

Types of Heroes

(Adapted from Vogler, 1999, pp. 41–44)

Willing, active, gung-ho heroes: (Tarzan, King Arthur, Luke Skywalker)

- committed to the adventure
- without doubts
- always bravely going ahead
- self-motivated

Unwilling heroes: (Frodo Baggins, Spiderman, Han Solo)

- full of doubts
- hesitant
- passive
- needing to be motivated or pushed into the adventure by an outside force
- usually change at some point and become committed to the adventure

Anti-heroes: (Billy the Kid, Jack Sparo, “Bride” from *Kill Bill*)

- specialised kind of hero
- may be outlaws or villains from the point of view of society
- audience is in sympathy with them
- they may win in the end over society’s corruption
- rebels

Tragic heroes: (Darth Vader, Brutus)

- flawed heroes
- never overcome their inner demons
- brought down and destroyed by inner demons
- may be charming
- their flaw wins in the end

Group-oriented heroes: (Nemo, Simba)

- are a part of society at the beginning
- journey takes them to unknown land far from home
- separate from group – have lone adventure in the wilderness away from the group which they eventually rejoin

Loner heroes: (Indiana Jones, Incredible Hulk)

- story begins with hero apart from society
- natural habitat is the wilderness
- natural state is solitude
- journey is one of re-entry into the group, an adventure within the group, then a return to isolation

Catalyst heroes: (Teacher from *Dead Poets Society*, any mentor)

- central figures who act heroically
- don’t change much themselves
- main function is to bring about change in others

The Hero's Journey
A Lesson Before Dying
Modern Literature

Names in Group:

Hour _____

With the members of your group, determine how Grant matches up against the archetypal heroic journey (as identified by Joseph Campbell). For each stage of the journey, describe how Grant does or does not fit. You must make specific references to the book by accurately summarizing or using quotes. All examples must have page references listed.

Within the hero's "normal" world: The normal world – setting, characters, beliefs, that the hero inhabits

Call to adventure: The hero is presented with a problem, challenge or adventure

Refusal of the call: The hero hesitates because of fear – something happens to further tempt the hero to take up the challenge

The mentor: Someone to advise or guide the hero is introduced

Outside the hero's "normal" world: The hero commits to undertaking the challenge and agrees to face the consequences

Tests, allies, enemies: A series of further problems to test the hero along the way

Approach the inmost cave: The edge of the most dangerous place in this other world

Ordeal: The hero confronts her/his greatest fear – the height of suspense and tension in the story

Reward: The hero seizes the object of the quest e.g. Knowledge that leads to a better "ordinary" world, a magic key or grail or an insight

Return to the “ordinary” world, the road back: The hero still has to deal with the consequences of the reward: evil forces might pursue him/her

Resurrection: The turning point for the hero who is forced to use this new knowledge or magic object to prevent his/her own “death”

Return with the elixir: The hero returns to the ordinary world with new knowledge, or object to heal or benefit the ordinary world