

CENTER FOR CONTEMPORARY ARTS YOUTH PARTNERS PROGRAM PRESENTS

STORY ARCHETYPES

PSYCHOLOGICAL AND DRAMATIC FUNCTIONS



OBJECTIVES

LESSON AND CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

- 
- TO IDENTIFY PSYCHOLOGICAL AND DRAMATIC FUNCTIONS OF 8 STORY ARCHETYPES
 - TO ANALYZE 8 STORY ARCHETYPES USING POP CULTURE FILMS
 - TO DEVELOP ORIGINAL ARCHETYPES USING THE SUPERHERO FILM GENRE
 - TO DRAW ARCHETYPES FOR AN ORIGINAL SUPERHERO STORYBOARD

INTRODUCTION

JUNG, CAMPBELL AND VOGLER



"...[A]rchetypes are the unconscious images of the instincts themselves, in other words, they are patterns of instinctual behaviour."

- C.G. Jung, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*



"The archetypes to be discovered and assimilated are precisely those that have inspired... the basic images of ritual, mythology, and vision."

- Joseph Campbell, *The Hero With a Thousand Faces*



"[Archetypes are] constantly repeating characters or energies which occur in the dreams of all people and the myths of all cultures."

- Christopher Vogler, *The Writer's Journey*

INTRODUCTION

PSYCHOLOGICAL AND DRAMATIC FUNCTION

From the beginning, we have created and absorbed story in order to understand ourselves and our roles in the larger community. To master the foundations of storytelling, the Center for Contemporary Arts invites you to explore and identify archetypes; psychological and dramatic story functions that will guide you in the creation of your own superhero tale!

In the early 1900s, Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung described archetypes as “ancient patterns of personality that are the shared heritage of the human race.” While analyzing dreams, Jung theorized that everyone houses multiple personalities that define who we are. To better understand these personalities, we can attempt to analyze our dreams, or we can turn to the ancient and universal evidence of storytelling.

Professor Joseph Campbell coined the term *The Hero's Journey* when his investigations of myth and folklore confirmed that most stories are projections of a journey in which a hero confronts forces that help or hinder them, ultimately shaping who they become. These are the forces of archetypes. And we are the heroes.

While comparing Hero's Journey tales, Campbell noted that the forces of archetypes served a primary **psychological function**: to evoke subconscious energies that bring about a hero's growth and enlightenment. Since Campbell's teachings, researchers such as Christopher Vogler, author of *The Writer's Journey*, have further described archetypes as serving a secondary **dramatic function**: to drive narrative plot forward.

Though there are as many archetypes as there are personalities (appearing as characters, temporary personalities, symbols or even inner manifestations of the hero), Vogler narrows the scope down to the following eight most common archetypes: **Hero, Shadow, Mentor, Herald, Threshold Guardian, Ally, Shapeshifter and Trickster.**

HERO

“ARROGANCE AND FEAR STILL KEEP YOU FROM
LEARNING THE MOST SIGNIFICANT LESSON OF ALL:
IT’S NOT ABOUT YOU.”

~ THE ANCIENT ONE, DOCTOR STRANGE

At its Greek root, the word hero means “to protect and serve.” If stories are metaphors for our real-life experiences, then the hero is our window into the metaphor; our means of relatability and empathy. Every time we read a book or watch a movie, we subconsciously or consciously cast ourselves as the hero, and therefore allow their experiences and decisions to temporarily be our own. Regardless of how different or similar we are to the hero, there is an act of self-projection that allows us to evoke traits in ourselves and perhaps show us who we could be in the larger scheme of things. In superhero movies today, for instance, we follow flawed heroes who must learn from their mistakes and absorb energies from outside sources before they can protect and serve.

HERO

PSYCHOLOGICAL FUNCTION

Christopher Vogler writes that in psychological terms, the hero represents the ego - "that part of the personality that separates from the mother, that considers itself distinct from the rest of the human race." Once the hero leaves what Joseph Campbell calls their ordinary world and enters the extraordinary world, the hero will explore their ego. However, during this time, they must be willing to absorb the personalities of the archetypes that enter their journey and ultimately "transcend the bounds and illusions of [their] ego."

[A hero] learns from the other characters, fusing them into a complete human being who has picked up something from everyone she has met along the way. (Vogler)

The exchange of archetype energy is needed for internal balance so that the hero's new identity becomes a force for change in their community. If the hero fails to absorb the energy of the archetypes, there is a danger of becoming what Campbell calls the "dangerous tyrant holdfast," the hoarder of benefits which lives in the realm of shadow.

HERO

DRAMATIC FUNCTION

- To Reveal Flaws - Heroes must have flaws in order to be relatable. Trial and error provide character arcs; a chance for improvement.
- To Take Action - The hero is typically the most active character; in control of their will and desire, they take the most risk and responsibility.
- To Grow - The hero tends to be the character who learns and changes the most in the course of the story. The absorption of archetypes is part of this growth.
- To Sacrifice - Dramatic story tends to call for sacrifice, an act of giving something up to gain something. The sacrifice might be the hero's old way of life, a loved one, a certain internal quality, etc.
- To Confront Death - Another common quality of dramatic story is the hero's confrontation with death either physically or symbolically. The death of the old allows birth of new knowledge; or once confronted with mortality, the hero may see death as having no power over them; or perhaps the hero may willingly sacrifice themselves for the greater good, becoming martyrs.

HERO

THE TYPES



WILLING HERO

From the beginning, these heroes are active, committed and brave.

They are called romantic, soldier-like, patriotic or classical. Many Western examples come from Greek and Roman mythology.

Wonder Woman is a willing hero who has ventured from her island of the Amazons to fight in World War II, where she means to defeat Ares, the god of war.

UNWILLING HERO

Before their journey, these heroes are doubtful, hesitant, and/or passive. These heroes tend to be pushed into adventure by external forces but must resolve to continue their journey.

Katniss Everdeen volunteers to replace her younger sister in the reaping of the Hunger Games. Though it is her decision to volunteer, the games themselves are forced upon the children of her district and Katniss must decide the worth of her own survival.



ANTI-HERO / FALLEN HERO

Considered an outlaw or villain, this hero is basically sympathetic. They act like conventional heroes but display cynicism or a wounded quality. A second type of Anti-Hero is the Fallen Hero, a central figure that never overcomes their inner demons and allows their flaws to get the best of them. They become a Shadow.

