

GATEWAYS JOURNEYS

G.A.T.E.WAYS invites high-ability Year 3 & 4 students with a love of writing and literature to ...



Does every story with a hero in it start with a 'Call to Adventure'? Do you agree that since the dawn of time there has only been ONE universal story plot – otherwise known as the “monomyth”? If you're an avid reader and keen creative writer, you'll love uncovering the truth behind these curious questions. Everyone joining our quest for knowledge is asked to bring a novel of their choosing that **must** contain an interesting hero character who is on a quest of their own. We will use these to gather surprising evidence that shows two seemingly different stories share more in common than you might think! Discover the inspiring explanation for this – a brilliant story template based on Joseph Campbell's famous “Hero's Journey” model. Learn more as you develop your own original hero character and craft an epic, entertaining read!

Requirements:

- Bring a novel of your choice that you have **finished reading**. Please consider novels other than the Harry Potter series but at a similar level of complexity and detail. Some examples include Wings of Fire, Amulet, Deltora Quest, Percy Jackson, Artemis Fowl, How to Train your Dragon, Tarin of the Mammoths, or **classics** such as Narnia, Anne of Green Gables, Treasure Island or The Hobbit.
- **Biographies** and **non-fiction written as stories** e.g., Jackie French's novels about Australian History, Mao's Last Dancer, are also suitable where they follow someone who might be considered heroic after a challenging journey.
- Bring a new A4 writing book (or folder with paper) and a well-stocked pencil case (including a glue stick).
- Morning tea (no nuts please).

Session 1: All kinds of Heroes

“The big question is whether you are going to be able to say a hearty yes to your adventure...” Joseph Campbell.

If you were the hero of your own story, would you embrace adventure and leap into the unknown? Or would you be hesitant and cautious? There's no “right answer” because every hero has a different attitude; whether they love to fly solo, need companions or work best in a team. In this session we explore all heroes great and small, as well as their distinguishing and similar features. What is your first impression of your novel's hero? Does this change as the character moves through their journey? We experiment with creating details that show both an *inner realm* (thoughts, feelings, fears, motivations) and an *outer realm* (physical powers, environment, forces at work) of a character. Use today's creative thinking strategies to create an original, detailed, and multi-dimensional hero.

Session Two: Known and Unknown Worlds

“We must be willing to let go of the life we have planned so as to have the one that is waiting for us.” Joseph Campbell.

Very different heroes on entirely different paths in completely different novels have so much in common! For example, when they answer the call to adventure, they must leave their familiar and ordinary worlds (think every animated movie ever). A quest always seems to take place in a special or previously unknown world (another planet, a strange school, a new land). What about their families, friends and foes? Does the hero of your novel begin the journey alone – orphaned, rejected or separated from parents? Assistance to get started or find directions has to come from other characters who help and hinder the hero. They have lots in common too! You will use the concepts of ‘assistance’ and ‘departure’ from Joseph Campbell's template in today's writing tasks to invent the interesting ordinary and special worlds your hero exists in.

Session Three: Trials, Smiles and Endless Miles

"The cave you fear to enter holds the treasure that you seek," Joseph Campbell.

Let's face it, if a hero doesn't encounter interesting obstacles, face gruelling trials and overcome darkest fears, it is not much of a story, is it? How does the author of your novel build tension, excitement, and intrigue to keep you reading and gasping at the crisis point! The next stage of Campbell's model asks writers to consider what is challenging the hero physically, mentally or emotionally. What is their greatest fear and how will it confront them? Generate ideas from shared examples of how heroes we know – in literature or in life – have responded to trials. Today you will experiment with writing short, action packed scenes about overcoming obstacles. Add depth and detail to your hero and additional characters with words, actions and emotions as they face the ultimate test. Be not afraid to take up this challenge!

Session Four: Transformation and Treasure

"Where you stumble and fall, there you will find gold," Joseph Campbell.

This week we explore the concept of "transformation" (remember those inner and outer aspects of the hero – how the hero changed during the journey?). We also think about the "treasure" gained or brought back when the hero returns to the ordinary world. Is it something tangible (a ring, a magical elixir, a useful map) or carried in their heart (a memory, a new understanding); an experience or a good deed (saving a clan, destroying an enemy, finding new land, a new friend)? Gather ideas from the novels before using your writing time to review your story ideas so far. Your goal is to elaborate on the details, illustrating changes in your hero and explaining the special treasure gained as the quest comes to an end. Share your masterpiece and hear other's tales to see if we have proven the monomyth to be true!

Homework: Each week students have the option of continuing to work on elements of their story. If you'd like feedback between sessions, please provide an emailed copy to Andrea at the address below. At the end of the Journey, if you would like feedback on your final draft, please send a completed copy to jesse@gateways.edu.au (subject: Calling All Heroes Final Draft) within ten days of the final session.

Outcomes:

In this program students will develop their story writing ability by:

- Unpacking the "Hero's Journey" model (template) created by Joseph Campbell to gain deeper understanding of archetypal patterns in stories.
- Analysing the work of diverse authors to identify examples of how characters and plot points match the model.
- Discussing and generating ideas about character development, with a particular focus on creating complex hero characters.
- Practising writing and applying new knowledge to meet high-level challenges and produce original written work each week.

About the presenter:

When Andrea Blake discovered the work of Joseph Campbell and learned about "The Hero's journey", she knew she had struck gold (especially for gifted learners) as it offers such in-depth and fascinating concepts for learning about the craft of story writing. An experienced teacher and specialist in the field of Gifted Education, Andrea enjoys working with passionate young readers and writers to ignite curiosity and creativity. She loves reading and responding to the brilliant ideas they come up with!