

Heroes and Villains Course Syllabus

Texts: *The Diary of Anne Frank*, Hamilton's *Mythology*, *Selected Tales of Edgar Allan Poe*, Euripedes' *Medea*, *Beowulf*, *The Classic Fairy Tales*.

DAY	ACTIVITIES	OBJECTIVES/DETAILS
Mon	Icebreaker	
	Journal Writing	“Why have you taken this course? What do you hope to learn?”
	Make expressive desk tag	
	Pre-Assessment Writing: 40 minutes	Plan and write an essay that explains your definition of heroism. Support your definition with specific examples
	Hero Poster Activity	Using information from your essays, meet with three other classmates to generate a group definition of heroism. Design poster for presentation to class
	Poster Presentation & discussion.	Identify assumptions about heroes and highlight their relationship to culture values. Key concepts: myth, culture, society, values, civilization v. nature, gender, power, ideology
	Todorov's hero types	Deduce from poster project the 5 types
	Discuss honor code	
	Begin Greek mythology: deities & creation myth	Read Hamilton, pp. 24-95
Tues	Journal	Freewrite on Greek mythology
	Review key ideas from Monday	Lecture/discussion
	Present god/goddess	Students draw one character from a hat and offer a brief introduction for him/her. Map on chalkboard spectrum of masculinity & femininity. Discuss gender.
	Discussion of Greek Pantheon & creation	Key points: relation of myths to early religious practices and formation of dominant Greek culture. Also, “fall of man” in Greek myth (Pandora) and Judeo-Christian myth (Eve).
	Greek heroes before the Trojan War	Read Hamilton, pp. 146-184
	Brief intro into principles of drawing	Let students teach others what they know about drawing on the chalkboard
Read story of Bellerophon aloud	Model on chalkboard how to outline plot points	
Poster Activity for Hercules, Perseus, Theseus, and Atalanta	Students outline their story on notebook paper (I will transfer the outline to the chalkboard). Then students illustrate in a comic book format parts of the story (plot).	

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Wed	Journal	“Revenge. What is it? Is it ethical?”
	Discussion: the hero cycle	Deduce from the stories a structure & common archetypes. Pull from this Campbell’s Hero Cycle
	Application of the Hero Cycle	Choose one modern hero (Spiderman, Harry Potter, etc.) and see how they fit/don’t fit into the Hero Cycle. Discuss.
	Prep for <i>Medea</i> : The Quest for the Golden Fleece	Read aloud from Hamilton 117-128
	<i>Medea</i>	Read play aloud, stop at various points to explication/questions
Thur	Begin planning essays on <i>Medea</i>	Brainstorm thoughts on Medea
	Rhetoric: how to write an essay	Lecture
	Write <i>Medea</i> essay	Topic: Is Medea a hero or villain, or where does she fit on such a spectrum?
	Journal	What’s the difference between a monster and a villain?
	Debating <i>Medea</i> : hero, villain, or other?	Informal debating based upon their essays
Fri	Reading & discussion: The Trojan War and Odysseus	Hamilton, pp. 185-229
	Discussion: Achilles’ Choice: fame or longevity	Reviewing the heroic code in glory cultures
	Excerpt from <i>The Odyssey</i>	Odysseus at Polyphemus’ cave. Reading aloud.
	Lecture: Key ideas for story writing	Point of view, setting, scene, sensory detail, dialogue
	Students rewrite one myth in 1 st person	Creative writing
Mon	Share stories with whole group	Reading aloud
	How to revise/rewrite an essay	Lecture
	Rewrite <i>Medea</i> essays	Writing
Mon	Begin <i>Beowulf</i> : Intro to Anglo-Saxon art, politics, archeology, and language	Lecture
	Begin <i>Beowulf</i> , pp. 3-45	Reading aloud, stopping for explication, discussion, and questions
	Draw Grendel	Drawing
	Journal	One page of reflection upon your first CTY week
	Read <i>Beowulf</i> , pp. 45-89	Reading aloud
Mon	Creative writing	Write a short scene from Grendel’s perspective
	Read <i>Beowulf</i> , pp. 89-149	Reading silently
	In pairs, students answer 8 detailed study questions	Reading comprehension assignment
	Go over first half of worksheet	Discussion