Batman (left) fights crime as a vigilante, sometimes working with the police and sometimes working against them. Though Batman keeps a personal code, he often makes choices that label him the villain by his fellow man. Anakin Skywalker (right) begins as a prophesized hero on the side of good, but when he fails to battle his inner demons, becomes a pawn of the dark side instead.



GROUP-ORIENTED HERO

Group-oriented heroes operate as part of a tribe or society and must leave their home in order to bring back new knowledge. Most heroes are group-oriented to some degree, and in Western storytelling, heroes will return to their ordinary world. Other cultures, however, value the hero remaining in the extraordinary world as a boon.

As future King of Pride Rock, Simba is responsible for his tribe. After the death of his father, however, Simba runs away from home only to find the call for his return not far behind.



LONER HERO

This hero is an estranged member of society and typically lives in isolation. Once their journey begins, they must join a group to accomplish a task and then either return to their isolation or remain with the group.

The most popular example of the Loner Hero is the mysterious gunslinger of the Western genre. Clint Eastwood's many roles fit into this category because these characters consider themselves independent with personal codes that keep them alive. Every now and then, however, they let their guard down to make friends.

CATALYST HERO

Catalyst Heroes act heroically, but don't have as large of a learning arc as other heroes. Their purpose instead is to change those around them, encouraging them to step up as heroes themselves.

Esmeralda already has great courage upon entering Paris. In the course of the story, her task is then to encourage Quasimodo and Phoebus to join her in her rebellion against the oppressive Judge Frollo.



ACTIVITY 1A

IDENTIFY THE HERO

Now it's your turn. Think of a movie you enjoy and make sure you know it well because you will be referring to it for the proceeding lessons. Write the movie and the movie's hero at the top of your page.

Using details from your selected movie, give evidence for the following dramatic and psychological functions of your selected hero.

1. What are the hero's flaws?
2. What important actions do they take in the course of the story?
3. How do they change or grow by the end of the film?
4. Does the hero make any sacrifices? If so, what are they (their old life, someone they love, a part of themselves, etc.)?
5. Does the hero confront any literal or metaphoric death? If so, what insights do they gain from it?
6. Based on Vogler's descriptions of hero types, what categories do they fit into and why?
7. In your opinion, did the hero successfully complete the psychological journey of absorption, growth and return to the ordinary world? Give evidence or draw a diagram of their journey.

ACTIVITY 1B

CREATE A SUPERHERO

Using what you know about the hero archetype, it's time to create your own using the superhero genre!

A superhero follows all the dramatic and psychological rules of a hero but typically possess super-human abilities or out-of-this-world powers. Keep in mind that the universe of a superhero film falls under Fantasy but can also take elements from other genres like Science-Fiction, Horror, Romance, Comedy, etc.

Imagine you are a superhero called to save your community. The proceeding lessons will add to this exercise, leading to a storyboard of a short superhero tale.

1. What's your name (pedestrian and/or superhero)? What's your gender and age? As a superhero, how do you appear to others?
2. What are your initial flaws and what does your ordinary world look like?
3. What superpowers do you have? How did you get them and how do you use them?
4. Considering your ordinary world, what type of hero are you and what makes you that type of hero? Note: this is an opportunity to consider potential plot.
5. Draw yourself in your superhero uniform.

SHADOW

“THERE IS AN EVIL IN THIS WORLD...
AND I CANNOT KEEP YOU FROM IT.”

~ MALEFICENT



If heroes are the boon for change and growth, the Shadow works against that change. Campbell describes this opposition as a natural force of balance inside all of us. When tipped too far toward the shadow, however, that energy can manifest in varying degrees in characters called antagonists, villains and enemies.

Villains and enemies are usually dedicated to the death, destruction, or defeat of the hero. Antagonists may not be quite so hostile- they may be Allies who are after the same goal but who disagree with the hero's tactics. Antagonists and heroes in conflict are like horses in a team pulling in different directions, while villains and heroes in conflict are like trains on a head-on collision. (Vogler)

SHADOW

PSYCHOLOGICAL AND DRAMATIC FUNCTION

PSYCHOLOGICAL

Each of us house an inner prison for things we don't like about ourselves; fears, bad habits, painful memories, self-doubt, etc. This is where the energy of the Shadow archetype thrives; in the repressed, traumatic and denied parts of our unconscious minds. Caught in the shadows, however, may also live positive qualities we have hidden or rejected, but as long as the negative face lingers, there remains potential of an inner force of destruction. In fact, the more the shadow is repressed, the more powerful and controlling it can become.

DRAMATIC

- Conflict - In dramatic structure, a key role of the Shadow is to challenge the hero and give them a "worthy opponent in the struggle." This not only provides conflict but allows the hero to rise to challenges and become their best selves.
- Shadow Mask - Compelling stories will use the conflicting energy of the Shadow in varying degrees throughout the story; existing in other characters, testing other characters or provoking inner struggle.
- Dynamic Shadow - Compelling too is the process of humanizing the Shadow. Flat villains tend to be forgettable whereas villains with vulnerabilities, flaws or causes will evoke our sympathy and even have us rooting for them. It's important to note that most villains consider themselves heroes of their own stories and as such will be on their own journeys. A best-case scenario is redemption, when the Shadow is brought back to the light and their relationship with the hero is redefined.

SHADOW

EXAMPLES



Lord Voldemort represents extreme and dangerous Shadow energy. Fed by childhood wounds and lack of affection, Voldemort becomes bent on ultimate power by instilling fear in all.



Antagonists, while projecting some Shadow, don't always have to be evil or bad. In the film *Whale Rider*, both Koro and his granddaughter Paikea have the same hopes of reviving their Māori culture. But when Koro allows tradition to blind him, he too becomes an obstacle for the hero Paikea to overcome.



There can also be antagonists who originated in the light and due to trauma, have slipped into Shadow. Realizing that Te Fiti and Te Kā are the same spirit, Moana lovingly returns the goddess' heart and restores the light to her Polynesian village.



For compelling Shadow drama, one need only turn to tales from the Bible. When Moses is called by God to save his people, he must challenge his brother, the King of Egypt. Though they love each other, the brothers are meant to serve opposing goals, which brings out shadow traits in both.



In the modern retelling of Sleeping Beauty, Maleficent's journey is one of the defrosting ice queen. For the injustices of her past, her plans of revenge ironically turn to her means of forgiveness and redemption.



