

REVITALIZING THE PEDAGOGICAL APPROACH TO THE HERO'S JOURNEY

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REVITALIZING THE PEDAGOGICAL APPROACH TO THE HERO'S JOURNEY

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ABSTRACT

REVITALIZING THE PEDAGOGICAL APPROACH TO THE HERO'S JOURNEY

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Joseph Campbell's monomyth, or the hero's journey, delves into the significance of the protagonist's character development and acceptance of the "call" during and after a series of quests and heroic acts that are outlined in his seventeen-step process which follows the plot from the first page to the resolution of the tale (Campbell, *A Hero with a Thousand Faces* ii). The hero's journey is a cycle, always restarting with a new call to accept and acknowledges the cyclical nature of life's events. While Joseph Campbell's hero's journey is an accepted mode through which to analyze the plot structure of certain novels and films, it can be argued that Campbell's systematic model for the hero should be updated for the modern reader to include a more diverse path for heroes that do not conform to the typecast white, male hero who comes to save the day; the current model is insubstantial to account for the modern-day hero in updated literature and media in which the hero faces discrimination and overcomes the threat to achieve their completed cyclical journey. Diverse protagonists allow the readers who experience the stories to question and critique the societal structures that provide obstacles for heroes in modern life; providing more diversity in characters allows students to explore their individuality as well as critiquing the society that dictates physical, mental, and emotional challenges for modern heroes. This practicum will provide an analysis of Joseph Campbell's work to understand why

Campbell's model has been commonly employed in the classroom and involve a unit plan that modernizes the hero's journey. The unit plan is based on an updated model of the journey that will allow young, secondary school readers to more deeply connect with the hero's journey and, through their narrative work and literary analyses, more deeply consider the importance of literature in their personal lives when the protagonists are more diverse. I constructed an updated model that accounts for the discriminatory practices that heroes face, inviting contemporary discourse about the various steps of the hero's journey; furthermore, allowing the heroes in question to be critiqued and analyzed through a modern lens.

To my students, may we always learn from one another.

-Ms. C

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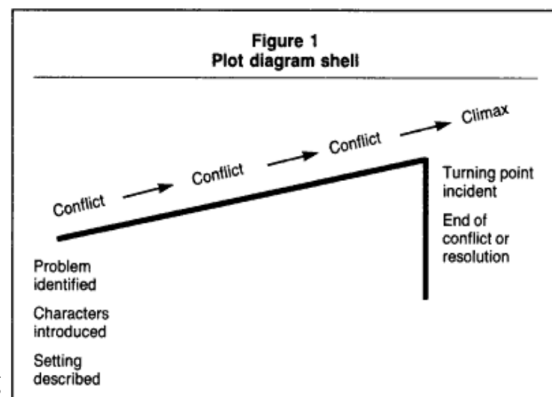
REVITALIZING THE PEDAGOGICAL APPROACH TO THE HERO'S JOURNEY

THE HERO'S JOURNEY- A MISSING PIECE

Joseph Campbell's monomyth, or the hero's journey, delves into the significance of the protagonist's character development and acceptance of the "call" during and after a series of quests and heroic acts that are outlined in his seventeen-step process which follows the plot from the first page to the resolution of the tale (Campbell, *A Hero with a Thousand Faces* ii). The monomyth is described by Campbell in his book *A Hero with a Thousand Faces* as:

A hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder: fabulous forces are there encountered, and a decisive victory is won: the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow man. (xix)

The hero's journey is a mode through which literary scholars and students alike can interpret novels and films through a set structure of thresholds, as Campbell terms them within his novel (2). The plot structure diagram, shown in figure 1, is commonly employed to teach fiction in secondary education and has a clear beginning, a middle, and an end (Norton 255); the hero's journey is a cycle, always restarting



with a new call to accept and acknowledges the cyclical nature of life's events. While Campbell's hero's journey is an accepted mode through which to analyze the plot structure of certain novels and films, it can be argued that Campbell's systematic

model for the hero should be updated for the modern reader to include a more diverse path for heroes that do not conform to the typecast white, male hero who comes to save the day. The white, cisgender male protagonist that is told and retold through Campbell's hero's journey limits the model's ability to account for the modern-day hero in updated literature and media in which the hero faces discrimination and overcomes the threat to achieve their completed cyclical journey. Diverse protagonists allow the readers who experience the stories to question and critique the societal structures that provide obstacles for heroes in modern life; providing more diversity in characters allows students to explore their individuality as well as critiquing the society that dictates physical, mental, and emotional challenges for modern heroes. This project will provide an analysis of Joseph Campbell's work to understand why Campbell's model has been commonly employed in the classroom and involve a unit plan that modernizes the hero's journey. The overarching goal of my proposed research will allow young, secondary school readers to more deeply connect with the hero's journey and, through their narrative work and literary analyses, more deeply consider the importance of literature in their personal lives when the protagonists are more diverse. An updated model that accounts for these discriminatory practices that heroes face allows for contemporary discourse about the various steps of the hero's journey; therefore, allowing the heroes in question to be critiqued and analyzed through a modern lens.

The hero's journey model that other models have been based off of is a cyclical pattern of events that numerous heroes from Greek myths to Tolkien's characters follow. Joseph Campbell within his book *The Hero's Journey: Joseph Campbell on His*

Life and Work describes the “mythological motif of the hero’s journey is acquiescence. For instance, I am moving toward death, as we all are. That’s also yielding. And the hero is the one who knows when to surrender and what to surrender to” (12). The concept of surrendering when events are beyond control is an admirable lesson to bring into the modern-day secondary education classroom; leaning into chaos and moments beyond a person’s control, and practicing resiliency in the face of challenges, is a key element to each hero’s journey model and, as such, cements the hero’s journey as a key facet to a foundation framework to understand literature and promote students’ level of self-awareness and growth. Furthermore, in secondary education, the hero’s journey can allow for deeper engagement with texts when students are able to broaden their view as to who a hero truly is- is the hero always the muscled Hercules, or can it also be a scrawny girl from a novel who rises above the expectations set before her? Joseph Campbell’s hero’s journey is lacking elements that should be included to update his seventeen-step model for contemporary audiences; in this practicum, I combine Campbell’s framework with some missing elements and stages that modern readers face on their personal hero’s journeys. An updated model of the hero’s journey will include a variety of heroic protagonists, specifically protagonists that further align with contemporary views regarding intersectional texts which explore gender, race, age, and preconceived abilities.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND CRITICISM

Joseph Campbell's hero's journey, or monomyth, was not the first iteration of the tracking and analysis of a protagonist. Some figures, such as Lord Raglan, Edward Tylor, and psychologist Otto Rank, all analyzed and discussed the similar patterns throughout stories and myths. Their concepts, based in ritualism, expanded on the importance of traditional heroes and the practices they all undergo, such as overcoming trials on a grand quest (Rank et al. 50-58). These "standard sagas" (57) all follow patterns and norms that were established when these stories of the ancient Greeks and Romans were widely spread amongst various Western cultures. The common themes that are connected among their work and research provides context for the typecast hero and allows for critical analysis of heroes in literature.

The significance of analyzing the hero's journey lies with the patterns among stories. Edward Tylor, an anthropologist in the late 19th century, stated, "that many of [the hero's journeys] follow a uniform plot, or pattern: the hero is exposed at birth, is saved by other humans or animals, and grows up to become a national hero" (qtd. in Rank et al. xi). Tylor was not as invested in the research of the origin of heroes, but rather the commonalities seen between different stories with similar patterns. Otto Rank, who was familiar with Campbell's journey when writing in the 1990s, delves into various stories such as Oedipus and biblical stories within his text *In Quest of a Hero*. Rank interprets the patterns as follows: "these variegated hero myths forcibly brings out a series of uniformly common features, with a typical groundwork, from which a standard saga, as it were, may be constructed" (Rank et al. 57). Otto Rank provides an outline of three to four common features in Greek myths and biblical stories that have to do with a

male hero born from a distinguished family, overcoming “obstacles” (57), and finally receives “rank and honor” (57-58). Rank’s viewpoint also accounts for Freudian psychology, which he included when discussing Freud’s Oedipus complex and how this complex provides a deeper method of understanding heroes (57). These ancient Western cultures were known for praising their “national heroes” and the myths and stories that are told and retold about these heroes have intersecting themes and cyclical narrative plotlines (Rank et al. 3-4).

Lord Raglan, who wrote “The Hero of Tradition” in 1934, also spoke about the Greek traditional heroes. He discussed the intersecting themes and cyclical narrative, as Otto does, but he also crafted a point process to track how heroes are measured. He discovered:

When these stories were divided into separate incidents there were certain types of incidents which ran through all, or most, of the stories. Whether these parallels have any significance, of whether they are merely accidental coincidences, or the kind of things that might happen to any hero, is a question. (Raglan 212)

Lord Raglan gives a series of twenty-two points for the patterns of the “tradition hero” (213), as Raglan terms it, and applies these twenty-two points to stories such as Moses, Hercules, Zeus, Oedipus, Dionysus, Perseus, and Romulus. Stories that adhere to more of the twenty-two conceits of the stories, such as number thirteen- he becomes king, he earns higher points. Hercules earned seventeen points out of the twenty-two, for example (215). While Raglan, Otto, and Tylor focused on tracking the patterns of the traditional heroes, their understanding and research was based on Western white-male prototypes of

heroes and, as such, should not be centered in the discussion of modern hero's journey literature.

Whereas Campbell, Raglan, Rank, and Tylor began tracking the hero prototype by delving into ancient history, specifically the Greeks and the Romans, Campbell expanded his hero into the fantasy genre and modern media. Campbell was interested in including psychology as well, but deviated from Freudian understanding, he was influenced by the analytical psychology of Carl Jung. Campbell's understanding of the dream-like quality to the hero's path was intersected with Jung's theories regarding individualism, collectivism, and unconscious dreaming's ability to influence personality (Jung 95). Essentially, Campbell's understanding of the hero is deepened by exploring the inner workings of the hero's dreams and unconscious decision-making skills, all of which Jung studied. Jung's study of the "collective unconscious" aids the study of the hero's journey; in his book *Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious*, he presents the concept as "the class of ideas that people at first find strange but soon come to possess and use as familiar conceptions" (Jung 3). Jung goes on to explain that while Freud believes that the unconscious was deeply personal in nature, the collective unconscious is, in Jung's terms, "universal" (3). To achieve this form of actualization, there must be an acknowledgement of the collective and universal thought process that provides a deeper awareness of the world. Modern heroes collectively face discrimination and overcome the prejudices of their societies, and the collective unconscious that Campbell used to construct his hero's journey in regard to unconscious dreaming shaping a hero's reality can be expanded to include not only the individual's awareness (95), but the collective societies awareness of the discrimination the hero faces and a reckoning as to the larger societal issues at stake

that impact the whole, rather than just the individual. The intersection of Jung's theories and Campbell's model provide a valuable foundation for conceptualizing the makeup of a hero and the plot events that each hero traces; extending the model to provide a critique of the societal structures surrounding the hero that directly impact them will further allow students to address the societal injustices in the modern world.

