

Module 2: Self-Discovery Through Change and Rebirth

Topic 2 Content: The Hero's Journey

The Hero's Journey



Joseph Campbell described "The Hero Journey" or "The Hero Cycle" as one basic genre or writing pattern found in stories from every culture. You are going to learn more about the Hero Cycle and then analyze *The Epic of Gilgamesh* using it.

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Call to Adventure



In the Hero Cycle, the hero does not start off as a heroic figure. He or she appears to be a plain, ordinary, everyday person engaged in commonplace tasks until he or she receives a call to adventure when someone asks for help. This call to adventure can take many forms.

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The Mentor

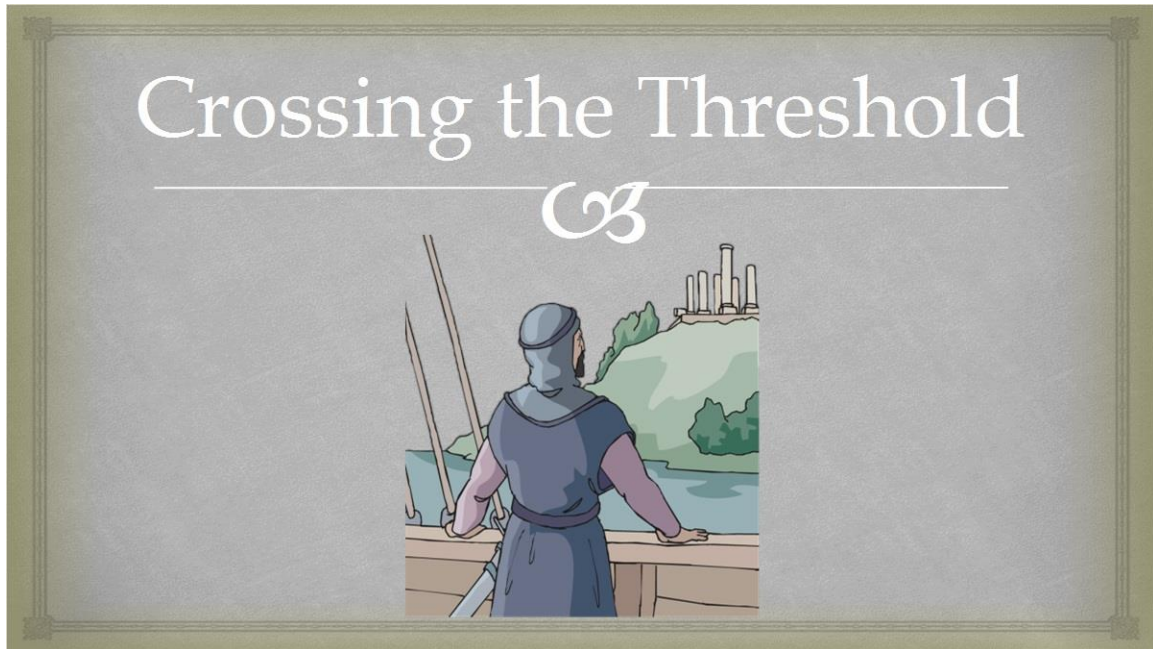


As he or she travels, the hero meets a mentor who helps by giving advice or an object that assists on the journey. This gift may have supernatural powers, spiritual powers, or it may just be a piece of information to help the hero.