No matter the evil of the external Shadow, there is no greater battle to fight than the battle inside ourselves. When Meg Murry confronts her Shadow persona, she overcomes its power by accepting her faults and rising to her balanced self.

ACTIVITY 2A

IDENTIFY THE SHADOW

Now it's your turn. Identify the characters or personalities of the Shadow archetype from your chosen movie.

Using details, give evidence for the following dramatic and psychological functions of the Shadow.

1. Would you call the Shadow from this movie a villain, enemy or antagonist? Explain why.
2. What would you say are some repressed, traumatic, or denied factors of the Shadow? Do these factors feed their actions?
3. In what ways does the Shadow challenge the hero?
4. Does the Shadow show any signs of changing for the better in the movie? If so, how do they change? If they don't change, what do you think prevents them?

ACTIVITY 2B

CREATE A SHADOW

Using what you know about the Shadow archetype, it's time to create a villain for your superhero!

If you, as the superhero you created, had to battle a villain in order to save your community, what kind of villain would it be? An archenemy? A family member? A friend with different values than you? Your darker side?

1. What's your villain's name/title? What's their gender and age?
2. What are your villain's origins? Do they have any superpowers? If so, what are they?
3. What does your villain want from you, the superhero? Do you know them? If so, how does that affect your relationship with them? If you don't know them, are you sure they are a shadow you must battle?
4. What might be some insecurities causing the Shadow to battle you? Do you take this into account when confronting them? Would you want to try help them or are they beyond helping?
5. Draw your villain.

MENTOR

In *The Odyssey*, the character Mentor was Odysseus' trusted friend and counsellor before becoming a teacher to his son, Telemachus. Before going to war, the Greek goddess Athena assumes Mentor's form to accompany Telemachus on his journey. It's from this character we name and define the inspiring archetype of Mentor.

According to Vogler, Mentors in the classic sense were enthused, from the Greek word *entheos*, which means god-inspired, god in you, or the presence of god. As such, these teachers, wise-ones, parents and supernatural guides might "speak in the voice of God" or from "divine wisdom" because they have completed their own Hero's Journey and are destined now to guide others in theirs'.



**“THERE IS ALWAYS SOMETHING MORE TO
LEARN, EVEN FOR A MASTER.”**

~ MASTER OOGWAY, KONG FU PANDA

MENTOR

PSYCHOLOGICAL AND DRAMATIC FUNCTION

PSYCHOLOGICAL

- Higher Self - The Mentor represents the Higher Self, the hero who has absorbed the energies of the archetypes and shares their enlightenment with others.
- Divine Speaker - Because the accomplished Mentor has transcended their ego, they now have the ability to speak for the divine, the wise who work toward the good of all.
- Aspirations - Mentors continue to challenge and learn, constantly feeding their higher aspirations as well as the aspirations of their students.
- Parental - In many instances, Mentors are parents or act like parental figures; protecting, loving and even dying for those they teach. And like parents, they may instill important morals in the hero consciously or unconsciously.

DRAMATIC

- Teach. Protect. Guide - Once in the extraordinary world, the hero relies on the teaching, protection and guidance of their Mentors. This could mean coaching, training, studying, or self-reflection using an inner voice.
- Gifts - Another function Mentors serve is gift giving. Gifts can be magic weapons, keys, codes, medicine, or life-saving advice that comes at a critical time for the hero. Usually the gift is bestowed once the hero proves worthy of it; completing a training, showing growth, making a sacrifice, etc.
- Aid - If a Mentor also acts as an Ally, they can use their abilities and wisdom to help in the hero's trials and battles.
- Planting - Mentors can plant information or a prop that will be used by the hero at a critical time. This may tie in the beginning and end elements of plot as well.
- Motivation - Lastly, Mentors might provide much-needed motivation, especially for an unwilling hero. They give that first push or help the hero overcome initial fear.

MENTOR

THE TYPES



DARK MENTOR

Dark Mentors will dwell in the realm of Shadow, acting like Mentors but often misleading the hero or luring them into danger.

Silver, based on the infamous Long John Silver from the novel *Treasure Island*, acts as Jim's mentor in the movie *Treasure Planet*. Once it's clear that Silver's intentions are driven by thievery and self-interest, Jim must separate himself from his Mentor to survive.



FALLEN MENTOR

Fallen Mentors were on a Hero's Journey but experienced a crisis of faith, leaving them incomplete. Often heroes need these Mentors to pull it together and redeem themselves in order to finish the journey and become whole.

In order to compete in the first Jamaican bobsled team, four competitors urge a disgraced coach to overcome his past and prepare them for the Winter Olympics.



MENTOR AS WISE OLD WOMAN OR MAN

Joseph Campbell calls the healers of myth and folklore the "wise old women" or "wise old men." One of their defining traits is an ability to travel to other worlds through dreams and visions in order to bring stories back to heal their tribe. They may also assist the hero in vision quests.

Moana's grandmother is in touch with the spirits of her ancestors and uses their powers to aid her granddaughter.



MENTOR MASK

Sometimes other characters will wear the mask of Mentor to fulfill functions like providing wisdom and guidance. Children and mad characters are two examples of underestimated Mentors.

The Mad Hatter may speak absurdly or nonsensically, but sometimes we need to hear wisdom in unique ways to interpret new meaning.

INNER MENTOR

Common in Westerns and film noir is the hardened hero who has no need for a Mentor. They instead use an unspoken code and notions of honor instilled previously by figures in their life.

MENTOR AS THRESHOLD GUARDIAN

Sometimes Mentors who harbor fear or jealousy may temporarily stand in the way of the hero's entrance into the extraordinary world. The message of this threshold is that sometimes students must outgrow their Mentors.

CONTINUING/MULTIPLE/COMIC MENTOR

Continuing Mentors appear in long-form storytelling, often giving assignments or setting stories in motion (i.e. Alfred in Batman movies). Some Heroes benefit from having multiple Mentors for specific aspects of their journey (i.e. James Bond's crew). And in the genre of Romantic Comedy, the hero's best friend could give advice that's usually disastrous before it turns out beneficial.

ACTIVITY 3A

IDENTIFY THE MENTOR

Now it's your turn. Identify the characters or personalities of the Mentor archetype from your chosen movie.

Using details from your selected movie, give evidence for the following dramatic and psychological functions of the Mentor.