Robert Ellwood, who researched the intersection between the two men's research, wrote, "The association of myth and dream-like mood in Campbell is not accident for, following Jung but if possible, even more so, he thought myth and dream, as well as truly great literature, all came from the same place" (Ellwood 128-129). The individualistic identity of the hero, "these stories made their way into subjective consciousness because they are about deep level psychic identities- above all, one's own" (Ellwood 129). The hero's journey for Campbell was about reaching the height of self-actualization through exploring the conscious mind and the dream-like state of innermost thoughts. While grappling with identity is not a revolutionary concept for the hero's journey, Campbell was able to bring in modern examples, such as Luke's trials and paternity issues in *Star Wars*, to display the dream-meets-personality argument.

While some have provided an updated approach to the hero's journey, Joseph Campbell's work within the text *The Hero with A Thousand Faces* remains at the forefront of secondary education. While Campbell's theories were popularized for secondary education through his clear, seventeen-step process that applies to both traditional myths and modern media, his concept of a "monomyth" has been criticized by folklore scholars, who have dismissed his patterns as untried and speculative due to source-selection bias. Source selection bias, focusing your research on sources that

confirm your own conclusions and biases, is present in Campbell's model; and while it is true that Campbell's work regarding the monomyth was never fully completed during his lifetime, the work he did contribute is significant to folklore, mythology, and educational scholars. Joseph Campbell's construction of the hero's journey has been extensively analyzed and critiqued by Sarah Nicholson, Phil Cousineau, and Coralee Grede. These scholars outline the holes in Campbell's research, specifically pertaining to diversity and whitewashed source materials.

One issue that is highlighted in Campbell's work is the overemphasis on sameness throughout the stories and the patterns he construed. Cousineau, in his essay, remarks that Campbell was focused on "concentrating on the similarities" amongst classic myths so that the "differences would appear less divisive and insurmountable" (Cousineau 11). Similarities and patterns should be tracked, but erasure of differences in characterization or plot should also be noted to avoid bias. Grede also comments on Campbell's fascination with myth's similarities and offers criticism to Campbell's methods, "Campbell doesn't acknowledge other theorists in his field and discusses only similarities... Campbell doesn't define for himself the functions of myth as well as many other concepts he uses in discussing his work. It is true he does not try to explain or justify these concepts, leaving it to the scrutiny of the reader" (Grede 50). With this combination, Campbell's research is critiqued on the basis of lack of thoroughness in regard to his own research and the presentation of his findings. According to Cousineau and Grede, his universal model is only applicable to his narrow selection of texts. Grede goes on to explore the male-centric, white view of the myth's Campbell explored (Grede 50-51). Adding to this concept, Cousineau also points out that Campbell's myopic choice

of texts and myths to explore is often revealing- the classic, Greek text *Odysseus*, Arthurian myths, and the 1970s phenomenon of *Star Wars* which offers commonalities in regard to their protagonists. These criticisms allow for further scholarship into the monomyth and how it can be updated to allow for more diverse protagonists. While Campbell does explore Native American myths, the rest are driven by white, male protagonists as listed above (Grede 51). Campbell's current model invites criticism due to the minimal inclusion of diverse protagonists - more specifically, the stereotype of what it means to be strong and brave is usually depicted by male protagonists for male audience members.

As a critique of Campbell's male-centric view of the hero's journey, Mary Lefkowitz, author of *Mythology: The Myth of Joseph Campbell*, asserts that as Campbell's work focused mainly on the classic literary canon and mythology that he retold from his own point of view (432). Lefkowitz expands upon Campbell's minimal inclusion of women in his writings, who were distinctly underrepresented in his research and when they were used, they were often objectified as bodies. When discussing the Goddess of the Universe in his text *Power of Myths*, he focuses on the creator's love of the universe and her ability to create, rather than "the force of the female will or determination of mind" (433). Campbell's fixation on women as creators and nurturers falls into the societal expectations of women during the mid-20th century during his lifetime and, once again, displays the need for an updated conceptualization of his work for modern heroes- heroes that include women who do not fit into Campbell's typecast. Lefkowitz continues when she contends that the hero-pattern thus created "seems to exclude women" (433). She also goes on to critique his writing in

regard to “projecting modern Christian values onto ancient myths” (434). His emphasis on rebirth would be known to Christians but could be limited to his supposed “universal” view of the hero to people from other cultures and religions. Inclusivity and modernization are the next steps to take in order to update Campbell’s work.

Cousinaeu, Grede, and Lefkowitz have each approached the hero’s journey to critique Campbell’s model, but they have not provided different stages or a different mode to read across texts in a more inclusive manner. Due to this critical response, creating a new model will allow for updated texts to be explored by the students themselves in a manner that will allow them to all see themselves in a hero’s role through an individualized method, rather than a universal one that has long been prototyped as a white-male protagonist. My ultimate goal is to construct new thresholds for the hero’s journey based on Campbell’s original pattern that invites an updating pathway for modern heroes to be tracked and discussed. Subsequently, discussing how to create this new threshold while adhering to an inclusive pedagogical standard is at the forefront of the upcoming section.

CULTURALLY RELEVANT TEACHING AND THE HERO'S JOURNEY

Culturally relevant teaching (CRT) and pedagogy in English language arts classrooms remain at the forefront of contemporary educators researching and implementation of lessons. Gloria Ladson-Billings explores these concepts in her text “Culturally relevant pedagogy 2.0: aka the remix.” She explores how culturally relevant teaching engages with the question of equity and how to include diverse texts in the classroom to ensure all students are able to see themselves represented in the classroom. Jacqueline Irvine, another educator, also stated a similar definition for the pedagogical practice (57). To encourage students to engage more deeply in literature, researchers argue that text choice is key to promoting engagement while also upholding the tenants of inclusive teaching; the concept of CRT will guide the unit plan for the hero’s journey unit. Erika Patall, Harris Cooper, and Susan Wynn, authors of "The effectiveness and relative importance of choice in the classroom," explore the psychology behind allowing students to choose within the constraints of the standards-driven curriculum. The researchers claim that student choice is essential “to lead a healthy and happy life, to express individuality, and maintain motivation for a broad variety of behaviors” (Patall et al. 869). They go on to explore how this is implemented in the classroom, specifically among diverse populations, writing, “teachers suggested that choice was especially beneficial for students with low interest and little motivation for a particular task” (896). They tested whether providing a choice of written work promoted higher learning outcomes related to performance, motivation, and academic achievement (898). These forms of quantitative research yielded positive outcomes associated with the student’s feeling of purpose, which was to provide students with choices in regard

to their schoolwork to promote motivation and adaptive learning outcomes (898). Their results were successful and promoted the concept that allowing students to choose their texts with which to explore the archetype of the hero will allow them to engage further with literature. In order to scaffold this skill, allowing for a limited number of choices will ensure that the students are able to track the archetype of the hero with their peers in literature circles.

Pedagogical approaches such as culturally relevant teaching (CRT) require educators and districts to provide diverse texts to ensure an inclusive classroom environment; this is key to maintaining an ethical, engaging classroom. This pedagogical approach is a modern pedagogical method to ensure that reading and writing standards are inclusive and appropriate, specifically when in reference to the African American community. CRT is not limited to one racial or ethnic group, rather it focuses on inclusive teaching and demands that teachers provide various texts and writing prompts to motivate learners from different backgrounds and with various identities. Sibberson wrote, “whether it is being open to learning so that we can find books that better represent the students we teach ... to better match what it means to be literate today. We need to listen in a way that allows us to grow and change our thinking” (303). These assertions foster the importance of developing into culturally relevant educators by ensuring that teachers are learning, adapting, and allowing students to experience autonomy within the classroom by providing interesting, motivating lessons. This address expands beyond the frameworks already in place, such as Campbell’s hero’s journey, as a pedagogical tool in and of itself, and this text challenges teachers to develop their own methods to “grow and change” (303). He

suggests when we turn to discuss a concept with a colleague that we do not listen to reaffirm our own beliefs, but that we listen to learn something new to adapt our own best practices in the classroom. Given the research already done regarding how to develop a CRT pedagogy, the stages of a hero's journey, and the importance of student-choice.

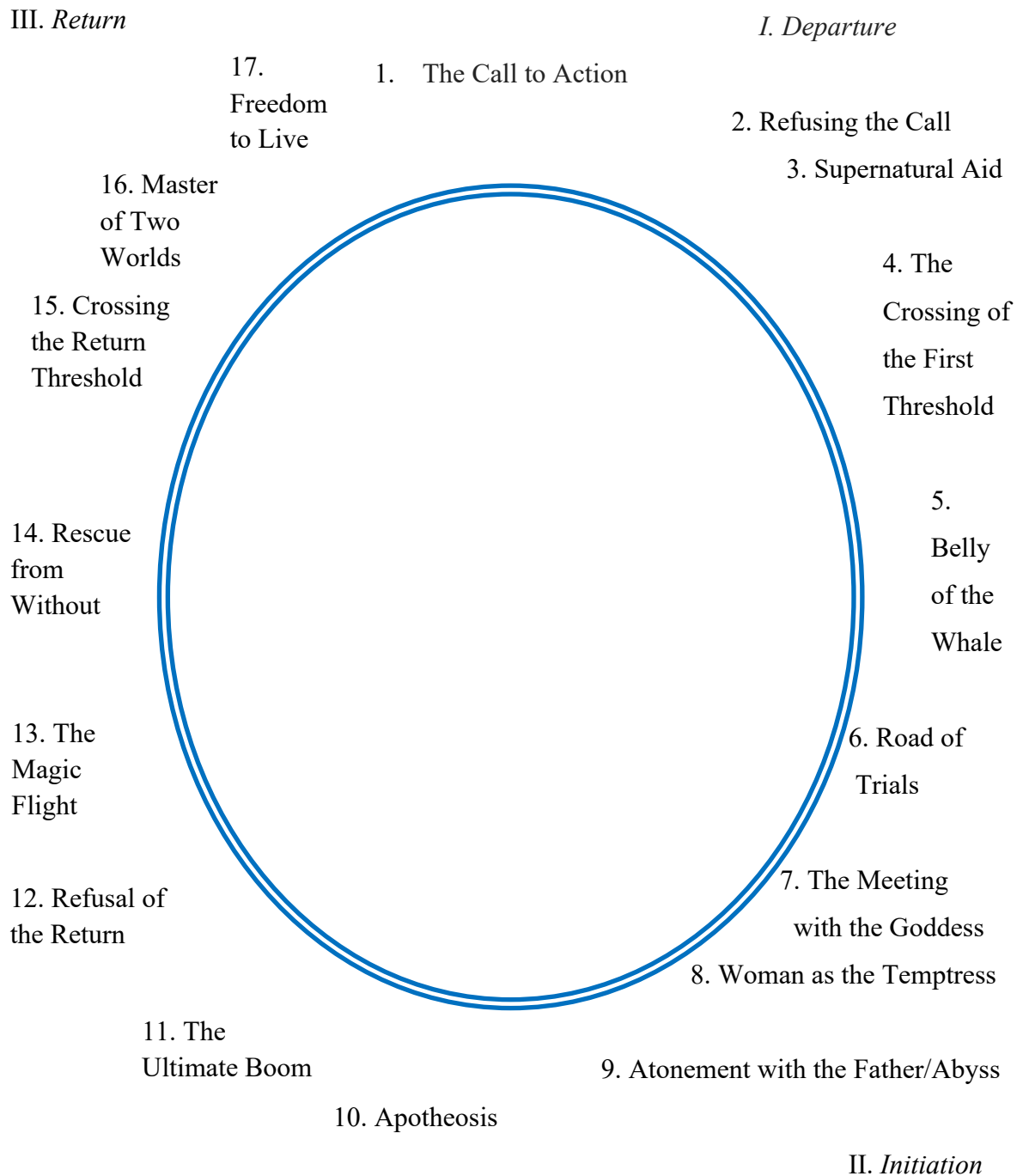
Unit questions include:

- How can the hero's journey be adapted to suit modern YA novels? (Mabbott 508).
- How can the hero's journey, Campbell's established version or an updated model, be applied to classic literary cannon in an inclusive manner?
- Does reading about the hero's journey using an updated, culturally relevant model allow students to develop beyond academic success?

