

The Six Stages of the Hero's Transformational Journey ~ Worksheet

Stage 1: The Setup (Key Scene #1). Character is in full persona. What characteristics can you bring out in this scene to reveal how her persona fails to make your protagonist truly happy? What setting and action can best convey her “ordinary” world that will showcase her persona?

Stage 2: A Glimpse of Essence. Somewhere between the Inciting Incident (10%) and the fixed goal (25%), something happens that gives your character a peek at what her true essence looks like and why it has appeal. What situation could incite that?

Stage 3: Vacillation between persona and essence (between 25% and 50%). The character is moving toward her essence, gradually changing. What scene could you create that shows she is taking that first big step toward essence, perhaps without realizing it?

Stage 4: Moving steadily into essence. Sometime between the Midpoint and the Dark Night moment (50%-75%), amid growing complications and rising stakes, your character embraces her true essence. Her persona no longer works, and although she isn't fully in essence, she knows there is no turning back. Think up a scene that will show this.

Stage 5: The embrace of full essence. At the Climax (75%-99%), your protagonist accepts this truth: she must be true to herself, regardless of the cost. She may backslide but finds her former persona is no longer a safe haven. The courage to immerse fully in essence is what gives your character that needed push to victory in the climax. How might you show this in your Climax scene?

Stage 6: Transformed existence. At the end of the story, in the Resolution (Key Scene #10), your protagonist has fully arrived. In this scene, she sees all the benefits and joy of embracing her true essence. Think, also, of how in this moment you might drive your themes home, for this is where the inner motivation is made universal.