



# 12 Stages of the Hero's Journey

## 1. ORDINARY WORLD

This is where the Hero exists before his present story begins, oblivious of the adventures to come. He is as human as we are, which makes it easier for us to identify with him and, empathize with his plight.

## 2. CALL TO ADVENTURE

The Hero's adventure begins when he receives a call to action, such as a threat to his safety, his family, his way of life or to the peace of the community. This disrupts the comfort of the Hero's Ordinary World and presents a challenge or quest that must be undertaken.

## 3. REFUSAL OF THE CALL

Although the Hero may be eager to accept the quest, at this stage he will have fears that need overcoming. When this happens, the Hero will refuse the call and as a result may suffer somehow.

## 4. MEETING THE MENTOR

The Hero desperately needs guidance. He meets a mentor figure who serves to dispel his doubts and fears and give him the strength and courage to begin his quest.

## 5. CROSSING THE THRESHOLD

The Hero now begins his quest, whether it be physical, spiritual or emotional. He finally crosses the threshold from his familiar world into the unfamiliar world. This signifies his commitment to his journey.

## 6. TESTS, ALLIES, ENEMIES

The Hero is confronted with more difficult challenges. He may earn allies and meet enemies who will help prepare him for the greater ordeals ahead. His skills and powers are tested and every obstacle that he faces helps us gain a deeper insight into his character and identify with him even more.

## 7. APPROACH TO THE INMOST CAVE

The inmost cave maybe literal or figurative. As he approaches the cave he makes final preparations before stepping into the unknown. At the threshold to the inmost cave the Hero may once again face some of the doubts and fears, which helps us understand the magnitude of the ordeal and escalates the tension in anticipation of his ultimate test.

## 8. ORDEAL

The Supreme Ordeal may be a dangerous physical test or a deep inner crisis. He must draw on all of his skills and experiences gathered on the path to the inmost cave to overcome this challenge. Only through some form of "death" can he be reborn, experiencing a metaphorical resurrection that grants him greater power or insight to fulfil his destiny. If he fails, he will either die or live as he knows it will never be the same again.

## 9. REWARD (SEIZING THE SWORD)

After defeating the enemy, surviving death and overcoming his greatest challenge, the Hero is transformed into a stronger person and often with a prize. However, celebrations are delayed as he prepares for the final part of his journey.

## 10. THE ROAD BACK

This is the stage of his return. He must return home with his reward to an acclaim, vindication or absolution. He may need one last push back into the Ordinary World when he must choose between a personal objective and a Higher Cause.



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## 11. RESURRECTION

This is the climax. The Hero must have his final encounter with death. If he fails, others will suffer. Ultimately the Hero will succeed, destroy his enemy and emerge from battle cleansed and reborn.

## 12. RETURN WITH THE ELIXIR

The Hero returns to his Ordinary World a changed man. He returns with fresh hope, a direct solution or a new perspective. The final reward which may be literal or metaphoric represents three things: change, success and proof of his journey. The return home also signals the need for resolution for the story's other key players.

Adapted from: <http://www.movieoutline.com/articles/the-hero-journey-mythic-structure-of-joseph-campbell-monomyth.html>