In order to achieve a new mode through which to read and understand the journey, I have created a mechanism for reading and evaluating texts according to CRT pedagogical standards; in order to do so, I consulted two cyclical examples of the hero's journey- Christopher Vogler's 2007 model, which he created within his text *The Writer's Journey: Mythic Structures for Storytellers & Screenwriters* and Joseph Campbell's 1949 seventeen-step model. The revitalized, reconstructed model follows the previous two. The overarching goal of the revitalized model is to provide an inclusive lens to analyze the hero's journey, to provide a mode to critically examine society's impact on the modern hero, and to display how students can benefit from reading and writing about the hero's journey.

The Hero's Journey: Joseph Campbell's 1949 Model

Figure 2

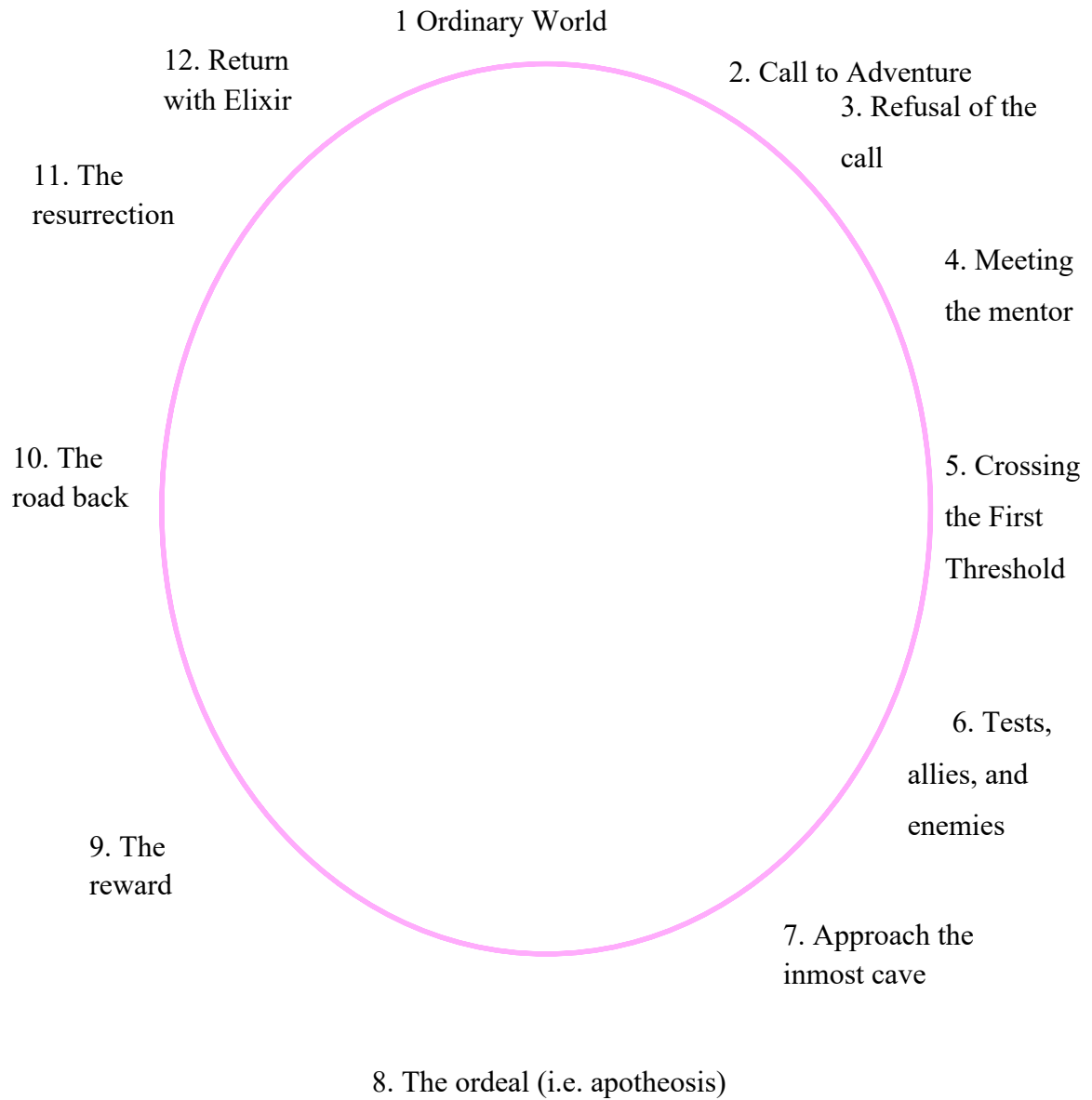


Campbell, Joseph. *The hero with a thousand faces*. Vol. 17.

New World Library, 2008.

The Hero's Journey: Christopher Vogler's 2007 Model

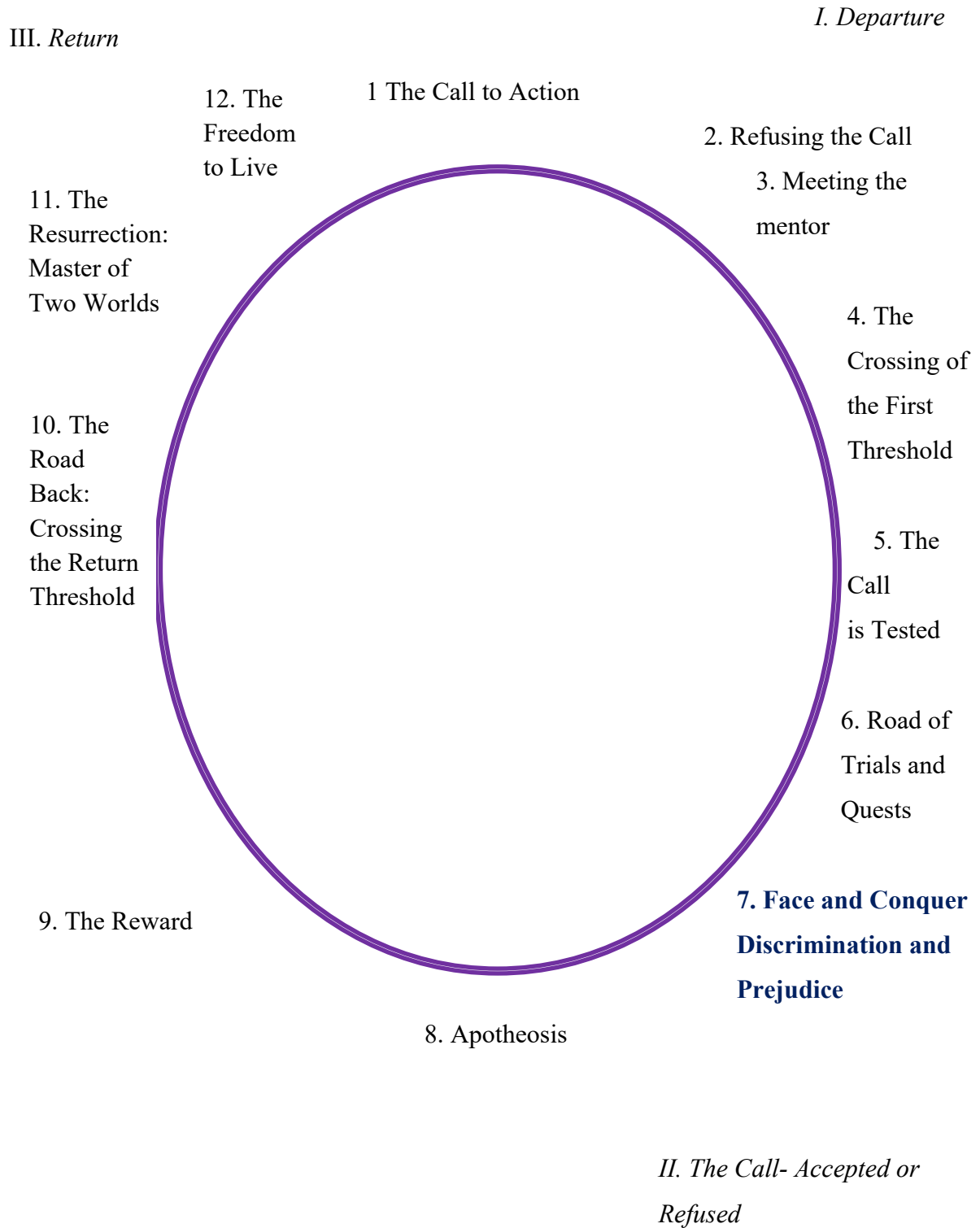
Figure 3



Vogler, Christopher. *The Writer's Journey*. Studio City, CA: Michael Wiese Productions, 2007.

THE HERO'S JOURNEY: REVISITED MODEL

Figure 4



Revisited Model Steps	Definition
1. Call to Action	The hero/protagonist is presented with a challenge, a journey, or a pathway that veers from their current path or state of being.
2. Refusing the Call	The hero/protagonist initially refuses the challenge, journey, or pathway before them.
3. Meeting the mentor	This character encourages the hero/protagonist to accept the journey.
4. Crossing the First Threshold	The hero leaves their ordinary world for the first time and crosses the threshold into adventure; occasionally this includes venturing into a supernatural world, but not always.
5. The Call is Tested	The hero is faced, for the first time, with awareness that they may have made a mistake beginning the journey; self-doubt creeps in.
6. Road of Trials and Quests	The hero learns the rules of the new world and endures tests, meets friends, and comes face-to-face with enemies.
7. Face and Conquer Discrimination and Prejudice	The hero is faced with societal structures that discriminate against them that are larger than themselves; they must overcome this obstacle to continue on their journey. This leads to deeper awareness of injustices.
8. Apotheosis	The hero recognizes the divinity (or goodness, worthiness) within themselves and reaches the highest personal form of self-actualization and agency.
9. The Reward	A battle takes place, either physical, verbal, or mental and the hero emerges victorious with the reward of a new life, or a new take on life.
10. The Road Back	The hero crosses the threshold to return to the normal world. The height of action is concluded.
11. The Resurrection	The hero has achieved a deeper understanding of the collective world and their own individuality, they become the master of the two worlds they exist within.
12. The Freedom to Live	The hero is free to live their life with their new knowledge in peace until a new journey comes along. The hero's journey is cyclical, not linear, and the journey will begin again.