1. In what ways does the Mentor teach, motivate or protect the hero?
2. Does the Mentor give any gift or critical information to the hero? If so, what is it and how does the hero use it?
3. Does the Mentor bestow any moral codes, conscious, or spiritual vision? If so, what are they and how does the hero use them?
4. What categories of Mentor do they fit into best? Give evidence.
5. Does the Mentor have flaws? If so, what are they and how do they effect their mentoring? If they don't show many flaws, would you say they speak from a higher plane of existence, "with the voice of God"? If so, what characteristics do they exhibit of that higher existence?

ACTIVITY 2B

CREATE A MENTOR

Using what you know about the Mentor archetype, it's time to create one for your superhero!

If you, as the superhero, had a guide, teacher or protector on your journey, who or what would you want them to be?

1. What is your Mentor's name/title? What's their age and gender? How do they appear to others (if others can see them)?
2. What type of Mentor are they and why?
3. Do you already have a relationship with your Mentor? If not, what type of relationship develops (i.e. parental, coach, spirit guide, wise friend, inner voice, etc.)?
4. In what ways does your Mentor teach, motivate or protect you as the superhero?
5. What flaws, if any, does your Mentor have? How can you, as the hero, help them change those flaws?
6. If your Mentor were to give you life-changing advice or a special gift, what would you want them to give you and why?

HERALD

A woman with long, flowing white hair and a shimmering, textured dress, standing in a field. The image is overlaid with a dark green tint.

“WE HEARD A CALL,
OUT IN THE UNIVERSE.”

~ MRS. WHICH, A WRINKLE IN TIME

The Herald - whether it be a character, an event or an inner voice - issues challenges and announces the coming of change. In many Hero's Journey stories, the Herald appears in the ordinary world to upset the status quo, but after its appearance the Hero must decide to take new action or be forced into it.

HERALD

PSYCHOLOGICAL AND DRAMATIC FUNCTION

PSYCHOLOGICAL

If nature in all of its forms favors balance, as Campbell records, our psyches too understand the need for it. Though in storytelling the call for action might come from an external source, it's our inner voices that call us as well and we should take comfort in knowing that we have the forces of nature on our side as we accept our quest.

DRAMATIC

- Action - In addition to the hero, the Herald may also promise the audience that something out-of-the-ordinary is going to happen and as such, may get the ball rolling on the action.
- Messenger - The Herald may be a means of delivering news, alerting others of danger or summoning forces for war.
- Issue Challenge - There may be a challenge component attached to the Herald, in which case, the hero may begin to be tested even before entering the extraordinary world.
- Extraordinary World - Lastly, the Herald may give the audience and the hero a glimpse into the extraordinary world they'll soon enter.

HERALD

EXAMPLES



Charlie's Herald is an invitation to the world-famous chocolate factory. Though it is a chance selection, the audience understands that Charlie's life is in particular need of change.



The legendary circumstances of the Sanderson sister's return to Salem are met when Max lights the black-flame candle on Halloween night, presenting him with the problem of three dangerous witches.



Effie acts as a Herald by selecting tributes for the next Hunger Games. Under threat from higher society, these heroes have little choice but to participate.

THRESHOLD GUARDIAN

“YOU MUST COMPLETE THREE TASKS
BEFORE THE MOON IS FULL.”

~ FAUN, PAN'S LABYRINTH

Inevitably, the hero will encounter obstacles on the road of adventure. These obstacles test and challenge the hero, making them worthy of continuing on. One common obstacle is the threshold into the extraordinary world, and the one who guards it.

THRESHOLD GUARDIAN

PSYCHOLOGICAL FUNCTION

While the physical passageways of Thresholds and their Guardians are a compelling visual in adventure stories, they are often accompanied with an inner challenge. Initial thresholds may fill the hero with doubt and regret as they have just left their ordinary world behind and fear of change is fresh on their minds. When separated from the shelter of their ordinary worlds, inner demons such as neuroses, emotional scars, vices, dependencies, and self-limitations make the first crossing all the more courageous. The same is true for thresholds that may come later in the journey.

In daily life, you have probably encountered resistance when you try to make a positive change in your life. People around you, even those who love you, are often reluctant to see you change. They are used to your neuroses and have found ways to benefit from them. The idea of your changing may threaten them. If they resist you, it's important to realize they are simply functioning as Threshold Guardians, testing you to see if you are really resolved to change. (Vogler)

THRESHOLD GUARDIAN

DRAMATIC FUNCTION



- Worthiness - Threshold Guardians test the hero's worthiness with tasks, riddles or physical altercations. If determined enough, the hero adjusts, battles, bypasses or befriends the Threshold Guardian in order to proceed.
- Guardian Defeat - Outwitting or persuading the Guardian to the hero's side are also possible options. Another is deceiving the Guardian by "entering into its spirit or taking on its appearance," as Vogler writes.
- Growth - Whatever form the Guardian and the challenge takes, the defeat forces growth. If not yet ready, the hero may have to turn back until they have matured sufficiently to handle the task.

THRESHOLD GUARDIAN

EXAMPLES



In Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex*, the Guardian Sphinx gives the following riddle to Oedipus: Which creature walks on four legs in the morning two legs in the afternoon and three legs in the evening? Legend has it, Oedipus was the first to answer correctly: man.



In *Harry Potter*, the legend of the Deathly Hallows describes how three gifts were given to three brothers by the Threshold Guardian, Death. Supposedly, the third brother proved the wisest, growing worthy of the gift gained in his passage.



Dorothy friends - Scarecrow, Tinman and Lion - dress in guard uniforms in order to cross the witch's Threshold. Disguise is also a function of Shapeshifting which you will learn in a future lesson.



In *The Princess Bride*, The Man in Black must defeat three foes in order to rescue his love. Though he physically defeats his opponents, two of them show respect for his talents and later become his allies.

ACTIVITY 4A

IDENTIFY THE HERALD & THRESHOLD GUARDIAN

Now it's your turn. Identify the characters or personalities of the Herald and Threshold Guardian archetype from your chosen movie.

Using details from your selected movie, give evidence for the following dramatic and psychological functions of the Herald and Threshold Guardian.

1. Who or what would you say is the Herald that calls the hero away from their ordinary world? Give evidence.
2. Describe a physical Threshold the hero must cross. Does this Threshold have a Guardian? If so, how does the hero handle the Guardian?
3. Describe a psychological Threshold the hero must cross (i.e. neuroses or internal fear).
4. What does the hero learn or gain after crossing the physical and psychological Threshold?

