



FINDING HEROES

INTRODUCTION

MODULE 1: INTRODUCTION

LESSON PLAN: LIFE IS A JOURNEY – THE HEROES JOURNEY

INTRODUCTION

Finding Heroes is focused on making a positive difference in our own lives and the lives of others. The philosophy is based on the premise that education is as much an academic pursuit as it is a personal journey of self-discovery.

Educators who can connect and relate to their students are far more likely to keep their students engaged in the academic aspects of schooling. Finding Heroes encourages and facilitates this deeper connection between you and your students and promotes an educational environment that is built upon mutual respect, trust, compassion and healthy wellbeing.

One of the key methods utilised in Finding Heroes is storytelling. Throughout history, storytelling has served as a powerful communication tool for humanity - a way for human beings to create meaning and purpose out of the random experiences and the chaos of life. Stories are filled with learning and wisdom that can guide us in decision-making and help us identify who we are and what we want from our lives. Stories empower us with the agency to create change in our lives by encouraging us to reflect, celebrate, acknowledge, and develop awareness of self, others and the world around us.

One of the most powerful aspects of storytelling is its ability to transcend the barriers of difference. Stories contain universal concepts and messages that speak to all humans, despite their age, culture, ethnicity, gender, social background or experience. By breaking down these barriers of difference, storytelling provides people with a space to cultivate empathy and connection in an environment of understanding and acceptance.

Finding Heroes harnesses this power of storytelling, and encourages students to share their thoughts, feelings and experiences through stories. Some of the method design also draws upon the use of symbols, metaphors and archetypes found in the studies of mythology and various storytelling methods. More specifically, this workshop introduces a famous 'storytelling' framework called 'The Heroes Journey', based on the works of Joseph Campbell. This framework can be drawn upon as a useful set of guidelines or 'map' to help you and your students navigate your way through the Finding Heroes program.

THEORY

'Finding Heroes' was originally inspired by the work of American Mythologist, writer and lecturer Joseph Campbell. Campbell advocated that there were universal symbols and consistent patterns found within the structures of myths and narratives found in various cultures and throughout different times around the world. In his book, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, Joseph Campbell identifies a basic, universal structure that exists within every story no matter where, when or how the narrative is told.

Campbell proposes that all stories contain variations of this basic structure and that essentially all stories are an individual's metaphoric expression of humanity's collective desire to engage in the never-ending spiritual search to understand the meaning of our very existence. He called this universal structure the 'Monomyth', which has now become better known as 'The Heroes Journey'. (For more information on the works of Joseph Campbell visit www.jcf.org)

Campbell's works on mythology have been inspired by various studies from psychology, anthropology and philosophy through to literature and the arts. Key influencers include psychologists Carl Jung and Sigmund



Freud, German philosophers Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, anthropologists James Frazer, Adolf Bastian and Otto Rank and writers James Joyce and Thomas Mann. Campbell's efforts have gone on to influence popular culture with many writers and filmmakers attributing their work and success to Campbell's 'Heroes Journey' model. Some of these include George Lucas' Star Wars Series, The Indiana Jones series, The Matrix Trilogy, and The Lion King.

In Christopher Vogler's book, *'The Writer's Journey: Mythic Structure For Writers'*, he simplifies Campbell's 'Heroes Journey' framework for the purposes of screenwriting analysis.

Inspired by Vogler's modified version, The Reach Foundation has created its own 'Heroes Journey' model, offering a simple and useful way for young people to apply the stages of the Heroes Journey framework to their everyday lives. The framework offers the students a means for understanding and benefiting from the fictional adventures of films and stories. Even if the characters aren't real, the journeys they take and challenges they face are reflections of the real journeys and challenges we all face in life. As students watch characters move through their quests, they can learn from their experiences.

The seven stages of The Reach Foundation's 'Heroes Journey' model include:

- 1) The Ordinary World
- 2) The Call to Adventure
- 3) The Special World
- 4) Test, Enemies, Allies
- 5) Slaying The Dragon
- 6) The Reward
- 7) The Return with the Elixir

The true power of this framework is that it can also be applied to 'real life' stories. By weaving together the stories of every day people and mixing them with the stories of established or fictional heroes as well as their own stories, students can begin to see that patterns emerge and that certain processes and ways of approaching challenges make it more likely for successful outcomes to occur.

Most importantly, the 'Heroes Journey' framework is a reflection of the pattern that we all follow in our own lives as we face challenges and move from child to teenager, from teenager to adult, from adult to old age, and from old age into death. The adventures we face will be challenging and exciting. They can open the doors to knowledge and understanding. If we understand the 'Heroes Journey' pattern, we will be better able to face difficulties and use our experiences to become stronger and more capable. Understanding this pattern can also help us achieve wisdom, growth, and independence, and taking our 'Heroes Journey' can help us become the people we want to be.

