

Hero's Journey Template

Use the prompts to outline your own film. Add or remove sections to suit your project. The worked example follows the blank worksheet.

Project _____ Writer _____

1 Familiar life

What does life look like before the adventure?

2 Invitation to change

What opportunity or problem calls for action?

3 Hesitation

Why might the character resist?

4 Guidance

What help or insight prepares the character?

5 Crossing into the unknown

What action commits them to the new situation?

6 Tests and relationships

What challenges reveal allies, rivals and weaknesses?

Hero's Journey Template

Continue your outline and check how the character has changed.

Project _____ Writer _____

7 Preparing for the central trial

What brings the character towards the greatest challenge?

8 The major ordeal

What forces the character to confront loss or danger?

9 Gain or insight

What do they gain, learn or recover?

10 The way back

What still stands between them and lasting change?

11 Final test of change

What shows that the character now acts differently?

12 Changed return

What benefit or insight can now be shared?

Worked film example

Star Wars: A New Hope (1977)

12-stage framework credited to Christopher Vogler, influenced by Joseph Campbell. Cineview's film mapping is an interpretation, not a claim that all stages match exactly. Spoilers follow.

- 1 Familiar life** Luke works on Tatooine.
- 2 Invitation to change** Leia's message creates a new purpose.
- 3 Hesitation** Luke feels tied to home.
- 4 Guidance** Obi-Wan introduces the Force.
- 5 Crossing into the unknown** Luke leaves with Obi-Wan.
- 6 Tests and relationships** Han joins the journey; danger grows.
- 7 Preparing for the central trial** The group enters the Death Star.
- 8 The major ordeal** Leia is rescued; Obi-Wan is lost.
- 9 Gain or insight** The group escapes with Leia.
- 10 The way back** They prepare the Rebel attack.
- 11 Final test of change** Luke trusts the Force in the attack.
- 12 Changed return** The Rebels celebrate a changed Luke.

How to use the worksheet

Start with character change. Write the belief, fear or limitation the character begins with, then identify what might challenge it.

Adapt the stages. Combine, reorder or omit stages when your story calls for it. “Return” can mean a changed situation rather than a literal trip home.

Compare a film critically. Map a film you know, then mark where the framework fits loosely. The model helps you ask questions; it does not guarantee a successful film.

References

Lucasfilm — Star Wars A New Hope

<https://www.lucasfilm.com/productions/episode-iv/>

Christopher Vogler interview

<https://filmcouragevideos.wordpress.com/2024/02/14/12-stages-of-the-heros-journey-narrated-by-christopher-vogler/>

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