ACTIVITY 4B

CREATE A HERALD & THRESHOLD GUARDIAN

Using what you know about the Herald and Threshold Guardian archetype, it's time to create them for your superhero!

If you, as the superhero, had to be called into action, how would it happen or who would call you away from your ordinary world?

1. Imagine encountering a Threshold before entering the extraordinary world. What is the Threshold (i.e. a physical barrier, a person, an obligation, a fear, etc.)? How is it preventing you from moving forward?
2. Who or what would be the Guardian of this Threshold? How would they test you?
3. What tactics would you use on the Guardian (i.e. outwit them, battle them, trick them, befriend them, etc.)?
4. How would you prove worthy of crossing? Must you overcome any fears first? If so, what are your fears?
5. Draw your Herald and Threshold Guardian.

ALLY



“WE’RE WITH YOU
WHATEVER HAPPENS.”

~ HERMIONE, HARRY POTTER

Allies come in all shapes, sizes and degrees, but their foremost feature is providing aid. Their roles in stories are often the most intriguing and memorable because we, as the audience, understand the difficulty of venturing into the unknown alone and a friend could mean the difference between failure and success.

ALLY

PSYCHOLOGICAL AND DRAMATIC FUNCTION

PSYCHOLOGICAL

According to Vogler, Allies may represent the “unexpressed or underused parts of the personality” that must be conjured from inside the hero during the journey. The Ally energy may also call to mind previous friendships or relationships which the hero may use to find closure or encouragement. Lastly Allies may represent “powerful internal forces that can come to our aid in a spiritual crisis.”

DRAMATIC

- Humanizing - Allies may serve as companions, sparring partners, conscience or comic reliefs, but these all support the underlying task of humanizing the hero and therefore bringing them closer to wholeness.
- Audience Character - Ally characters are sometimes the guide or introduction to the extraordinary world, both for the hero and for the audience. They may ask the right questions or bring out the internal thoughts of the hero as we move along the journey.
- Action - In action films, many Allies fight at the hero's side, advise them, warn them or even challenge them.
- Non- Friend Allies - Allies don't necessarily need to befriend the Hero. Sometimes characters act antagonistically toward the Hero yet share the same goal and must therefore become comrades in order to satisfy a shared goal.

ALLY

TYPES



MULTIPLE ALLIES

Sometimes multiple characters with specific skills are needed to serve the greater goal. The group becomes a unified machine, each part necessary to move forward or they become a supportive community for the hero.

Dolores must masquerade as a nun while in witness protection, but she discovers that her "sisters" provide her much more than prayer when things turn sour.

WESTERN ALLIES: SIDEKICKS

The term "sidekick" comes from an early nineteenth-century slang term for side pants pocket. As such, this character tends to be the one the hero keeps close to them. Hollywood Westerns utilized the faithful sidekick for functions of comic relief, consciousness and loyalty. The category has since expanded to more equal partnered allies such as "buddy films" where both characters share the role of hero and operate as best friends, willing to make sacrifices for one another.

The *Rush Hour* franchise demonstrates how "buddy films" have equalized the Hero/Ally roles while also playing with elements of comic relief and loyalty.



HELPFUL SERVANT

Famous in folklore and romantic dramas are the “helpful servants” who perform critical roles of messenger, healer, guard, etc. Their function will sometimes overlap with the Mentor’s for they may need to provide emotional and spiritual guidance for the hero as well.

General Okoye is sworn to serve the leader of Wakanda, but when the loyalties of her people are divided, she chooses to fight for her friends.



NON-HUMAN ALLIES

For thousands of years, folklore and myth have used the mysterious energies of animals for physical and spiritual aid. Vogler explains that some religions assign spirit protectors as lifelong sidekicks or allies because they channel wisdom and abilities from higher or alternative levels of existence.

Just as a limb serves the whole body, Hiccup and his dragon, Toothless, demonstrate the power of a symbiotic relationship: each relying on the other to thrive.



SUPERNATURAL AID

The powers of nature may also be called upon to temporarily aid the hero, especially in the direst of moments. Many Fantasy and Adventure tales utilize the appearance of divine forces whose aid must be earned or exchanged with something precious.

During a battle between Narnians and men, Aslan conjures the ancient one of the river to prevent an army's crossing.

ACTIVITY 5A

IDENTIFY THE ALLY

Now it's your turn. Identify the characters or personalities of the Allies from your chosen movie.

Using details from your selected movie, give evidence for the following dramatic and psychological functions of Allies.

1. Identify three dramatic functions of an Ally in your selected movie. How do they serve these functions?
2. Describe how an Ally from your selected movie demonstrates a psychological function for the hero.
3. Do any of the Allies fit into the listed categories? If so, how?
4. Are there any other elements of aid that temporarily enter the story? If so, what are they?

