

The 12 Stages of the Hero's Journey:

1. **THE ORDINARY WORLD.** The hero, uneasy, uncomfortable or unaware, is introduced sympathetically so the audience can identify with the situation or dilemma. The hero is shown against a background of environment, heredity, and personal history. Some kind of polarity in the hero's life is pulling in different directions and causing stress.
2. **THE CALL TO ADVENTURE.** Something shakes up the situation, either from external pressures or from something rising up from deep within, so the hero must face the beginnings of change.
3. **REFUSAL OF THE CALL.** The hero feels the fear of the unknown and tries to turn away from the adventure, however briefly. Alternately, another character may express the uncertainty and danger ahead.
4. **MEETING WITH THE MENTOR.** The hero comes across a seasoned traveler of the worlds who gives him or her training, equipment, or advice that will help on the journey. Or the hero reaches within to a source of courage and wisdom.
5. **CROSSING THE THRESHOLD.** At the end of Act One, the hero commits to leaving the Ordinary World and entering a new region or condition with unfamiliar rules and values.
6. **TESTS, ALLIES AND ENEMIES.** The hero is tested and sorts out allegiances in the Special World.
7. **APPROACH.** The hero and newfound allies prepare for the major challenge in the Special world.
8. **THE ORDEAL.** Near the middle of the story, the hero enters a central space in the Special World and confronts death or faces his or her greatest fear. Out of the moment of death comes a new life.
9. **THE REWARD.** The hero takes possession of the treasure won by facing death. There may be celebration, but there is also danger of losing the treasure again.
10. **THE ROAD BACK.** About three-fourths of the way through the story, the hero is driven to complete the adventure, leaving the Special World to be sure the treasure is brought home. Often a chase scene signals the urgency and danger of the mission.
11. **THE RESURRECTION.** At the climax, the hero is severely tested once more on the threshold of home. He or she is purified by a last sacrifice, another moment of death and rebirth, but on a higher and more complete level. By the hero's action, the polarities that were in conflict at the beginning are finally resolved.
12. **RETURN WITH THE ELIXIR.** The hero returns home or continues the journey, bearing some element of the treasure that has the power to transform the world as the hero has been transformed.