

Lesson 1 Journey to a Better Me

Reading 1

The Hero of Your Own Story

What do the Hulk and Harry Potter have in common? They couldn't be more different, since one has super strength and the other has powerful magic. What brings them together is the fact that they are both heroes. But what exactly makes them heroes? The answer lies in a framework known as "the hero's journey." This journey is a common theme that runs through many heroic stories. Let's walk through the stages of the hero's journey and explore what it takes to become a true hero.

Stage 1. The Call to Adventure

The hero's journey often begins with an event that takes the hero from the comforts of home into an unknown world. There could be a supernatural guide or a magical item that encourages the hero to go forward. In the novel *The Lord of the Rings*, the main character, Frodo Baggins, is thrown into a journey when he is given a magic ring. He is told to protect it at all costs. In order to save the world, he must transport the ring to a land far away to destroy it once and for all.

Stage 2. The Initiation

Once the hero accepts the call to adventure, the journey begins as the ultimate test. The hero will focus all the energy to solve the problems ahead. There are successes and failures, and discovery of new values. In this phase, the hero may find a mentor or a helper on their journey. In the Harry Potter series, Harry sets off on a journey to defeat the dark wizard Voldemort. He must overcome various obstacles and pass a series of magical tests. Harry has several mentors and helpers who aid him on his journey. Dumbledore, one of the most powerful wizards in the world, acts as a mentor to Harry and helps him. Harry's friends, Hermione and Ron, also help him solve many puzzles and challenges.

Stage 3. The Transformation

The actions taken on the journey greatly change the hero physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Now, on the outside, the hero is physically stronger. A change has also taken place on the inside. The hero is more mature, with an expanded vision of life. Take Elsa from Frozen, for example. She is transformed from a fearful and isolated young woman to a confident and powerful queen who learns to control her ice powers and saves her country.

Stage 4. The Return

The hero now returns home to make a big difference in the world with new knowledge and abilities gained from the journey. More courageous than ever, the hero comes back with a belief that great changes are needed. For instance, at the end of The Lion King, the main character Simba, who used to be a fearful baby lion, finally becomes brave enough to confront his evil uncle. Simba becomes the king and restores peace and harmony to the country.

Have you ever taken a hero's journey? You may not be faced with challenges such as fighting dragons or wizards, but you do have to pass exams or complete group projects. Then how can you incorporate the heroic mindset to complete your journey?

First, step out of your comfort zone. Just like the heroes who accepted the call to adventure, don't be afraid to try new things. Remember that the treasure you seek lies in the cave you fear to enter. The unknown can be scary, but it is also full of opportunities for growth and discovering new talents.

Second, adopt the mindset of perseverance and resilience. It is not always possible to avoid obstacles and adversities, but each challenge can be an opportunity to learn and grow. There may be failures along the way, but if you don't give up, you will bounce back just as the heroes did.

Third, surround yourself with people who can support you. Seek out positive role models and true friends.

Try to be the source of support for them as well.

Having a strong network of people who will support you throughout your journey is a great advantage.

When faced with challenges in life, will you see them as barriers or a call to adventure? Being a hero is not about how strong you are. It's about how you deal with the problems that you are faced with.

Listen for your call to adventure. Accept the challenge. Overcome your fear and claim the treasure. Then you will become the hero of your own story.

Reading 2

The Ball is in Your Court

Imagine an ordinary boy, Kid A. He comes home from school to find a table. "Um, it's a table," says Kid A. "Yes!" shouts his father, "But it's a table tennis table!" Before you know it, Kid A is facing his father across the net. His father serves the ball, and Kid A swings and gets nothing but air. He falls to the floor. This embarrassing moment is an important fork in the road of Kid A's life. He has two choices:

1. Give up and go to his room, or
2. Get up and try again.

Will he take the first choice to become Kid Average or will he take the second choice to become Kid Awesome?

Let's see what happens if he takes the first choice.

Kid Average

"I've had enough. I'm going to my room," Kid Average says. His father asks, "Are you sure? You'll get better." Kid Average responds, "No thanks. I'm not good at it." That's the end of table tennis at his house. A month passes and his mother says, "Get rid of that table covered in dust." The table is sold immediately at the next garage sale. After that, Kid Average coasts through life as usual. His report cards at school suggest that he could try harder but he doesn't. Kid Average sees challenges as obstacles that should be avoided. One day he comes across a broadcast of the National Table Tennis Championships on TV. It reminds Kid Average of that time he tried table tennis. He can't take his eyes off one of the players. He looks strikingly familiar

Kid Awesome

Kid Awesome brushes himself off and gets up. "Let's have another go." An hour passes, and he's a little better, but he still can't score a point. But this only fuels the fire in Kid Awesome's heart. The next day, Kid Awesome asks his brother to practice with him, since their levels are similar. After they play every day for a month, Kid Awesome asks his father, "Are you up for another game?" His father replies, "You bet, buddy." This time, Kid Awesome loses 11– 3. His father says excitedly, "Great game! You're a totally different player now." Kid Awesome practices with his father until he is good enough to join the school table tennis team. From there, he gets better and better until he finally wins the National Table Tennis Championships!

Kid Awesome's amazing story didn't happen by accident. His success was a product of honest sweat and a commitment to excel. Now, you have two choices in front of you. Which kid are you going to be?