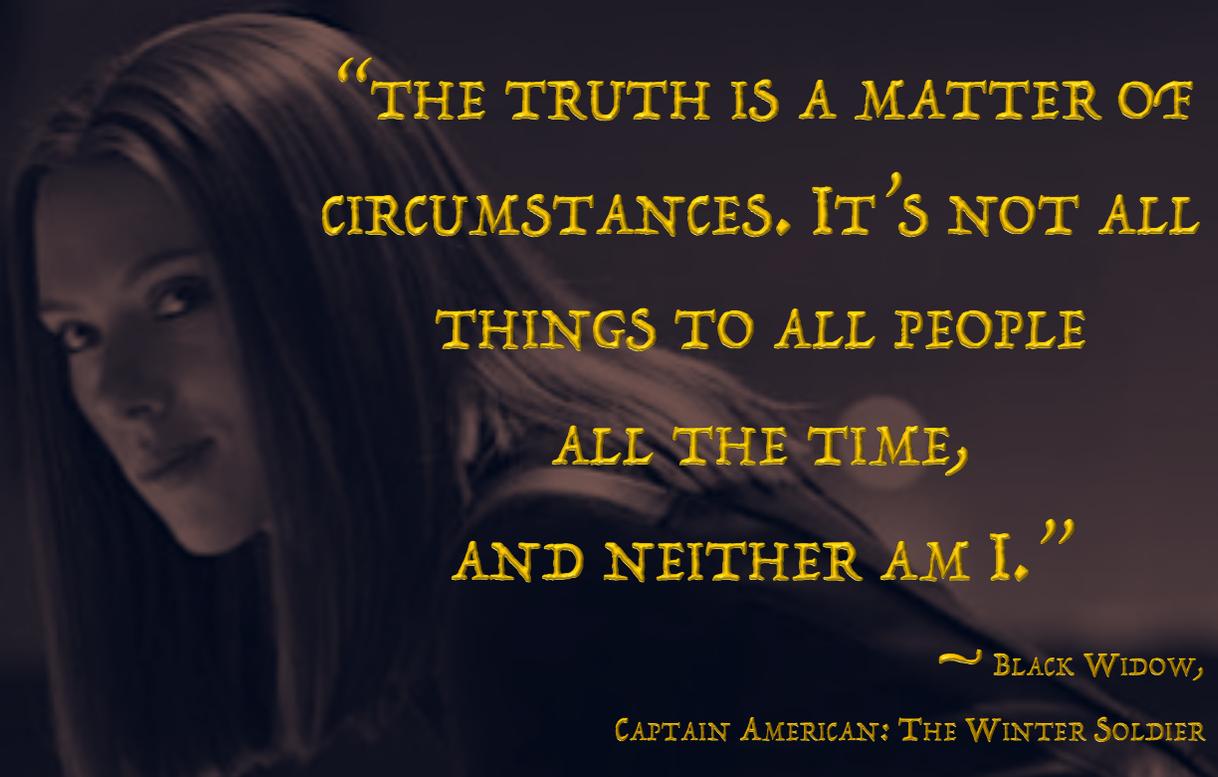
ACTIVITY 5B

CREATE AN ALLY

Using what you know about the Ally archetype, it's time to create one for your superhero!

1. What is your Ally's name/title? What's their age and gender? How do they appear to others (if others can see them)?
 2. Describe three dramatic functions your Ally serves for you, the superhero.
 3. Describe how your Ally serves as a psychological function for you, the superhero.
 4. What sort of relationship do you have with your Ally? Does he/she/it fit into any of the listed categories? If so, how?
-
1. Draw your Ally.

SHAPESHIFTER

A close-up, slightly blurred photograph of Black Widow (Scarlett Johansson) looking off to the side. The image is dark and serves as a background for the quote.

“THE TRUTH IS A MATTER OF
CIRCUMSTANCES. IT’S NOT ALL
THINGS TO ALL PEOPLE
ALL THE TIME,
AND NEITHER AM I.”

~ BLACK WIDOW,
CAPTAIN AMERICAN: THE WINTER SOLDIER

A sometimes elusive and peculiar archetype, the Shapeshifter is defined mainly by their unpredictability, adaptability and mysteriousness. Their loyalties to the hero are constantly in question and their inner identities may prove to be unstable - either resolving or remaining ambiguous by the end of the journey.

A classic tale from *The Odyssey* of the god Proteus demonstrates the essence of the Shapeshifter personality. Once caught, Proteus changes shape in attempts to escape until he exhausts himself and must reveal his true identity to the hero. Though the Shapeshifter might literally change shape, the shifting of personalities is the most common trait, proving that their inner identities may be a mystery even to the Shapeshifter themselves.

SHAPESHIFTER

PSYCHOLOGICAL FUNCTION

According to Vogler, a common psychological function of the Shapeshifter is the expression of the animus (male) and anima (female) energies. Based on Carl Jung's research, the theory is that "people have a complete set of both male and female qualities which are necessary for survival and internal balance," and because society projects certain identities onto our gender, we become curious with those who express the opposite energies. Romantic relationships may therefore be a projection of our lacking anima or animus, which may lead to destructive or helpful partnerships, depending on whether the person is genuine or two-faced.

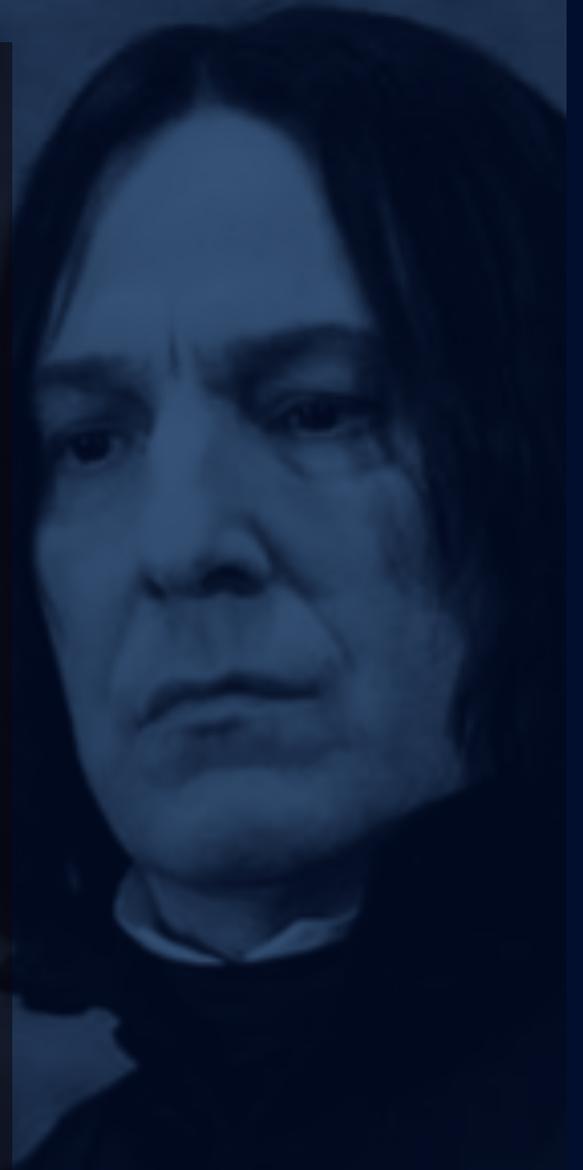
It's natural for each sex to regard the other as ever-changing, mysterious. Many of us don't understand our own sexuality and psychology very well, let alone that of the opposite sex. Often our main experience of the opposite sex is their changeability and their tendency to shift attitudes, appearances, and emotions for no apparent reason. (Vogler)

Two common Shapeshifters formed from this theory are the Femme Fatale (woman as temptress or destroyer), and Hommes Fatale (man as tempter or destroyer). These characters are often the romantic interest of the hero and may shift personalities and loyalties to favor their own agendas. On the other hand, the animus and anima personalities may aid the hero by showing them the benefits of their opposite energies, symbolizing a psychological urge to transform or to better understand their opposites. And if the hero is patient with Shapeshifters, there may be a mutual exchange of energies that create balance in both.

