

The Hero's Journey – General Information

Joseph Campbell, a well-known mythological scholar, first described the Hero's journey. The journey is generally considered to have seven major steps:

The Call to Adventure
Refusal of the call
Assistance
The Point of No Return
The Road of Trials
Temptation and Triumph
Return.

While not every myth has all seven categories, most heroes' journeys contain at least five of the steps.

The Hero's Journey – Step Explanations

- The Call to Adventure
 - This is the point in the hero's life when he/she first hears that he/she is going to be asked to undertake some difficult task.
 - Some heroes will see this task as their responsibility but others will have to have the task assigned to him/her by an outside force.
- Refusal of the Call
 - Often when the call is given, the future hero refuses to listen.
 - Reasons for ignoring the summons can include:
 - A sense of duty or obligation to whatever the hero is currently doing.
 - Insecurity in the hero's ability to accomplish the task.
 - Fear of the task itself.
- Assistance
 - Once the hero has accepted the task, whether or not he/she wants to do it, a guide or assistant will appear. Sometimes this assistance is supernatural (help from a god) and sometimes it's just a companion so the hero is not alone on the quest.
- The Point of No Return
 - This is the point that the hero actually begins the adventure leaving behind his/her normal world and task to enter into the unknown and possibly dangerous world where rules and limits are unknown.
- The Road of Trials
 - This is the series of tests, tasks or ordeals the hero must go through to achieve his/her goal.
 - The hero often fails the tests in some way allowing the hero to learn
 - Tests often come in groups of three.
- Temptation and Triumph
 - This is the step where the hero may choose to abandon or stray from the task and must reconcile his/her wants and needs with the requirements of the task.
 - Once the hero decides to continue on the task and finds purpose in what he/she is doing, the challenge is overcome and the hero accomplishes the mission.
- Return
 - The hero returns to his/her original starting point with the knowledge or actual objects of the quest.
 - The hero sometimes needs assistance in returning with the wisdom or object of the quest due to the physical and mental challenges of the task.