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**Archetype Descriptions - Handout**

Your group will be assigned one of the following archetypes (either a situation or a character). Your job is to prepare a 1-2 minute presentation about your archetype.

1. Each archetype has one example. Think of a second example from the myths we have read in class.

2.Give a description of how one of your examples matches your archetype

3. Present visual aid (drawing) of one of your archetype’s examples

4. Give one or two additional examples of your archetype from stories you think your classmates would recognize

**Character Archetypes:**

**The Hero/Heroine:** Many, many stories we read in books and see in movies feature a hero/heroine character. Traditionally, the situation around the hero/heroine’s birth is unusual, and at birth some attempt is made to kill him/her. He/she is sometimes taken away and raised by foster parents. For some hero/heroine characters, we know almost nothing of his/her childhood, but upon reaching adulthood he/she returns to his/her future kingdom. Sometimes, after a victory over the king or a wild beast, he/she marries a prince/princess, becomes king/queen, reigns uneventfully, but later loses favor with the gods. He/she is then driven from the city after which he/she meets a mysterious death, often at the top of a hill. His/her body is not buried, but nevertheless, he/she has one of the more holy sepulchers.

**EXAMPLES:**

1. **Katniss Everdeen, *Hunger Games***

**The Mentor**: these individuals serve as teachers or counselors to the heros/heroines. Sometimes they work as role models and often serve as father or mother figures. Mentors teach the hero/heroine the skills necessary to survive the quest.

**EXAMPLES:**

1. **Gandalf the Grey, *Lord of the Rings***

**The Devil Figure**: Evil incarnate, this character offers worldly goods, fame, or knowledge to the hero/heroine in exchange for possession of the soul

**EXAMPLES:**

1. **The Joker, *Batman***

**The Temptor/Temptress:** Oftentimes a female figure (though sometimes a male figure) who tempts a hero/heroine into doing something bad (or does something bad her/himself). This often results in big consequences, like changing the course of the world.

**EXAMPLES:**

1. **The White Witch, *Narnia***

**Situational Archetypes:**

**The Journey:** The journey sends the hero/heroine in search for some truth or information necessary to restore the kingdom. Usually the hero/heroine descends into a sort of hell and is forced to discover difficult truths, quite often concerning his/her faults. Once the hero/heroine is at his/her lowest point, he/she must accept personal responsibility to return to the regular world.

**EXAMPLES:**

1. **Sam and Frodo’s journey to Mordor, *Lord of the Rings***

**The Fall**: This archetype describes a sort of “falling” from a higher to a lower state of being. The experience is often brought on by some sort of loss of innocence (for example, the first exposure to evil in the world, when a character is no longer innocent).The fall is often shown with characters being kicked out of a kind of paradise as penalty for disobedience.

**EXAMPLES:**

1. **Pandora, *D’Aulaire’s Book of Greek Myths***

**Death and Rebirth**: This is a very common situational archetype. There are often images of winter (when plants die or wither), followed by springtime (where plants grow back). This archetype is all about the cycle of life.

**EXAMPLES:**

1. **Persephone, *D’Aulaire’s Book of Greek Myths***

**Battle Between Good And Evil:** The fight between these two forces. There might be two characters that represent good and evil, or there may be two warring groups of people, or two forces of nature. This archetype is often a way we show our optimism - most popular stories that feature this battle show that “Good” always wins.

**EXAMPLES:**

1. **Anakin vs. Obi Wan Kenobi, *Star Wars***

**The Unhealable Wound:** This is an injury that is either physical (on the character’s body) or psychological (in the character’s mind). Sometimes this wound is caused by supernatural forces. The unhealable wound will never fully heal and can represent a situation in which a character lost his/her innocence, and began to see the evil in the world. Sometimes, this wound can cause a lot of trouble for the character.

**Examples:**

1. **Harry Potter’s scar, *Harry Potter***