SHAPESHIFTER

DRAMATIC FUNCTION

Shapeshifters bring doubt and suspense into the story, for their lies tend to eventually cause tension and friction. It's also possible for there to be no specific Shapeshifter character, but rather characters who temporarily wear the mask of Shapeshifter. For example, the hero may wear the Shapeshifter mask to escape a trap or to cross a threshold. Villains may use Shapeshifter energies to trap or trick the hero. In films featuring partners, one participant might put on a "protective mask" to hide vulnerability from the other.



SHAPSHIFTER

EXAMPLES



Because she claims making friends is difficult, Johanna often puts on an indifferent or threatening mask to avoid vulnerability and weakness.



Han Solo's loyalties are questionable when his self-interests prove detrimental to the group, but when tested, Solo proves himself a noble Ally and worthy partner to Princess Leia.



Physically able to change her shape, Mystique's outer masks are as mysterious as her inner masks, especially when her loyalties shift among her fellow mutants. Her abilities, however, allow her to gather truth from others which she uses to her advantage.



Harry, Ron and Hermione take Polyjuice potion to assume different identities while they infiltrate the Ministry of Magic. The temporary deception is a needed step in their mission.

ACTIVITY 6A

IDENTIFY THE SHAPESHIFTER

Now it's your turn. Identify the characters or personalities of the Shapeshifter from your chosen movie.

Using details from your selected movie, give evidence for the following dramatic and psychological functions of the Shapeshifter.

1. Is there any one character who reflects the personality of the Shapeshifter the most? If so, who are they and how do they demonstrate that personality?
2. Are there any internal conflicts seen in the character of the Shapeshifter? If so, what are the conflicts, and do they clash at all with the hero?
3. Are there any characters who function temporarily or wear the mask of a Shapeshifter? If so, what function are they serving?
4. Does the hero project any opposite anima/anime energies onto other characters in the story? If so, do those relationships prove detrimental or beneficial?

ACTIVITY 6B

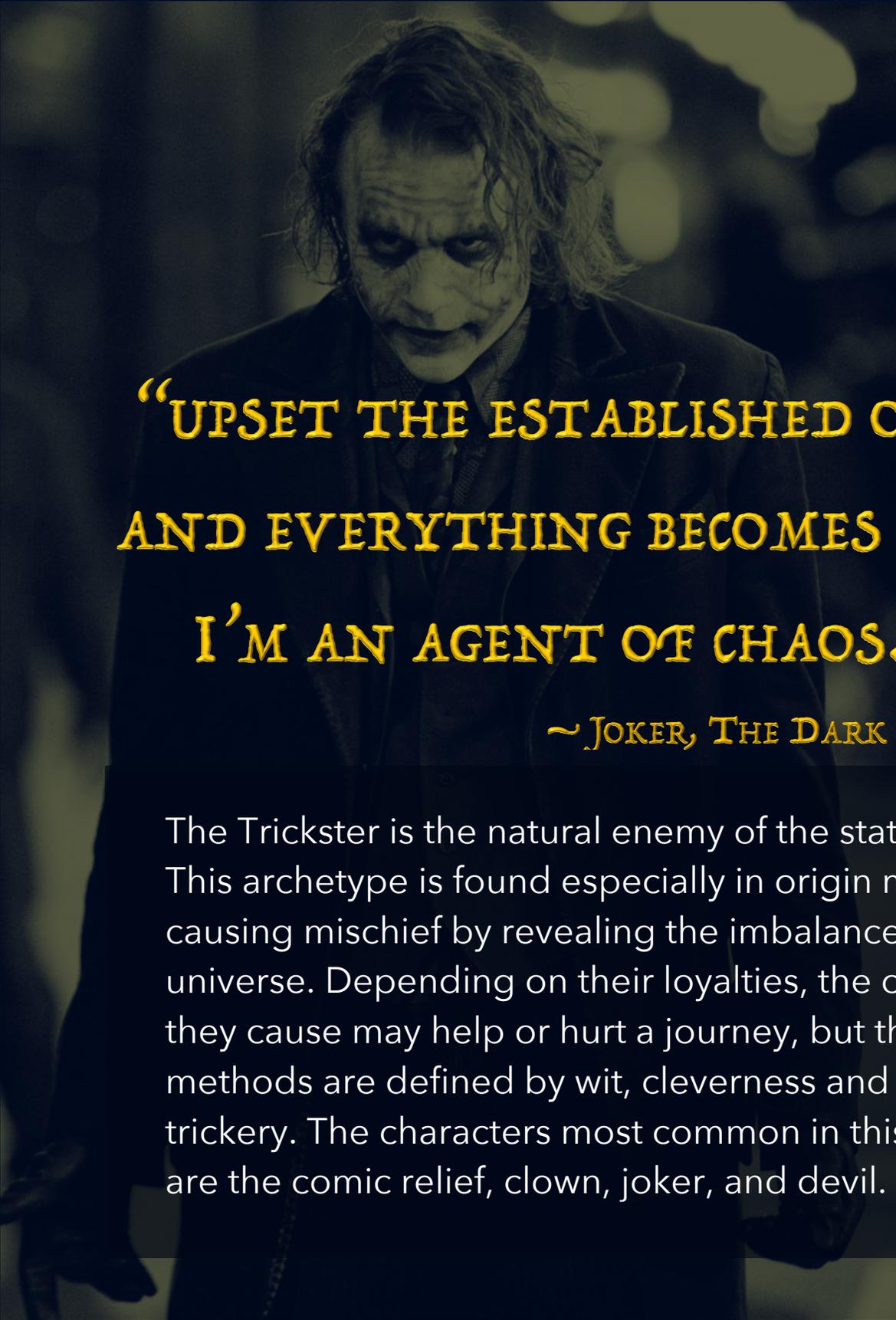
CREATE A SHAPESHIFTER

Using what you know about the Shapeshifter archetype, it's time to create one for your superhero!

Create a Shapeshifter for you, as the superhero, to project your opposite anima or anime energy onto. For example, if your superhero identifies with female energy primarily, create a Shapeshifter who identifies with male energy primarily. Your relationship with the Shapeshifter does not have to be romantic but must be an opposite energy that you, as the superhero, can absorb later to become whole.

