

Napoleon Dynamite : An Epic Hero's Journey NOTES Name: _____

Essay Prompt:

Joseph Campbell has argued that the stories we read, at least the ones that appeal to us the most, are the SAME story. The only thing that changes is the face of the hero. At heart, the stories today are just revisions of stories like *The Epic of Gilgamesh* and *Beowulf*. Let's assume that Campbell is correct. Using the notes sheets attached, write down ideas, scenes, quotes, and details from the movie in order to write an essay proving that Napoleon Dynamite fits the same pattern as those stories from ancient literature. In other words, prove that Campbell is right, using the movie as proof. Within your essay, you MUST cite QUOTES and SPECIFIC DETAILS from the film as evidence, so TAKE EXCELLENT NOTES!!!!

Part I: The Journey Cycle

The Call: The hero is presented with a problem, challenge, or adventure to undertake (Refusal of the call: Often the hero refuses the challenge or journey, usually out of fear)	
Meeting the Mentor: The hero meets a mentor to gain confidence, advice or training to face the adventure	
Crossing the First Threshold: The hero crosses the gateway that separates the ordinary world from the special world (something previously foreign or unknown to the hero)	

<p>Test, Allies, Enemies: The hero faces tests, meets allies, confronts enemies and learns the rules of the Special World</p> <p>(The hero often hits setbacks during the tests and may need to reorganize his helpers or rekindle morale with mentor's rally cry. Stakes are heightened.)</p>	
<p>The Abyss: The biggest life or death crisis – the hero faces his greatest fear and only through “death” can the hero be “reborn” - experiencing even greater powers to see the journey to the end.</p> <p>(The hero will likely give up or almost give up during this element of the journey.)</p>	
<p>The Atonement: The hero has survived his/her greatest fear and now earns the reward he/she sought.</p>	
<p>The Return: The hero must recommit to completing the journey and travel the road back to the Ordinary World. The hero returns with the wisdom from the Special World that he/she brings back to the Ordinary World so he/she can heal physical or emotional wounds.</p>	

List the main characters below and what archetypal role he/she best fits with. EXPLAIN why he/she fits that role.

Archetypes:

The Child

The Great Mother

The Trickster or Fox

The Mentor

The Outcast

The Hero

The Wise Old Man or Sage

The Devil or Satan

The Warrior

The Temptress

The Martyr/Scapegoat

The Damsel in Distress

The Scarecrow

The Wise Old Woman/Man

The Platonic Ideal

Character:

Archetype:

Explanation:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

Part III: The Epic Hero

First decide whether _____ or _____ is the hero and THEN explain how he/she fits with the elements of the epic hero we have previously discussed. Those are:

- * Noble/Special Birth

- * Capable of deed of great strength or courage that others are not able to do or won't even attempt

- * Has traits that represent his/her culture and what it values

- * Travels over a vast setting (can be actual distance, or can be figurative/metaphorical, such as stance in society or social circles)

- * May initially be proud and a braggart but eventually learns to be humble

- * Faces seemingly supernatural foes and/or receives seemingly supernatural aid (fate is on his/her side)

- * Usually has a guide or sidekick to provide aid