

# ARCHETYPES

English I

# OBJECTIVES FOR THIS LESSON:

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- I can discuss the importance of archetypes within literature and culture.
- I can identify and analyze archetypes and use them to discern meaning in literature.



# What Is An Archetype?

- **Archetypes** are recurring patterns (plot structures, symbols, character types, themes) that occur in mythology, religion, and stories across cultures and time periods.

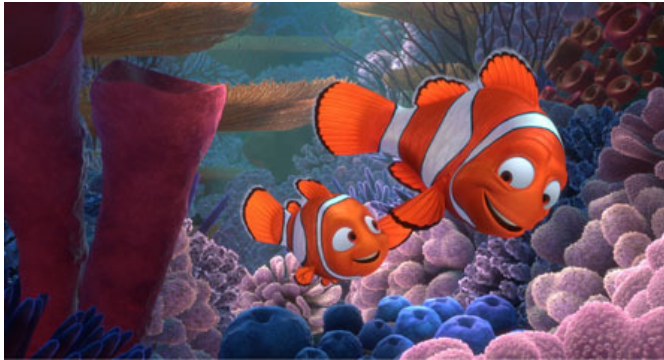


# What Is An Archetype?



- They embody universal meanings and basic human experiences and can evoke unconscious responses in a reader.
- They help us to understand common traits we share with others outside our own culture and to interpret situations and characters that might be quite different from ourselves otherwise.

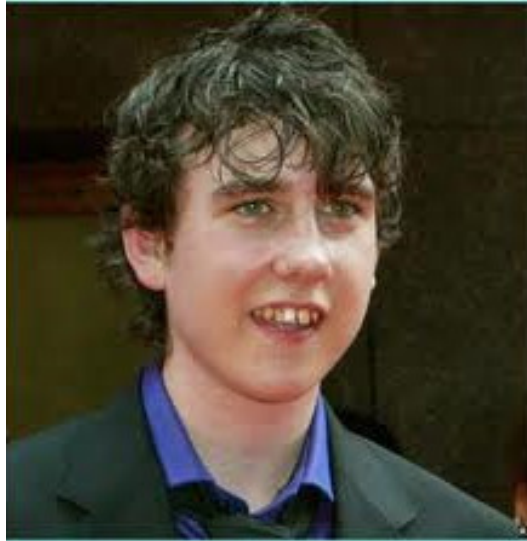
# Character Archetypes



## The Hero

- Man/woman with great strength and courage
- Known for having honorable purposes
- Willing to risk life for the good of all
- Variations of the hero figure include the “orphaned” hero
- Often leaves the familiar to enter a new, unfamiliar, challenging world, and then returns to his/her “ordinary” world
- Return to “ordinary” world often leads to destructive change

# Character Archetypes



**Loner or Outcast:** a character who is separated from society due to an impairment or an advantage that sets him apart from others.

**Underdog:** Characters who are usually in the wrong place at the wrong time, but who usually win something of value in the end.

# Character Archetypes

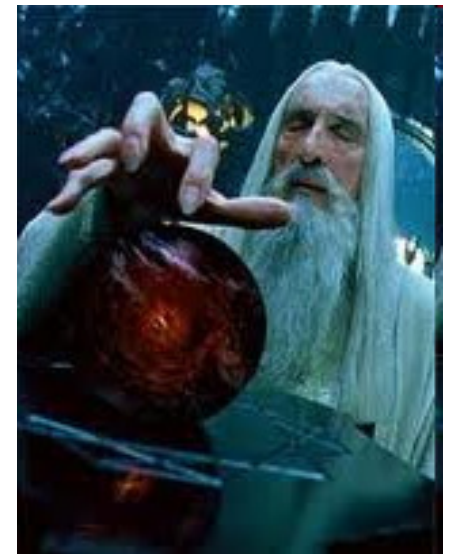
**The Innocent**: trusts in faith and optimism, has exceptionally high ideals and aspirations, and a belief in hard work and doing the right thing



# Character Archetypes



**The Villain:** the male or female personification of evil. The antagonist who truly personifies evil. The villain's malice is limitless and rarely is the villain reformed.