RATIONALE

The construction and understanding of the hero's journey have been used to model a protagonist's journey in a literary text for many years. Campbell writes in his text *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* that each literary hero undergoes a series of trials until they are able to return "home" or back to the "ordinary" world (188). With my students, I justify our literary choices to the students when I explain that, like the protagonists, they are also on a journey in which they will face trials and their resiliency skills will be tested as they grow in life. As a class, we will examine their personal journeys through the literature we read and engage with. The hero's journey, therefore, acts as an analogy for the path each person must walk in their life. The texts that we read expand upon this idea. Campbell defines the hero as "the man of self-achieved submission" (Campbell 11). Campbell's current model opens itself up to contemporary criticism in regard to the underrepresentation of racial groups and women- more specifically, the stereotype of what it means to be strong and brave is usually depicted by male protagonists for male audience members; while young women, African-American, and Latinx students have the ability to suspend their disbelief and envisage themselves in the role of a white, straight, male protagonist, my aim is to bring more diverse texts into the classroom that allow students from various backgrounds to see themselves represented as heroes in the English classroom through the texts we engage in and discuss to answer the question- what is the most effective method to teach the hero's journey in order to engage students on an academic and personal level? Moreover, how can students apply the study of literary texts through the hero's journey to their own lives?

I employ an updated model of said journey with an additional step for discrimination by which to understand and define a hero using a variety of texts, classic literary canon, and modern young adult literature (refer to step 7 in the revisited model). Applying the pedagogical approach of CRT to this model to ensure the hero's journey is contemporized. By crafting a mechanism to evaluate texts according to principles for inclusion and diversity in order to reach more students and engage them in literature. The proposed one-quarter research of the hero's journey and implementation of a narrative focused unit plan will allow the model I develop to be shared with other educators to implement in their own classrooms and ensure that my students are able to further develop their academic and emotional competency with the literary heroes we engage in the literature and composition classroom.

As diverse individuals have often been left out of the literary canon, providing updated texts is a current issue in the contemporary classroom setting, as well as how to provide those texts. Some pedagogical approaches include primarily using the pre-established literary canon, such as Shakespeare, Dickens, and Fitzgerald, rather than exploring more updated and diverse options that speak to today's student population; these approaches are insufficient to account for current students' needs. The hero's journey is usually taught in a formulaic manner through a cis, male-perspective and the study of heroes has an important role to play in regard to students' development of their self-identity. The new model will allow for updated texts to be explored by the students themselves in a manner that will allow them to all see themselves in a hero's role. My aim is to engage the students in the hero's journey through textual analysis in order to engage them in self-exploration through narrative work as we read. My unit

plan will include research based instructional activities, a narrative rubric, survey questions, and standards-based curriculum guides that I can give to other educators, as well as the newly constructed model with how to teach the hero's journey by using best practices and applying CRT. Beginning the unit with an exploration of the hero's journey through a class text will allow me to craft a unit plan that encourages students to find connections between text and self, text and world, and text and text. Continuing with student-led textual analysis will allow me to reconstruct a framework that our class will work with, the newly adapted hero's journey.

This practicum is a unit plan that can be used in practice and that other educators can utilize; the practicum is based on the use of a new revitalized mode through which to read hero's journey literature and evaluate texts according to principles for equity/inclusion/diversity which are tenets of CRT. With the students, we will compare how this updated model stands in comparison to Campbell's and Vogler's cyclical models while studying how the implementation of class materials regarding the hero's journey can be adapted to evaluate students' reading and writing practices. The unit plan is centered around a student-selected text that is from a diverse grouping that allows the educator to foster CRT within the classroom while also instructing the hero's journey model. These texts are:

Kindred by Octavia Butler

The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian by Sherman-Alexie

The Hate U Give by Angie Thomas

The Hobbit by J.R.R. Tolkien

The Hunger Games by Suzanne Collins

The novels selected are all fictional and are post-modern or contemporary (1940s-2010). The novels all include themes of discrimination and prejudice, and all track the hero's journey cycles on each other the three models (Vogler, Campbell, and the Revisited). *Kindred* by Octavia Butler is the fantasy story of a young Black woman named Dana who is in an interracial marriage in 1970s America- she time travels back to the Antebellum south and lives through slavery firsthand. The major themes include racism, resiliency, intersectional feminism, and the dangers of "silence" in regard to racism (Butler). *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* by Sherman-Alexie is a whimsical, but still serious, tale of a Native American teenager Arnold Spirit Jr. or "Junior" who is a young teenage cartoon artist who explores the intersection between being a member of the Spokane Native American Tribe and attending a white public high school. This graphic novel offers a new way to construct the coming-of-age and hero's journey story, because the hero is the narrator and is telling the story through the meeting of words and images (Alexie). *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas is a fictional story based on the events surrounding the police shooting of Oscar Grant. This novel tells the story of the fictional Starr Carter who is a 16-year-old black girl who lives in a poor neighborhood but goes to school at an affluent white school district. After her best friend Khalil is shot to death by police officers one night, and the aftermath of that loss and the subsequent court case and injustice (Thomas). When reading this novel, students will grapple with the ongoing racism in America and they will most likely explore step 7 on the revitalized Hero's Journey model that explores overcoming discrimination. *The Hobbit* by J.R.R. Tolkien is the famous hero's journey story of a Hobbit who is swept up in an adventure with dwarves, elves, and wizards to

help him on his path; that said, even Bilbo and the dwarves face discrimination, which the students will explore in the literature circles (Tolkien). *The Hunger Games* or *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* by Sherman-Alexie is where I will place my IEP students/students who need additional accommodations. *The Hunger Games* is easily accessible for the hero's journey unit and these students will read this with additional support and Sherman Alexie's novel is a graphic novel, which is preferable for struggling readers; both of these novels are written below secondary grade level and have easily accessible language as well as visual adaptations that are closely tied to the novels. They will be able to vote with the whole class but will be placed in this group to best support their overall comprehension. I will take turns sitting with and observing each literature circle, prompting the students to think of new ideas, asking questions, and overall aiding them in their discussions as they participate in the 9-week hero's journey unit with their novel of choice.

The unit plan will include a pre-assessment, literature circles, interviews, written formative assessments along the twelve-step process, and a final written assessment will be narrative based in order to assess the student's level of personal engagement with the updated hero's journey. Assessing the students' level of engagement with reading and writing the hero's journey will be done through observation, formative assessment, one on one conferencing, and their written work. The interviews will be one on one conferences with the students to discuss their work two weeks into the hero's journey unit and it will be mainly student led in order to assess their overall engagement with the unit. Some survey questions will include: Did you relate to the protagonist from your self-selected book? Can you explain why? What does a hero

mean to you, in your own words? What is the most important stage of the journey? If the student answers no to these questions, I will remind them that the call is not always accepted, sometimes it is refused. More so, while we cannot always relate to a character from the novel, it is human to recognize heroism in our own lives. A follow up question would be: if you do not relate to your protagonist in your novel, review our definition of a hero and, in your own words, paraphrase the definition. Then, write 1-2 sentences about a hero that you know of, either in fiction or in the world. What makes someone a hero to you?

Lastly, the narrative rubric and prompt will ask the students to outline their own hero's journey using examples from their own lives, and it should allow the educator to analyze how many of them focused on the updated stages in the revisited model and how many used Campbell's universal 12-stage structure when writing their narratives to determine if the updated model is, in fact, a resource when teaching the hero's journey.

This 9-week unit plan encompasses student-selected fiction novels, literature circles, three hero's journey models, and the reading and short written assessments that are connected to the overarching question: does the final, revisited structure for the hero's journey act as a more inclusive framework? This revisited model adheres to the state standards for analysis of plot and characterization of fiction while also incorporating CRT in order to foster an inclusive classroom learning environment while the students read, analyze, discuss, and compose a narrative that tracks the hero's journey in their fictional texts. Our course objectives are established by the [State of](#)

[Ohio](#) (Ohio Department of Education). Some key objectives that we meet during this

unit read as follows:

- RL.9-10.1 Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- RL.9-10.2 Analyze literary text development.
 - a. Determine a theme of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details.
 - b. Provide an objective summary of the text that includes the theme and relevant story elements.
- RL.9-10.3 Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.
- RL.9-10.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning, mood, and tone.
- W.9-10.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
 - a. Engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation, establishing one or multiple point(s) of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters; create a smooth progression of experiences or events.
 - b. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plot lines, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
 - c. Use a variety of techniques to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole.
 - d. Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.
 - e. Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on what is experienced, observed, or resolved over the course of the narrative

In order to successfully achieve these standards, the students will complete short written assignments and extensive packet work that discuss the major themes, plot events, and fiction terms in their selected novels that all encompass elements of the hero's journey. The packet that will guide the students through their self-selected novel utilizes a Learning Contract to differentiate the level of answers required in regard to analysis

provided by the students and MLA in-text citations. I introduce this unit guiding packet at the beginning of the unit and outline the expectations for each grade; this re-enforces that an A is above-expectations, and a C meets expectations, which is a new concept to many students who are entering into high school for the first time; while grading is a necessary part of secondary school education, I ensure my grades are based on mastery of standards rather than justification of grades that are not tied to objectives. While my student's writing is not always graded, and can be formative in nature, summative assessments, such as the narrative essay, are standards based and are guided by a rubric, conferencing, and models to ensure the students have the tools necessary to succeed. Grading could become subjective in nature if standards-based rubrics are not employed- it is the educator's job to remain as objective as possible when establishing grades, and that means providing the students with clear expectations and models. All written assignments throughout the course of the year are intended to scaffold the students' skills as writers for when they eventually graduate from the 5-paragraph essay model once they are second semester 10th grade students- until then, we focus on repetition of skills with new prompts that are aimed to engage the students in the writing process.

The Hero's Journey Learning Contract

Directions:

1. Check off completed items in the learning contract at the end of the unit.
3. Use this packet to help you write your essay/in class writing assignment.
4. Turn in a completed contract at the end of the unit.
5. Ms. Caserta reserves the right to remove points for incomplete/incorrect work.

Note: You must complete all C Items fully and according to directions to receive a passing grade.

Score: ____/50

Independent Work Choices:

To earn an 'A' (90-100)

- ____ 1. Completed all work required of a 'B' and a 'C'
- ____ 2. Completed all optional *Hero's Journey* writing assignments and projects on Google Classroom.
- ____ 3. Work is exemplary and does not have any major grammatical errors.
- ____ 4. I participated in class regularly and my literature circle work is completed.
- ____ 5. 15 or more written answers in the packet use a direct quote from the novel and a correct in-text citation from the text to prove your claims.

To earn a 'B' (80-89)

- ____ 1. Completed all the work required of a 'C'
- ____ 2. Participated in class discussion at least twice.
- ____ 3. 8 or more written answers in the packet use a direct quote from the novel and a correct in-text citation from the text.
- ____ 4. The majority of your literature circle work was completed with minor mistakes.
- ____ 5. The writing displayed within the packet is *above average* with no major grammatical errors or graveyard/weak words utilized. Remember: the wording must be your own or it is plagiarism!

