages of the Hero's Journey

Stage 11:

THE RESURRECTION

- **The Hero's most dangerous meeting with death**
- **A cleansing or purification that must occur**
- **The Hero is reborn or transformed**
- **It may be a physical Ordeal with the entire world at stake**
- **Must prove he has reached Heroic Status and accept his sacrifice for the benefit of the Ordinary World**

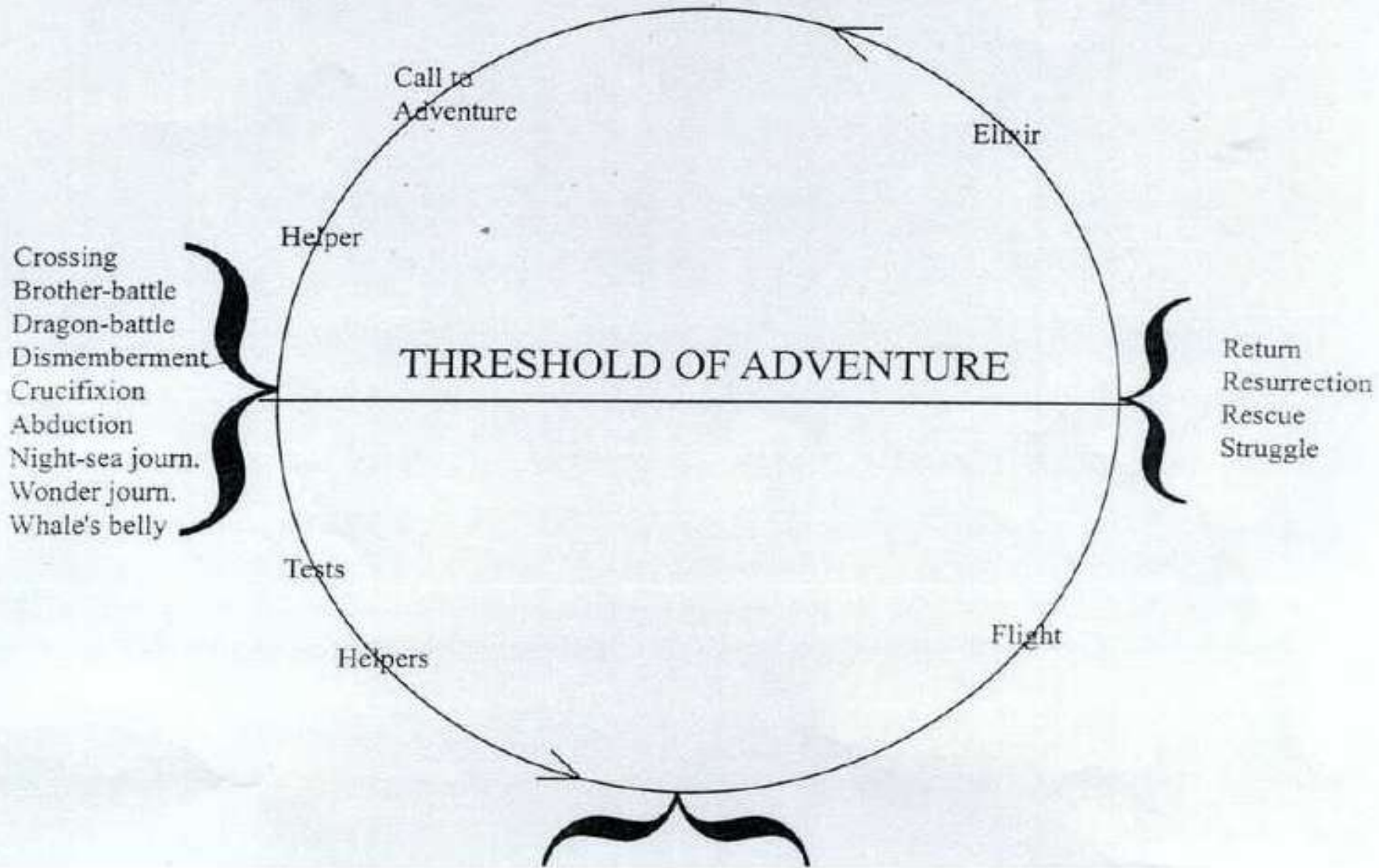
The Stages of the Hero's Journey

Stage 12:

RETURN WITH THE ELIXIR

- **The final Reward**
- **The Hero has been resurrected and purified and has earned the right to be accepted back into the Ordinary World**
- **The Hero shares the Elixir of the journey with others or heals a wounded land**
- **All celebrate the journey's end with revelry or marriage**
- **Harmony and balance are restored to the Ordinary World**

The Stages of the Hero's Journey



The Archetypes

Archetypes describe the function or role the characters play in a story. Think of an Archetype as a mask a character wears. In a story, characters may change masks with other characters from time to time. The following slides list the Archetypes that occur most frequently and their functions.

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KGV1BvnyvGo>