



African Literature 4 Africa

The Hero's Journey

Written Notes

1. THE BIRTH IN THE ORDINARY WORLD

Life circumstances are difficult and force a strength of character from an early age. Childhood is traditional but he grows in strength and courage.

2. THE CALLING

He is called to head into the unknown. The call disrupts the comfort of his world and presents a challenge that must be undertaken.

3. REFUSAL OF THE CALL

The Hero will refuse the call due to a fear or uncertainty that he experiences.

4. MEETING THE MENTOR

He meets a mentor who dispels his doubts and fears, and gives him the courage to begin his quest.

5. CROSSING THE THRESHOLD

The Hero now begins his quest, whether it be physical, spiritual or emotional. He leaves his world of common day into an entirely different realm.

6. TESTS, ALLIES, ENEMIES

Powerful forces of conflict and struggle are encountered. He will meet allies and enemies who will prepare him for the ordeal ahead. This shows the hero as moving from childish behaviour to self-reliance.

7. APPROACH TO THE INMOST CAVE

The threshold to the inmost cave may be symbolic. The Hero may again face doubts and fears, which help us to understand the magnitude of the ordeal and escalate the tension.

8. ORDEAL

Only through some form of "death" can he experience a metaphorical resurrection that enables him to fulfil his destiny. If he fails, he will either die or life as he knows it, will never be the same again.

9. REWARD (SEIZING THE SWORD)

The Hero is transformed into a stronger person and often with a prize. He prepares for the final part of his journey.

10. THE ROAD BACK

He must face his last obstacle, where he must choose between a personal objective and a Higher Cause, before he returns home with his reward.

11. RESURRECTION

One final test is required for the purification and rebirth of the hero. 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 with fresh hope, a direct solution or a new perspective. He returns with wisdom to share with the rest of the world.

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