Mandatory Classwork/Homework:

To earn a 'C' (70-79)

- ____ 1. Complete all assigned questions from the packet.
- ____ 2. I wrote one narrative essay and earned a passing grade.
- ____ 3. I completed at least half of the activities in my literature circle.
- ____ 4. I participated in class discussion at least once.

Summative Assessment: Completes the Narrative Essay at the end of the unit ____/25

Circle the top two novels you are interested in, as were presented on in class:

Kindred by Octavia Butler

The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian by Sherman-Alexie

The Hate U Give by Angie Thomas

The Hobbit by J.R.R. Tolkien

The Hunger Games by Suzanne Collins

**The Hunger Games* is where I will place my IEP students/students who need additional accommodations. Further reasoning provided in the rationale.

Daily Student Schedule

The chapters are due on the date they are listed under. Each student-selected novel has been separated into 10 parts. We will take the entire number page numbers, divide them by 10%, and then mark those into 10 parts! (Note: some of you have more pages to read on nights when reading is assigned, some of you have less depending on the length of the novel- together we will mark each novel into 10 sections!)

Date(s) Should Be Listed Manually	Select your top two novel choices and then follow Ms. Caserta's instructions to move into your literature circles for the book you will read. These will be your assigned seats for this entire unit.
Day 1-3	Complete the background info on the Hero's Journey and the three models (Revisited, Campbells, and Vogler's). Completed pre-assessment.
Day 4	First part due tomorrow. You should have selected your Literature Circle roles. Begin reading/listening to the audiobook together. Who is your protagonist? What are her/his defining traits? Complete the first part of the transformation in your packet on pg. 3.
Day 5	Discuss the first 10% of the novel and begin working on your packet work with your groups for the self-selected novel. Groups are organized based on interest in the novels provided (if students cannot be in a group with their first choice, they will be placed with their second choice of reading material).
Day 6	Second part of the novel due tomorrow.

Day 7-8	<p>Discuss the second part of the novel and begin working on your packet work with your groups.</p> <p>Discuss which part of the hero's journey your protagonist is at on each of the three models.</p>
Day 9	<p>Read the third part of the novel and begin working on your packet work with your groups.</p> <p>Discuss which part of the hero's journey your protagonist is on throughout each of the three models.</p>
Day 10-11	<p>Discuss the third part of your novel and look at the Revitalized hero's journey model- do you see any discrimination or prejudice?</p> <p>Complete the written assignment on google classroom.</p>
Day 12	<p>Read the fourth part of the novel and begin working on your packet work with your groups.</p> <p>Discuss which part of the hero's journey your protagonist is at on each of the three models.</p>
Day 13-14	Prepare for your first Socratic Seminars in your literature circles.
Day 15	Socratic Seminar #1
Day 16	<p>Half-way point! Read the fifth part of the novel and begin working on your packet work with your groups.</p> <p>Check in with your packet, make sure you're keeping up with the work assigned for the grade you are working for!</p>

	Discuss which part of the hero's journey your protagonist is on each of the three models. Discuss how society forms a hero, rather than just individual choices.
Day 17-18	Discuss the fifth part of your novel.
Day 19	Read the sixth part of the novel and begin working on your packet work with your groups.
Day 20-21	Discuss the sixth part of your novel and look at the Revitalized hero's journey model- do you see any discrimination or prejudice?
Interview Day Day 22	Read the narrative rubric prompt before class- I will call you up one by one to interview you about which hero's journey model you will be using for your narrative and why.
Day 23	Read the seventh part of the novel and begin working on your packet work with your groups.
Day 24-25	Discuss the seventh part of your novel and look at the three hero's journey models. Which one is the most effective? Why?
Day 26	Read the eighth part of the novel and begin working on your packet work with your groups. Prepare for Socratic Seminar #2
Day 27-28	Discuss the eighth part of your novel and look at the three hero's journey models. Which one is the most effective? Why? Socratic Seminar #2
Day 29	Read the ninth part of the novel and begin working on your packet work with your groups.
Day 30-31	Discuss the ninth part of your novel and look at the three hero's journey models. Which one is the most effective? Why?

Day 32	Finish reading the novel.
Day 33	Final discussion day- did the hero accept or reject her/his call? How did they grow from the journey?
Day 34-35	Finish working in the packet and then submit it on google classroom. Once completed, begin working on the narrative outline for your personal hero's journey that we discussed on interview day!
Day 36	<p>Sketch out your own hero's journey on a piece of loose-leaf for reference as you write your outline- what trials did you face? What transformations have you undergone? Did you accept the call, or did you originally refuse it?</p> <p>This will be used as a prewriting activity for their outline, which will scaffold their concepts and writing for the final narrative essay.</p>
Day 37	<p>Complete the submit the outline by the end of class.</p> <p>Complete the Flip Grid assignment for homework.</p>
Day 38	Begin working on the rough draft- copy and paste the outline, delete the formatting, and build your essay around your thesis and main points.
Day 39	Continue developing your rough draft- I will be around for one-on-one conferences.
Day 40	Peer-Review Day! Due: by the end of class.
Day 41	Rough draft is due by the end of class.
Day 42-43	Watch short myths/legends on TedEd and discuss the various monomyths that you see. Then, complete the vocabulary.com assignment that reviews monomyth terminology while I provide feedback on your rough drafts.
Day 44-45	<p>Read my feedback, resolve all suggestions on the google doc, and then submit the final narrative essay of your hero's journey.</p> <p>Concluding thoughts and questions.</p>

After reading through and discussing the packet expectations, the students will complete the pre assessment for the hero's journey individually and then discuss with their literature circles. Pre-assessment questions to be answered on google classroom and then discussed:

1. What is your definition of a hero? What do they usually look like, sound like, etc.?
2. Have you ever heard of the hero's journey?
3. Name one hero (fictional or nonfictional) that you know and list two characteristics that make them heroic.

Many pre assessment answers will include white-male heroes who present an unattainable goal of being kings and receiving glory; this is the time when I challenge the students to question their preconceived notions of what a hero is, referring back to my rationale. They then watch the TedEd video about the hero's journey and we discuss the three models of the circular hero's journey the students will be working with and building from their previous student of the plot structure diagram; the hero's journey does have a resolution or an ending, but then the hero's journey is picked up by another hero and the cycle continues. It is not just one story; it is an ongoing story that is never-ending (Rank et al). Throughout the unit, we will also discuss how society shapes a hero and I will encourage the students to look beyond the hero's individual growth from within and look at how the world around them could be shaping their character.

From the pre assessment, the students will flip through the beginning of their packets and explore the various roles they will all eventually partake in: Discussion

Directions, Literary Luminary, Connector, Word Wizard, Illustrator/ Mapper. The roles will circulate in order of their seating charts, so each student will have a different role for each of the 10 sections of their self-selected novels and I will assign them. These roles were found in *Literature Circles: Voice and Choice in the Student-Centered Classroom* by Harvey Daniels. They are as follows:

Role 1: Discussion Director

Name _____ Meeting Date _____ Book _____

Your job is to develop a list of questions that your group might want to discuss about this part of the book. Don't worry about the small details; your task is to help people talk over the big ideas in the reading and share their reactions. Usually, the best discussion questions come from your own thoughts, feelings, and concerns as you read. You can list your questions before, during, or after your reading. Or you may use some of the general discussion questions below to develop topics for your group.

Possible discussion questions or topics for today (write at least 3):

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Sample Questions: *Refer to the Bloom's Taxonomy Question-Stems on Google Classroom.*

Can anyone summarize this section briefly?
What was going through your mind as you read this?
Did anything in this section of the book surprise you?
Predict some things that you think will happen next.
How did you feel while reading this part of the book?
What are the one or two most important ideas in this section?

Self-Evaluation - Rate yourself on a scale of 1 to 5.

How well did you **prepare**? How well did you **participate**?

Role 2: Literary Luminary

Name _____ Meeting Date _____ Book _____

Your job is to locate a few special selections of the text that your group would like to hear read aloud. The idea is to help people remember some interesting, powerful, funny, puzzling, or important sections of the text. You decide which passages or paragraphs are worth hearing, and then jot plans for how they should be shared. You can read them aloud yourself, ask someone else to read them, or have people read silently and then discuss. Cite using parenthetical MLA in-text citations. You do not need to cite the entire passage but cite a sentence with a page number. Ex. The character said, “no” (Smith 3). [Review your MLA citation guide on google classroom.](#)

Location: Reasons for Picking Plan for Sharing.

1. MLA in-text citation:

Key idea(s) presented in the passage:

2. MLA in-text citation:

Key idea(s) presented in the passage:

Possible reasons for picking a passage to be shared:

Important - Funny - Surprising - Confusing - Informative
Controversial - Well-Written - Thought-Provoking
Meaningful – Literary Devices – Hero’s Journey Connection

Self-Evaluation - Rate yourself on a scale of 1 to 5.

How well did you **prepare**? How well did you **participate**?

Role 3: Connector

Name _____ Meeting Date _____ Book _____

Your job is to find connections between the book your group is reading and the world outside. This means connecting it to your own life, to happenings outside school or in the community, to similar events at other times and places, to other people or problems that you are reminded of. You might also see connections between this book and other writings on the same topic, or by the same author. Your main focus: the hero's journey models provided at the beginning of the packet!

Some connections I found between this reading and the world outside were:

1. Once connection that I made was that this novel deals with real issues that we face, such as.....
- 2.

Possible kinds of connections:

- Happenings at school
- World events
- Problems you have experienced
- Similar books or authors
- Subjects studied at school

Some connections I found between the reading and the steps on the hero's journey model(s) were:

- 1.
- 2.

Possible connections to the journey:

- The protagonist faces an evil and overcomes.
- The protagonist does not want to begin or continue the journey.
- The antagonist is winning against the protagonist in a section.

Self-Evaluation - Rate yourself on a scale of 1 to 5.

How well did you **prepare**? How well did you **participate**?

Role 4: Word Wizard

Name _____ Meeting Date _____ Book _____

Your job is to be on the lookout for words that may be unusual, puzzling, or unfamiliar. Try to figure out their meaning from the context clues around the words and cite the page number where you found them using an MLA in-text citation. Look up the words at dictionary.com and then write a definition in your own words. Make sure that you understand the words before you meet with the group! Lead your group through a discussion of the words and their meanings.

Word	Best Guess and Dictionary Definition
Ex. Attercop (Tolkien 182).	Guess: Some sort of snake, or a dragon, because atter sounds like “Adder” which is a type of snake. Definition: A spider, derived from Middle English. The spiders view this word to be insulting or derogatory.
	Guess: Definition:
	Guess: Definition:
	Guess: Definition:
	Guess: Definition:

Self-Evaluation - Rate yourself on a scale of 1 to 5.

How well did you **prepare**? How well did you **participate**?

Role 5: Illustrator/Mapper

Name _____ Meeting Date _____ Book _____

Your job is to draw some kind of picture or thinking map related to the selection (this should be drawn in a marker, colored pencil, or charcoal. You may use the coloring resources in our classroom, but do not simply use a pen or pencil for this). You can draw a sketch, cartoon, diagram, or any kind of graphic organizer. You can illustrate something that's discussed specifically in the book or something that the reading reminded you of, or a picture that conveys any idea or feeling you got from the reading. Make your illustration on another sheet of paper and attach it to this one before handing in this assignment.