1. What is your Shapeshifter's name/title? What's their age and gender? How do they appear to others? Are they able to physically Shapeshift or is it their personalities that shift?
2. Are there any internal conflicts in your Shapeshifter? If so, what are the conflicts, and do those conflicts clash with you or your mission?
3. How might you, as the superhero, absorb the energy of your Shapeshifter? Would you test their loyalty, remain patient until they let their walls down, put on "their skin" to beat them at their own game, or help them find their true identity?

TRICKSTER



“UPSET THE ESTABLISHED ORDER,
AND EVERYTHING BECOMES CHAOS.
I’M AN AGENT OF CHAOS....”

~ JOKER, THE DARK KNIGHT

The Trickster is the natural enemy of the status quo. This archetype is found especially in origin myths, causing mischief by revealing the imbalances of the universe. Depending on their loyalties, the changes they cause may help or hurt a journey, but their methods are defined by wit, cleverness and of course trickery. The characters most common in this category are the comic relief, clown, joker, and devil.

TRICKSTER

PSYCHOLOGICAL AND DRAMATIC FUNCTION

PSYCHOLOGICAL

- Truth - Tricksters can cut egos of other characters down to size by pointing out truths.
- Laughter - Tricksters provoke healthy laughter, grounding the audience and creating a common bond among the characters.
- Jest - Tricksters may point out the follies and hypocrisies of society, a traditional role of early court jesters.
- Change - Most especially, tricksters are used to bring about change by drawing attention to the imbalances and absurdities of a situation. They encourage perspective by not taking things so seriously.

DRAMATIC

- Types - Comic relief characters are a great way to revive drama with laughter. Other types of Tricksters (like the devil) can be both clever and amoral, causing tension and unpredictability.
- Sides - The Trickster's functions may also depend on whose "side" they're on. For example, Trickster may be allies of the hero (best friends or sidekicks) or else work for the villain as henchmen and agents. Other times, they work independently, taking no one's side.
- Trickster v. Shapeshifter - Though the functions of Tricksters and Shapeshifters may cross over, a key difference is self-identity. Tricksters tend to have a resolved foundation, even if misplaced or mischievous, which gives their trickery the appearance of authority or wisdom.

TRICKSTER

EXAMPLES



Captain Jack Sparrow is an example of a Trickster-Hero archetype. While undergoing the same trials of a conventional hero, Trickster-Heroes move through their journey unconventionally; ignoring rules, outwitting antagonists and causing mischief to gain higher ground.



Sometimes the comic relief can serve as both Ally and Hero. Van Helsing has a specific journey with accompanying struggles, but she also serves as Ralph's Ally in his journey. Both roles allow her to point out truths with wit and playfulness.



Bugs Bunny is a contemporary example of the ancient Rabbit Trickster. Coyotes, Foxes, and Ravens also appeared as early tricksters in folklore with the common function of causing grief and trouble.



In Romantic Comedies, the hero's best friend may act as a Trickster by taking clever action that moves the plot forward. Becky in *Sleepless in Seattle* wants growth for her friend, Annie, so Becky feels justified in sending a letter to the man Annie likes without asking permission.

ACTIVITY 7A

IDENTIFY THE TRICKSTER

Now it's your turn. Identify the characters or personalities of the Trickster from your chosen movie.

Using details from your selected movie, give evidence for the following dramatic and psychological functions of the Trickster.

1. Is there any one character who reflects the personality of the Trickster the most? If so, who are they and how do they demonstrate that personality?
2. Are there any characters who function temporarily or wear the mask of a Trickster? If so, what function are they serving?
3. Are there any Trickster personalities working on the side of the Shadow? Does the Shadow use the energy of the Trickster archetype at all?

ACTIVITY 7B

CREATE A TRICKSTER

Using what you know about the Trickster archetype, it's time to create one for your superhero!

Create a Trickster that fits one of the following subcategories: comic relief, clown, joker or devil.

1. What is your Trickster's name/title? What's their age and gender? How do they appear to others?
2. Decide what side, if any, the Trickster works for. The hero? The villain? Neither? Or perhaps your Trickster is a personality of you, the superhero, or the villain. If so, describe how this personality works for you or the villain.
3. Give them defining traits. Are they cunning, witty, funny, annoyingly honest, sinister, or destructive?
4. Draw your Trickster.

HERO'S JOURNEY

“A HERO VENTURES FORTH FROM THE WORLD OF COMMON DAY INTO A REGION OF SUPERNATURAL WONDER; FABULOUS FORCES ARE THERE ENCOUNTERED, AND A DECISIVE VICTORY IS WON; THE HERO COMES BACK FROM THIS MYSTERIOUS ADVENTURE WITH THE POWER TO BESTOW BOONS ON HIS FELLOW MAN.”

~ JOSEPH CAMPBELL, HERO WITH A THOUSAND FACES

It's time to plot our created characters onto a visual storyboard. We may not have an entire superhero tale created yet, but we know the roles of our 8 archetypes and how they affect you, the superhero.

STORYBOARD EXAMPLE

Considering what we now know of archetypes, use the following storyboard of *Wonder Woman* as an example to help you plot out your superhero tale.

ORDINARY WORLD



HERALD & CALL TO ADVENTURE



MENTOR/GIFTS/ADVICE



THRESHOLD/ THRESHOLD GUARDIAN



ALLIES



SHAPESHIFTER



TRICKSTER



CONFRONTING SHADOW



NEW KNOWLEDGE & WHOLENESS



STORYBOARD TEMPLATE

Use the following template to fill in your superhero storyboard. Consider how each archetype contributes to the loose plot of your superhero tale.

You may draw or write in your descriptions.

TRICKSTER	THRESHOLD & THRESHOLD GUARDIAN	ORDINARY WORLD
CONFRONTING SHADOW	ALLIES	HERALD & CALL TO ADVENTURE
NEW KNOWLEDGE AND WHOLENESS	SHAPESHIFTERS	MENTOR / GIFTS / ADVICE

THANK YOU!

Now that you've successfully completed your archetype journey, explore and create more! We encourage you to continue expanding your superhero tale by writing your archetypes into a movie, expanding your drawings or creating additional characters.

When watching movies, challenge yourself to identify the archetype energies and allow them to be part of your own absorption as hero.

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