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Crossing the Threshold

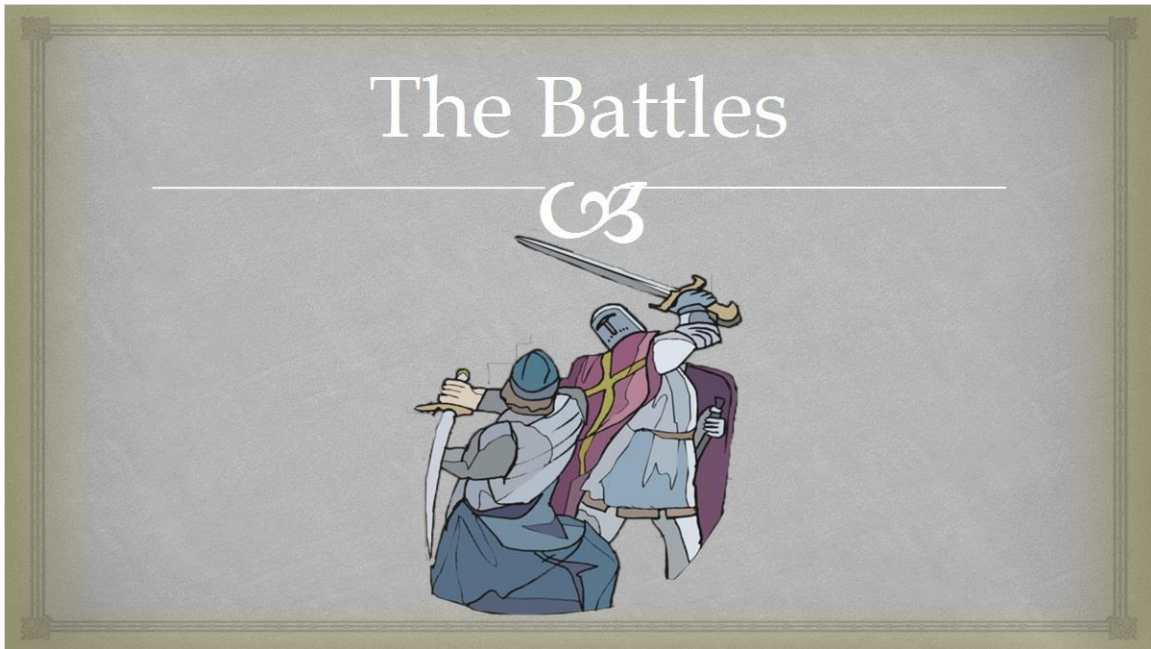


At some point along the journey, the hero (possibly accompanied by companions) will cross a threshold to step into another place. This indicates a change point as the hero begins a transformation. If the hero crosses a threshold with a group of friends, the entire group will experience the change.

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The Battles

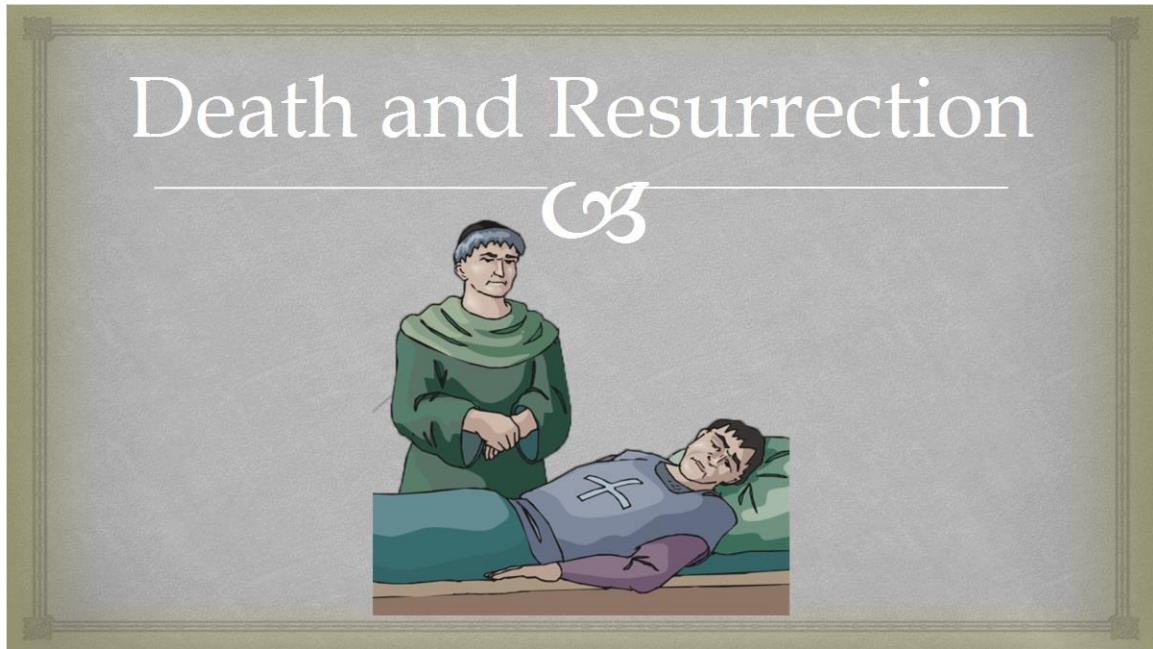


Typically, three battles occur. Though often actual battles such as **person vs. person** or **person vs. nature**, these conflicts can be internal, such as **person vs. self**.

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Death and Resurrection



As a result of the third battle, the hero, who is alone, undergoes some sort of death and resurrection. It does not need to be a physical death and resurrection; it could be an emotional, spiritual, or figurative one.

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The Transformation



Now that the hero is transformed, he or she can return to a changed society. Think how most fairy tales end with the line, "And they lived happily ever after..."