Presentation Plan: Show your illustration without comment to others in the group. One at a time, they get to speculate what your picture means, to connect the drawing to their own ideas about the reading. After everyone has had a say, you get the last word: tell them what your picture means, where it came from, or what it represents to you.

Comments to share with your group (reasons why you drew that illustration, what it means to you, what part of the story it represents, etc.) Write 3-4 sentences:

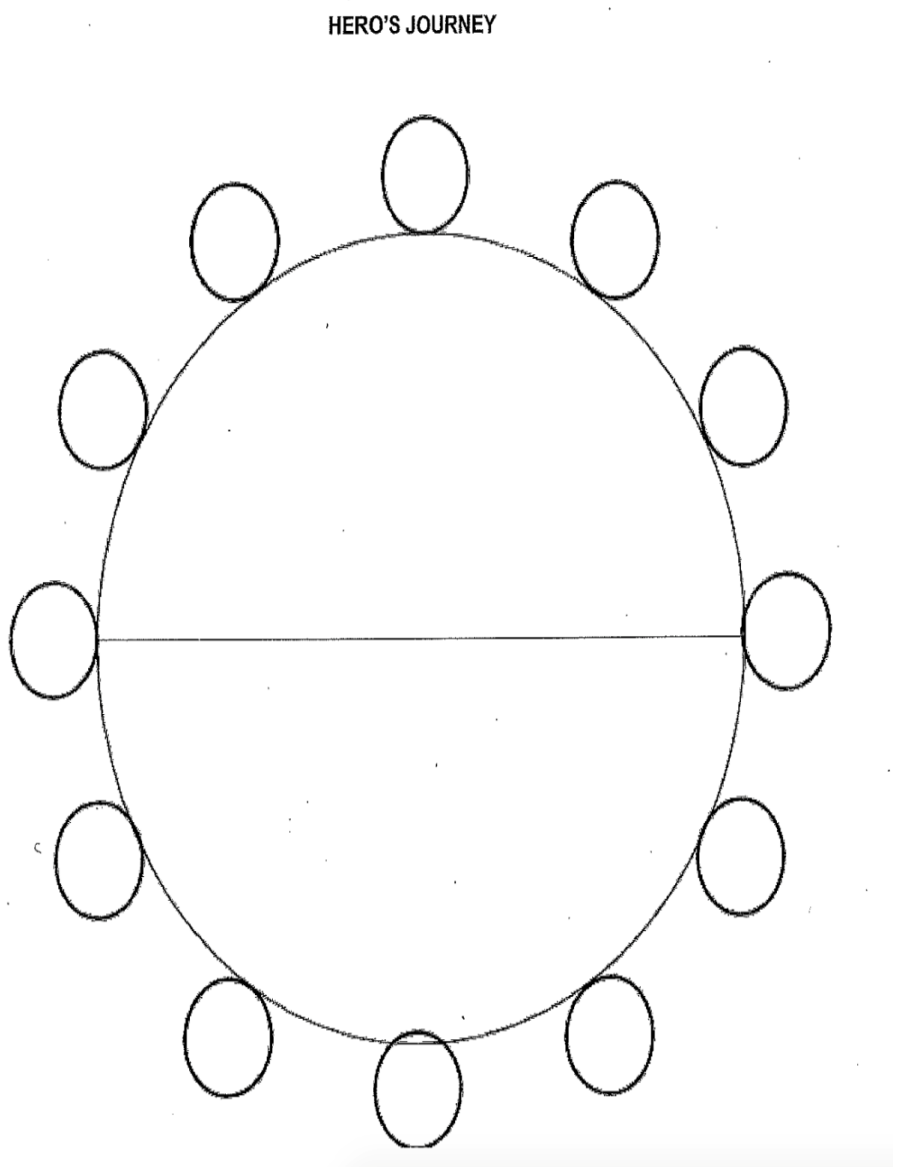
Self-evaluation: Rate yourself on a scale of 1 to 5?

How well did you **prepare**? How well did you **participate**?

The students move through the packet and literature circle assignments as they read the novel in school and at home, engaging with key passages in the classroom and participating in writing activities and class discussions. The students can use the packet on reading checks to help them answer the questions as I am assessing their ability to apply concepts of the hero's journey models, rather than just memorize plot events in the novel. The students will fill in the blank hero's journey model in their packets using one of the three

models provided after they read part two in their novels.

The students will track the various transformations the protagonist in their self-selected text faces within their individual packets as well in order to ensure they are engaging with the key concepts of the hero's journey unit- the path of the hero:

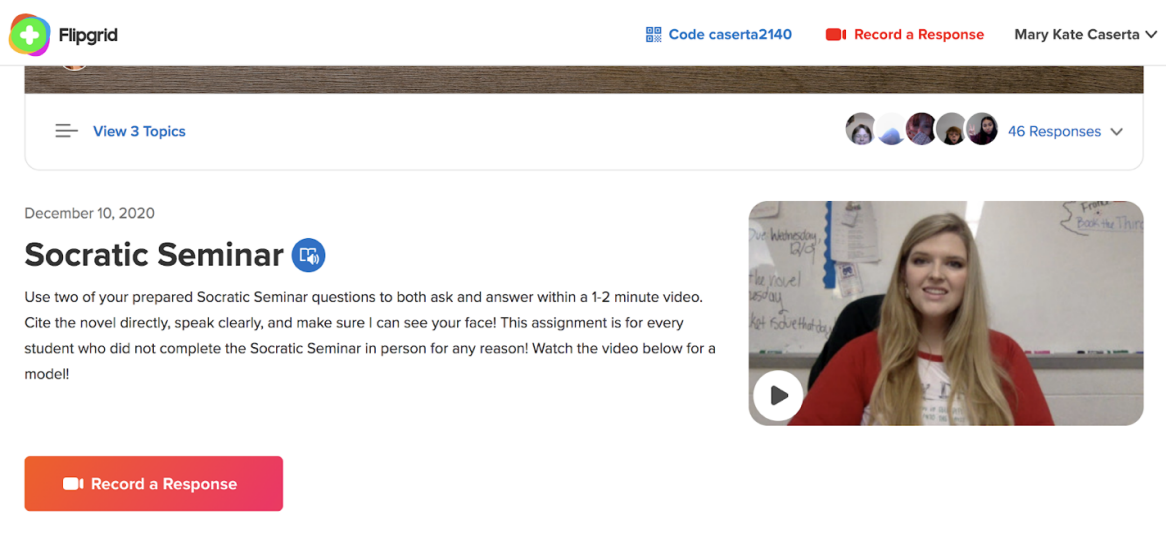


Protagonist's Name: _____

Directions: Add to this page in your packet as you read, recalling your study of fiction terms and citing evidence from the novel using MLA in-text citations (Caserta 1).

Personality Traits: Before the Journey	Transforming Events	Personality Traits: After the Journey

The FlipGrid and the two Socratic Seminars will be used as formative assessments, or an assessment that allows me to gage how well the students understand the journey. FlipGrid is a website which is connected to google classroom and it allows the students to record themselves asking questions and the other students have the opportunity to answer questions below their peer's videos. This is ideal for the concurrent model when some students are participating in a class online, and some are in the building. The traditional Socratic Seminar model will be a student-led discussion in their literature circles that they have prepared for using Bloom's Taxonomy question stems that were outlined in Michael Pohl's *Learning to Think, Thinking to Learn: Models and Strategies to Develop a Classroom Culture of Thinking* (Pohl). I model the expectations and read the instructions to provide both verbal and written instruction in the video to the left of the picture below. The students are then graded using an adapted version of my [Socratic Seminar rubric](#) that is inclusive for online learning. This fits into the standard for "analyzing literary text development" (Ohio Department of Education). The rubrics are below:



The screenshot shows a Flipgrid interface. At the top, the Flipgrid logo is on the left, and the user 'Code caserta2140' is on the right, with a 'Record a Response' button and a dropdown menu for 'Mary Kate Caserta'. Below the header, there's a section for 'View 3 Topics' and a row of profile icons with '46 Responses'. The main content area features a post from 'December 10, 2020' titled 'Socratic Seminar' with a video icon. The post text reads: 'Use two of your prepared Socratic Seminar questions to both ask and answer within a 1-2 minute video. Cite the novel directly, speak clearly, and make sure I can see your face! This assignment is for every student who did not complete the Socratic Seminar in person for any reason! Watch the video below for a model!'. To the right of the text is a video thumbnail showing a woman in a red shirt in front of a whiteboard. Below the post is a red button labeled 'Record a Response'.

Rubric for Socratic Seminar

	5 points	3 points	1 point	
Speaking	Focused on dialogue, brings others into dialogue, speaks to all participants, takes a leadership role without monopolizing the discussion	Speaks to some participants, rambles on after making a point, poses questions but does not answer any, needs prompting to get involved, monopolizes discussion	Reluctant to speak, comments do not support point	
Reasoning	Cites the novel directly, relates topic to outside knowledge, willing to take on an alternate viewpoint, ask questions to further dialogue	Makes limited connections, some references to text, some intriguing points that lead to discussion	No textual support, illogical comments	
Listening	Writes down comments, questions and ideas, builds on other's ideas and gives others credit	Generally attentive and focused, responds thoughtfully, takes <i>some</i> notes	Inattentive, comments show lack of understanding, takes no notes	
Reading/ Preparation	Familiar with the novel, has annotations in text, was prepared for discussion with questions that are thoughtful	Fairly familiar with the novel, was mildly prepared for discussion, questions were mainly plot based and did not venture into themes	Unfamiliar with the novel, no annotations, unprepared for discussion	
Conduct	On task, patient with differing opinions, asks for clarification, doesn't distract other participants	Usually respectful, comments but does not involve others, generally focused	Engages in side conversations, acts disrespectfully, shows impatience	
Total:				$\frac{\quad}{5}/2$

Name: _____

Socratic Seminar Rubric Guidelines and participation

- Be prepared, and bring notes that will help you when discussing
- Back up comments with evidence (quotes) from the novel.
- Try to comment on someone else's previous statement before you give yours
- Personal stories must connect to the text, directly
- Use your speaking time fairly- contribute to the discussion, but do not monopolize!

Questions: You need to create **5** thoughtful, text supported questions and **2** personal connections questions:

Ex. Text supported from the novel *Kindred*: How does Dana's distancing from her husband call out the danger of silent racism? (Butler 45).

Ex. Personal Connections question: Can people regain their humanity after murdering another person? How so?

Write out questions below to turn in (make sure to write the page #):

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7

Your completed peer review worksheet and my own personal rubric and feedback will determine your grade. You will turn in any notes you take, and I will be observing.

Bloom's Questions Starters for Higher Order Thinking (DOK)

Bloom's Question Starter List – I have written what each level of questions are about, given lists of key words that can be used to begin a question for that level, and I have listed Question Starters. You can use this chart to create questions that are specific to your novel when you look through specific lenses.