Tip

In 2011, a documentary film called 'Finding Joe' was released which demonstrates how Joseph Campbell's work and 'The Heroes Journey' influences our culture and how the framework can be a powerful tool to achieving fulfilment in life. For additional preparation prior to this workshop, it is recommended you watch this film which is available for purchase or rent via itunes.

OBJECTIVES

The following workshop is designed to allow students to:

- Be introduced to the 'Heroes Journey' Framework.
- Learn about the origins of the 'Heroes Journey' Framework.
- Practice identifying the 'Heroes Journey' pattern in films, stories and personal experiences
- Learn and explore how the 'Heroes Journey' pattern exists in our day-to-day lives.
- Utilize the 'Heroes Journey' framework to gain a deeper understanding of our experiences and the experiences of others.

- Learn how the 'Heroes Journey' framework can assist in drawing lessons and wisdom that can be applied to decision-making and behavioural choices.
- Develop an overall understanding of the 'Heroes Journey' framework and how it can be used as a tool during 'Finding Heroes' sessions throughout the year.

SET UP

- Laptop to screen the following clips:
 - 'Finding Joe' Documentary Trailer (2.12 min)
<http://findingjoethemovie.com/>
 - The Hero's Journey' Monomyth (7.18 min)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SB_Q1gFsvlw
- The 'Heroes Journey' Stages written on seven large (A3) posters and handing around the room OR: Can be written on white board.

ACTIVITY RUNNING SHEET AND SCRIPT

Remind the class of the three Finding Hero participation agreements:

- Show respect and listen – hands up
- What is said in the room stays in the room, and
- Be honest, open and courageous.

ACTIVITY 1: The Heroes Journey

First, set up this activity by introducing the students to the power of storytelling with a brief discussion. Ask them to share examples of what a 'story' is and why we tell them. Draw upon the 'Introduction' section of this workshop to guide your discussion.

Next, explain to your students that you will be introducing them to a storytelling framework called the 'Heroes Journey' by exploring a film (which is a visual story). Before the session, select a film that you would like to use for this activity. There are several films that we have identified as being appropriate for demonstrating the seven stages of the Heroes Journey. You may however wish to find your own film, which you believe will best suit your students. Ideally, you would select a film that most of your students have seen or heard about.

Suggested films:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warrior • Milk • Inception • Braveheart • Good Will Hunting • Titanic • The Fighter • Shawshank Redemption • Hurricane • Erin Brockovich • 8 Mile • Money Ball 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Beautiful Mind • The Pursuit of Happiness • Avatar • Star Wars • The Wizard of Oz • The Matrix • Twilight • Little Miss Sunshine • Coach Carter • Freedom Writers • Batman 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Matrix • Twilight • Bridesmaids • Get Rick of Die Trying • Forrest Gump • Fight Club • The Social Network • Harry Potter series • Gladiator • Slumdog Millionaire • Million Dollar Baby • The Hurt Locker
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Instructions

- 1) First begin by giving a brief introduction to The Heroes Journey concept drawing upon the information in the 'Introduction' and 'Theory' sections of this workshop. You may choose to screen the trailer outlined in the Set Up section as a way of introducing the framework. Make sure you have the list of the 'Heroes Journey' stages as a reference either pinned up on poster paper or written on the whiteboard.

The 'Heroes Journey' Stages include:

- The Ordinary World
 - The Call to Adventure
 - The Special World
 - Test, Enemies, Allies
 - Slaying The Dragon
 - The Reward
 - The Return with the Elixir
- 2) Explain that this workshop will be about exploring the 'Heroes Journey' Stages and that you will do this together as a class using films and personal stories as examples.

Tip

In addition to using a chosen film to explain the stages of The Heroes Journey, this is a great opportunity for you to share your own Heroes Journey with your students. Find a story from your own life that you can refer to as an additional 'real life' example of how the Heroes Journey pattern exists in every day life. This will encourage students to share their own stories throughout the activity. The more examples shared, the deeper your students will understand this framework.

- 3) Now explain and guide your students through each of the „Heroes Journey“ Stages using the following information as a guideline:

Tip

You may like to use the following clip to assist the process: The Hero's Journey/Monomyth (7.18 min) http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SB_Q1gFsvlw. This clip explains the monomyth, or Hero's Journey, with examples from films such as The Matrix, Star Wars, Harry Potter, and the Lord of the Rings.

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