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	Basics of medieval religion & politics	(Interactive) Lecture. Key concepts: The Great Chain of Being; rebellion; primogeniture; hereditary conflicts (War of the Roses and Richard III)
Tues	Journal	Freewrite on <i>Beowulf</i>
	Finish 2 nd half of <i>Beowulf</i> worksheet	Discuss
	Translating Old English	Show how grammar works in Old English through translation of <i>Beowulf</i> 's fight with Grendel's Mother
	Christian idea of the hero in <i>Beowulf</i>	Lecture
	Finish reading <i>Beowulf</i>	Read 149-213; students write 3 discussion questions as they read
	Discussion	Focal points: origin of dragon, Last Survivor's speech, theow/thegn, Ravenswood, Wiglaf.
	Essay on <i>Beowulf</i> : Does <i>Beowulf</i> reconcile in any ways the Christian ideal of the hero with a pagan (or classical) one?	Writing
	Students read Grendel stories	Reading Student Work aloud
Wed	Journal	What is your favorite fairy tale & why?
	Read versions of Cinderella	Tartar, pp. 100-137
	Group Assignment: Tale Functions	Abstract core elements of each core Cinderella story; chart similarities and differences
	Students finish group discussion of Cinderella	Students write on chalkboard their abstracted functions & presents their list
	Journal	Are fairy tales appropriate for children?
	Reading Canonical Tales	Hansel & Gretel, Snow White, Beauty and the Beast, Bluebeard, Little Red Riding Hood
Thur	Discussion/debate	Are fairy tales appropriate for children? (What is the relation to violence in society to the types of cultural artifacts—stories or video games—children are exposed to?)
	Readings touching upon debate issues	Psychologist's view: Bettelheim, 269-273; opposing feminist views, p. xiii; read "Politically Correct Cinderella"
	Structural analysis of tales poster & presentation	Read in groups AT Tale Type Definitions (pp. 373-378) and Propp's functions (382-387). Design a poster that presents the appropriate tale functions & type for your tale.
	Begin student-led discussions of tales	Discussions of Hansel & Gretel, Bluebeard, Little Red Riding Hood, Beauty & the Beast, & Snow White
Fri	Finish student-led discussions	
	Read more tales	Fitcher's Bird, The Juniper Tree, Pig King, Frog King

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	Writing Assignment	Essay on Fairy tales: identify three heroic qualities in your favorite tale
Mon	Film: <i>Sense and Sensibility</i>	
	Writing assignment on film	Comprehension questions: one paragraph each
	Journal	“Your second week at CTY”
	Discussion: <i>Sense and Sensibility</i>	
	Writing: fairy tales	Students write their own fairy tales (with attention to Propp’s functions)
	Share fairy tales	
	Review: heroes and villains	Review hero’s we’ve studied; how have their conceptions of heroism/villainy developed?
	Intro to <i>The Diary of Anne Frank</i>	Lecture: historical context of Nazi Europe
	Reading: <i>Anne Frank</i>	
Tues	Journal	Prompt: “What is done out of love always takes place beyond good and evil.” –Nietzsche
	Reading: “White Tigers” by Maxine Hong Kingston (handout)	Discussion: Does Fa Mu Lan succeed or fail? How does this reflect the difference between heroic age heroes and contemporary ones?
	Lecture: samurai of medieval Japan	
	Begin Kurosawa’s <i>Seven Samurai</i> (save final sequence for Wednesday)	Stop at points for discussion/explication/elements of cinematic composition
	Journal	Freewrite on <i>Seven Samurai</i>
	Continue reading <i>The Diary of Anne Frank</i>	Silent reading
Wed	Finish <i>Seven Samurai</i>	
	Answer interpretive questions on film	One paragraph per question (5 total). Check all answers with Jeff; revise if necessary for more detail
	Discussion: <i>Seven Samurai</i>	Who is more powerful: the villagers or the samurai?
	Lecture: Nietzsche’s critique of Judeo-Christian values (vis-à-vis <i>Seven Samurai</i>)	Weakness=power after antiquity?
	Discussion: ethics	Moral relativism or universal concept of good & evil?
	Review/discussion: heroic paradigms from the Classical world to ours	What does heroism mean today?
	Read Poe, “The Fall of the House of Usher” and “The Tell-Tale Heart”	Discussion: the relationship between villainy and sanity
	Continue reading <i>The Diary of Anne Frank</i>	Silent reading
Thur	Continue reading <i>The Diary of Anne Frank</i>	Silent reading
	Reading aloud: Poe	“The Cask of Amontillado” and “Hop-Frog”
	Defining a villain—heroism perverted?	Discussion

DAY	ACTIVITIES	OBJECTIVES/DETAILS
	Post-assessment writing	Plan and write an essay that explains your definition of heroism. Support your definition with specific examples
Fri	Reading, <i>The Diary of Anne Frank</i> Finish Reading <i>The Diary of Anne Frank</i> , then discuss Journal	Silent reading Why is Anne a hero? “Things I want to remember about my summer at CTY”