Level 1: Remember – Recalling Information

- List of keywords: Recognize, List, Describe, Retrieve, Name, Find, Match, Recall, Select, Label, Define
- List of Question Starters:
 - What is...? Who was it that...? Can you name...? ◦ Describe what happened after... ◦ What happened after...?

Level 2: Understand – Demonstrate an understanding of facts, concepts and ideas

- List of keywords: Compare, Contrast, Demonstrate, Describe, Interpret, Explain, Extend, Illustrate, Infer, Outline, Relate, Rephrase, Translate, Summarize, Show, Classify
- List of Question Starters:
 - Can you explain why...? ◦ Can you write in your own words? ◦ Can you clarify...? ◦ Who do you think? ◦ What was the main idea?

Level 3: Apply – Solve problems by applying knowledge, facts, techniques and rules in a unique way

- List of keywords: Apply, Build, Choose, Construct, Demonstrate, Develop, Draw, Experiment with, Illustrate, Interview, Make use of, Model, Organize, Plan, Select, Solve, Utilize
- List of Question Starters:
 - Do you know of another instance where...? ◦ Demonstrate how certain characters are similar or different? ◦ Illustrate how the belief systems and values of the characters are presented in the story. ◦ What questions would you ask of...? ◦ Can you illustrate...? ◦ What choice does ... (character) face?

Level 4: Analyze – Breaking information into parts to explore connections and relationships

- List of keywords: Analyze, Categorize, Classify, Compare, Contrast, Discover, Divide, Examine, Group, Inspect, Sequence, Simplify, Make Distinctions, Relationships, Function, Assume, Conclusions
- List of Question Starters:
 - Which events could not have happened? ◦ If ... happened, what might the ending have been? ◦ How is... similar to...? ◦ Can you distinguish between...? ◦ What was the turning point? ◦ What was the problem with...? ◦ Why did... changes occur?

Level 5: Evaluate – Justifying or defending a position or course of action

- List of keywords: Award, Choose, Defend, Determine, Evaluate, Judge, Justify, Measure, Compare, Mark, Rate, Recommend, Select, Agree, Appraise, Prioritize, Support, Prove, Disprove. Assess, Influence, Value

- List of Question

Starters:

- Judge the value of... ◦ Can you defend the character's position about...? ◦ Do you think... is a positive or negative thing? ◦ Do you believe...? ◦ What are the consequences...? ◦ Why did the character choose...? ◦ How can you determine the character's motivation when...?

Level 6: Create – Generating new ideas, products or ways of viewing things

- List of keywords: Design, Construct, Produce, Invent, Combine, Compile, Develop, Formulate, Imagine, Modify, Change, Improve, Elaborate, Plan

- List of Question

Starters:

- What would happen if...? ◦ Can you see a possible solution to...? ◦ Do you agree with the actions of the character?...with the outcomes? ◦ What is your opinion of...? ◦ What do you imagine would have been the outcome if... had made a different choice? ◦ Invent a new ending. ◦ What would you cite to defend the actions of...? ((Pohl, *Learning to Think, Thinking to Learn*).

Survey Questions: one on one conferences with Ms. Caserta	Write your answer in complete sentences below, be prepared to share!
Did you relate to the protagonist from your self-selected book? If not, find an alternative example (another character you relate to, or a person).	
What does a hero mean to you, in your own words? Review what paraphrasing means.	
What is the most important stage of the journey?	
Will you choose the call accepted or refused for your narrative essay? <i>Remember, not every hero's journey is completed, but that does not mean that it did not have value.</i>	

Daily Writing Assignments

Objectives: I can complete short written assignments, adhering to the instructions provided and referring to my rubric to help me complete the assignment to the best of my ability.

State Standards:

W.9-10.10 Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

W.9-10.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)

Prompt(s) for daily writing assignments:

1. Which step in the hero's journey has been the most impactful or insightful for you so far in your story? Cite specific evidence, using MLA in-text citations. Review the rules [here](#) (Purdueowl.com).
2. What has surprised you the most while reading the novel?
3. What was a time when you did not accept the call for the hero's journey? Review your notes on the hero's journey to review this concept.
4. How does society impact the journey of a hero?
5. Which hero's journey path are you choosing to use- Campbell's, Vogler's, or the Revisited?

Rubric for Daily Writing Assignments

Grade Levels:	A Level- Exceeds Expectations	B-C Level- Meets Expectations	D Level or Below- Expectations Not Met (Redo Assignment for Reassessment- see me)
Word Choice	Precise word choice is implemented, and the words chosen are well constructed and used.	At grade level word choice utilized.	Below grade level word choice utilized (also called graveyard words: a lot, gonna, bad, good, sad, things, stuff, etc.).
Structure, Evidence, Grammar, and Mechanics	Uses varied sentence structure without spelling, punctuation, or major grammatical errors. Evidence used is excellent and includes a correct MLA citation and analysis when applicable.	Uses at grade level sentence variety with 2-3 errors in spelling, punctuation, and/or grammar. Evidence used is acceptable and includes an MLA citation.	Lacks evidence or proper use of complete sentences, spelling, punctuation, or grammar. MLA evidence is attempted but is not correctly cited. Review MLA expectations here .

State Objectives	State objectives for writing and evidence are met. And are beginning to emerge into higher grade level standards.	State objectives for writing and evidence are met.	State objectives for writing and evidence are not met.
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This rubric is also posted on each google classroom assignment applicable along with the learning target (based on the objectives and standards from the state). I use the three-pronged thesis to limit the feedback focus and to prepare them to create a focused and limited scope for their writing aim. The students know the three main objectives they are being assessed on for each minor writing assignment in my class. They internalize these three (structure, evidence, and grammar- state objectives- word choice) by the second quarter and the majority of my students' writings see a marked improvement by then. While not every writing assignment earns a letter grade, all of the writing assignment are evaluated using the above rubric to ensure that the students are improving in their writing abilities and continuing to deepen their analysis of the literature.

These daily writing assignments are employed to scaffold future writing assignments as writing is a central focus in any unit, literary or compositional. The writing assignments ensure the students are engaging with the hero's journey models, practicing their MLA standards, and questioning how their own paths intersect and diverge from the paths the heroes in their various student-selected novels encounter. Writing during a literature unit further emphasizes the interconnection between reading and writing, internalizing themes and then applying them. The additional threshold in the updated model titled "face and conquer discrimination and prejudice" will promote a variety of different writing responses that focuses on each protagonist and the students' own personal experiences that are shared as a narrative.

LESSON PLANS FOR NARRATIVE ESSAY

Summative Assessment

Instructor: Mary Kate Caserta

Class: Introduction to Literature and Composition

Grade: 9th grade

Objectives: Students will be able to engage in a long-term written assignment that asks them to explore their own hero's journey. The students will use their understanding of the narrative structure, plot development, and dialogue to create a story that grapples with accepting or refusing the call to adventure.

Ohio Department of Education Standards:

RL.9-10.2 Analyze literary text development.

- a. Determine a theme of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details.
- b. Provide an objective summary of the text that includes the theme and relevant story elements.

RL.9-10.3 Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.

RL.9-10.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning, mood, and tone (e.g., how the language evokes a sense of time and place or an emotion; how it sets a formal or informal tone).

W.9-10.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences. a. Engage

and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation, establishing one or multiple point(s) of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters; create a smooth progression of experiences or events. b. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plot lines, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters. c. Use a variety of techniques to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole. d. Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters. e. Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on what is experienced, observed, or resolved over the course of the narrative.

W.9-10.10 Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Learning Targets:

- I can write developed personal narratives that have clear introductions, middles and ends.
- **I am able to write a narrative that adheres to the conceits of the fiction genre, recalling our class discussions of the hero's journey, prejudice, characterization, and themes to inform my writing. I can use my resources on google classroom to inform my thesis driven essay.**

Daily Schedules:

Day 1: Prewriting and outline

1. Each student should sketch out their own hero's journey on a piece of loose-leaf for reference as they write their 5-sentence outline and answer the following

questions posted on the board: what trials did you face? What transformations have you undergone? Did you accept the call, or did you originally refuse it?

- a. This will be used as a prewriting activity for their outline, which will scaffold their concepts and writing for the final narrative essay.
2. The outline, rough draft, and the final draft are all modeled on google classroom for the students to reference. We begin with the outline and have in-class time to work independently.
 - a. I give the students one student example (name redacted) and then one example that I wrote- I practice writing with my students. I project my work on the board so they can watch me grapple with semantics, grammatical structure, and dialogue. I find this encourages them to take risks in their own writing and make mistakes.
3. At the end of class, we will complete a [mentimeter formative assessment](#) to allow the students to anonymously ask if they are confused about anything regarding the outline, the journey they chose to use for their narrative, or the essay as a whole.

Day 2-3: Rough draft

1. The students will copy and paste their outline into a blank google document, remove the formatting and begin writing their five-paragraph essay, using the paragraphing structure they've been taught.
2. Students, both in-person and remote, will view [my asynchronous video](#) about how to complete paragraphing that was recorded earlier in the year. This is to promote their recall abilities regarding how to write a strong five paragraph essay, which

they will need to comprehend fully before they move into more developed writing.

3. Students will begin to write their rough draft- I will walk around and ask whether they chose to write about the call accepted or the call refused, ensuring that I am affirming either way. **I anticipate most of my students will choose to use the revitalized hero's journey model as many of my students have expressed their concerns about how they are perceived by society due to their age, gender, sexuality, race, class, or status.**

Day 4: Rest and Review Vocabulary

1. The students will complete a [vocabulary assignment](#) about the hero's journey terms whilst I am providing detailed feedback on their rough drafts. I am a proponent of providing guidance more so on a rough draft than a final draft, so the students have more direction with where to go with their writing as it adheres to the standards and the rubric. It also sets them up for success on the final draft.

Day 5-6: Final Draft Workshops

1. Students will complete peer review, analyze my comments and ensure they are responding to each comment I make on their google docs. I provide a video and instruction on how to do so- this is to ensure that my feedback is being utilized and the students are able to ask questions if my feedback is unclear.
2. Students will work as a class on their final drafts.
3. Students will have the option to share their hero's journey- call accepted or refused- in small groups at the end of class. Sharing their journeys with one

another is a relationship building exercise and aids their communication abilities, which is another standard.

Assessments:

- Observation based formative assessment: walking around the room and monitoring the student's screens and progress through one-on-one conversations and check ins.
- We also will complete a [mentimeter formative assessment](#) to allow the students to anonymously ask if they are confused about anything regarding the outline, the journey they chose to use for their narrative, or the essay as a whole. This is a question asking tool that informs my instruction.
- Summative assessment: the final draft of the narrative essay once it is completed to the standards written above.

Differentiation: *Verbal and written instructions are also used for students with processing needs.*

Materials:

- Two laptops- one for the lesson itself, the slides presentation, attendance, and the google meet for sharing my screen for the online learners, and the other laptop for monitoring GoGuardian so I can see their chrome book screens to make sure they are engaged and on task, whether they are remote or in-school.
- Printed out and highlighted modeled outline and essay for the IEP students and any student who is struggling.
- Charger for my laptops and student chrome books.
- Pre-recorded asynchronous lessons about writing for online and in-person learners to watch as many times as needed.
- Daily lesson posted on google classroom by 8:00 a.m. for the students to access.

Sample Hero's Journey Outline [Model]

[Name Redacted]

Ms. Caserta

Introduction to Literature and Composition

3 March 2021

- I. Thesis statement: I accepted the call to be a mentor to at risk youth once I realized just how significant that role would be in shaping who I am today.
 - A. The call (initially) refused.
 1. My mom said, "you should go back to help the program district this summer to earn work experience." I was not so sure, but I took her advice and sent an email to my mentor.
 2. I finally agreed, taking my spot in the program reluctantly at the prodding of my mentor in the program.
 - B. The journey begins: a tumultuous time.
 1. My mentor told me one night, while we were packing up, "one of the kids said that you had a hard time at his age. How so?" I divulged some personal information to him, such as....
 2. I acknowledged that I had struggled as a child due to my _____ and that the issues I faced were larger than just with myself, but with society as a whole.
 - C. The return home: changed, but happier.
 1. I am no longer in the program, but I learned that through perseverance and modeling healthy behaviors, I can use the struggles I've had to assist others who are in similarly low positions.
 2. All in all, discrimination did play a role in my hero's journey and my personal call because...
- II. Restatement of thesis: I am grateful to have accepted the call because I have grown in the following ways:

NARRATIVE ESSAY

Directions: You will write a 5-paragraph narrative (personal) essay which includes a thesis statement, 5 complete paragraphs, and follows your self-selected topic. You will also turn in a 5-sentence outline and a peer review sheet along with your rubric.

Learning Targets:

- I can write developed personal narratives that have clear introductions, middles and ends.
- **I am able to write a narrative that adheres to the conceits of the fiction genre, recalling our class discussions of the hero's journey, prejudice, characterization, and themes to inform my writing. I can use my resources on google classroom to inform my thesis driven essay.**
- I can write paragraphs and especially conclusions that show self-evaluation.
- I can paragraph separate parts of a story and dialogue and provide transitions.
- I can revise for needed details and remove unnecessary details; I can revise for more effective sentence clarity.
- I can edit for correct mechanics, usage, grammar, and spelling.

The essay is at the end of the unit because the hero's journey, characterization

analysis, plot building, and varied sentence structure were all skills we practiced during

the previous *To Kill A Mockingbird* unit that are mentioned on the rubric. In lieu of

asking the students to memorize facts from the plot and characters for a test, an essay

allows the students to use their voices to express their knowledge and overall insights into

the overall. I find the skills they practice when writing essays will benefit them more so

later in their educational track. Our course objectives are established by the [State of Ohio](#)

(Ohio Department of Education). Some key objectives that we meet during this unit read

as follows:

State Standards:

W.9-10.5 Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grades 9–10.)

W.9-10.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences. a. Engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation, establishing one

or multiple point(s) of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters; create a smooth progression of experiences or events. b. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plot lines, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters. c. Use a variety of techniques to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole. d. Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters. e. Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on what is experienced, observed, or resolved over the course of the narrative.

Rubric for Hero's Journey Narrative Essay

Grade Levels:	A Level- Exceeds Expectations <i>30-35 points</i>	B-C Level- Meets Expectations <i>25-30 points</i>	D Level or Below- Expectations Not Met <i>24 points or below</i>
Structure, Grammar, and Mechanics	<p>Uses varied sentence structure without spelling, punctuation, or major grammatical errors.</p> <p>The feedback provided on the rough draft regarding grammar was resolved on the final draft.</p>	<p>Uses at grade level sentence variety with 2-3 errors in spelling, punctuation, and/or grammar.</p> <p>The feedback provided on the rough draft regarding grammar was resolved on the final draft.</p>	<p>Lacks evidence or proper use of complete sentences, spelling, punctuation, or grammar. Below grade level word choice utilized (a lot, gonna, bad, good, sad, things, stuff, etc.). MLA evidence is attempted but is not correctly cited. Review MLA expectations here.</p>
Learning Objectives	Objectives for writing and understanding the conceits of the genre are beginning to emerge into higher grade level standards.	Objectives for writing and understanding the conceits of the genre are met. Refer to models provided on google classroom.	Objectives for writing and understanding the cycle of the hero's journey are not met.

Organization and Thesis-Driven Argument	The essay includes a thesis at the end of the introduction that includes a topic, claim, and three supports. This thesis guides the topic sentences and body of the 5-paragraph essay. The essay is logically organized and follows the paragraphing structure discussed in class. The overall organization and thesis is exemplary- refer to the “A” modeled essay on google classroom.	The essay includes a slightly confusing/underdeveloped thesis at the end of the introduction that includes a topic, claim, and three supports. This thesis guides most of the body paragraphs. The essay is logically organized and follows the paragraphing structure discussed in class. The overall organization and thesis are acceptable- look at the “C” modeled essay on google classroom.	The essay is missing the thesis at the end of the introduction and/or the body paragraphs are unorganized or unfinished. The overall organization and thesis are unacceptable and do not meet the standards or objectives for the unit- see me to discuss the steps for redoing this essay!
Paragraphing	Dialogue with signal (introducing) phrases are used. Paragraphing and transitioning are superior.	Dialogue is provided. Paragraphing and transition are effective.	Dialogue is missing. Underdeveloped details; may rely on telling vs. showing settings, events, people etc.
Score			_____/35

What you did well:

What you need to work on:

With rubrics for a summative assessment, I make sure that I include specific models along with the rubric that the students can access to see what an “A” level essay looks like. I always write that they did well and then what they need to work on, even on my “A” level essays, to reinforce the idea that writing is a process, not a destination. At the end of the process, before their final grades are returned to them, the students will complete an essay reflection on their learning management site to ensure they are reflecting on their process as a writer and their finished process. **Essay reflection guide:**

Essay Reflection

Name _____

Self-Reflection (after the expository essay is submitted): A truly engaged learner understands the necessary step of self-reflection in order to grow. Please respond with at least two to three sentences for each question and note specific examples to show your learning process.

1. What did you learn about yourself as a reader and writer through this writing process?
2. What was the hardest part of the writing process? Why? Cite specific examples.
3. What was the easiest part of the writing process? Why? Cite specific examples.
4. What parts of your essay are you the proudest of? Why? Cite specific examples.
5. What would you do differently the next time you have to write an essay in this class?
6. What are your conclusion thoughts regarding your own hero's journey?

I also practice persevere and return; when my students do not meet the standards the first time, they have a worksheet to redo their essay and then they turn in the rewritten essay as well as the rewrite worksheet. The overarching goal of asking the student to not only rewrite the essay but also complete the worksheet is that the worksheet walks them through the necessary steps to write a stronger essay. This reinforces the pedagogical belief that writing is a process and, as such, revisions are fundamental to the process. The students are still able to achieve a “meets expectations” grade with their redone essay. Writing about their own hero's journeys at the end of the unit will foster their engagement with the literature they read and the trials of the protagonists.

Sample rewrite worksheet:

Name: _____ Period: _____

Re-Write Opportunity: If you complete the following steps to the letter, you can receive up to 75% on your essay. Refer back to your original rubric and my written comments for my expectations. The rewrite is due this **Monday**.

Write out the following and turn in this paper, your re-write, and your original paper by this Monday:

Issues marked on essay (if applicable): Write out the issues I marked on your essay below. Then resolve and check off yes on all comments and suggestions once you have reviewed them!

Content issues:

Grammar:

Format:

Misspellings:

Additional errors:

Checklist:

- My paper is written in MLA format- 12 pt. Times New Roman, double-spaced and with a storyline that is constructed in first person about my own hero's journey.
- My essay discusses accepting or refusing the call (review Ms. Caserta's example)
- I've written a full five paragraph essay with at least 5 sentences per paragraph.
- I have attached my original rubric to this re-write.

FINAL ASSERTIONS

While this practicum has not been utilized yet within my secondary classroom, my goal is to employ this lesson plan with the revitalized model within my own classroom next year; this year, due to teaching hybrid, and then the concurrent model, I do not have the resources to provide additional texts to my students who are struggling with virtual learning during the 2020-2021 school year, nor do I have the instructional time as I've now lost the equivalent to half a quarter of instructional time in my district. That said, I propose that the revitalized model of the hero's journey will be effective because it requires the students to grow in their understanding of themselves as well as the societal limitations that impact each of them on their journeys. My students thrive during narrative units because, as teenagers, they are in the midst of identity formation and they are extremely self-aware in regard to their "calls to action" or the call refused. Allowing the students to choose their own literature within this unit, which is a cornerstone of CRT as previously stated in the rationale, cemented the importance of modernizing the hero's journey and crafting an updated framework with which to utilize in my classroom. Providing a revitalized model that focuses not only on the individual, but also the society that impacts each individual, does provide a more inclusive framework for understanding the modern typecast of a hero and, more importantly, who can be included under the title "hero." The following questions were posted at the beginning of the unit plan:

- How does studying the hero's journey impact students' self-esteem and their relationship to the concept of "heroism"?

- How culturally relevant is Campbell's framework when referenced in contemporary literature? Can students relate to this framework in their own lives?
- How can culturally relevant teaching (CRT) as a pedagogical framework improve the way the hero's journey is approached in a classroom setting?
- Does the final, revisited structure for the hero's journey act as a more inclusive framework?

The hero's journey as it pertains to the students forces them to acknowledge that they are the main characters in their own stories- a difficult subject for some teenagers. That said, I firmly believe that encouraging the students to broaden their concept of heroism to include themselves helps promote self confidence in the classroom as a student, a reader, and a writer. I am confident that the revitalized model of the hero's journey with the added threshold for facing and conquering prejudice and discrimination will be one that resonates with so many of my students due the focus on society's ability to shape a human being, and the fact that so often the choices and forces that work in our lives can be outside of our control. Allowing my students to select their own novels, and then encouraging them to write about their own hero's journey in a narrative essay adheres to culturally relevant teaching as it promotes a student-centered classroom that molds to the needs, interests, and educational goals of the students rather than the comfort of the teacher. Literature circles and a classroom with six different novels that are being read, analyzed, and discussed is not straightforward; however, it is a cornerstone of CRT as a pedagogical philosophy to create a student-centered classroom. Furthermore, not only are the students writing and tracking their own hero's journey throughout the unit and while writing, but they are also electing to share their journeys, or the call refused, with their peers; and so, there will be a sense of understanding and empathy that the

students are able to share in those moments. Jung's theory of "collective unconscious" (3) as it pertains to the universal human experience over valuing the individual along with CRT as a pedagogical philosophy encouraged me to provide the revisited model of the hero's journey and to include overcoming prejudice and discrimination as a necessary step on the journey- the more inclusive framework created in this practicum should aid students in their overall understanding of the modern hero and further their engagement in the reading and writing classroom. The importance of narrative composition and allowing students to make their own choices to foster their love of reading and their own agency whilst reflecting on the call accepted or the call refused in their own lives allows educators focus on a necessary truth: students are human beings who are diverse, and they deserve to read stories that reflect who they are. In the end, any framework, pattern, or conceptualization of the hero's journey is unceasing- therefore, I leave my students with this question: "what will your next adventure be?"

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