# Character Archetypes



**The Terrible Mother/The Woman as Temptress:** A woman to whom the protagonist is attracted and who ultimately brings about his downfall



# Character Archetypes



- **The Stepmother**: A surrogate mother who represents the evil side of motherhood.

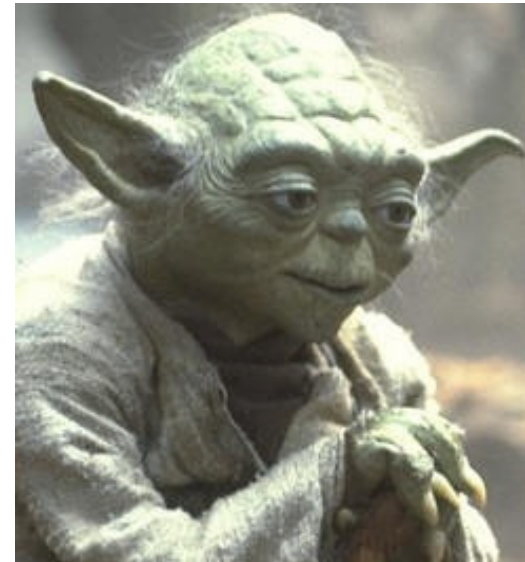
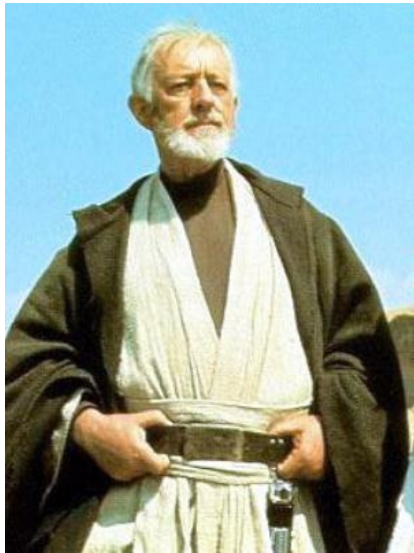


# Character Archetypes



**The Damsel in Distress:** A vulnerable woman who must be rescued by the hero; often used as a way to trap the hero

# Character Archetypes



**The Wise One/The Mentor/The Sage:** the savior, the redeemer, the guru – represents knowledge, insight, and wisdom; serves as a teacher or counselor to the hero

# Character Archetypes



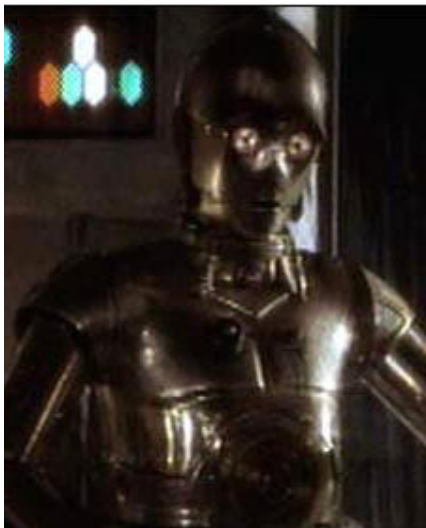
**The Spiritual Earth Mother/The Good Mother:**  
symbolic of abundance and fertility; offers spiritual/emotional nourishment

# Character Archetypes

**The Soul Mate**: incarnation of inspiration and spiritual fulfillment



# Character Archetypes



## Loyal Retainers

- Individuals somewhat like servants who are heroic themselves
- Duty is to protect the hero and reflect his/her nobility



# Character Archetypes

**Ill-fated ("Star-crossed") Lovers:** A young man and woman enter an ill-fated love affair which ends tragically in the death of either or both of the lovers





# Character Archetypes



## **Nature Helpers:**

Characters (animals or plants usually) that assist or guide the protagonist

# Character Archetypes

**Jester/Fool/Trickster**: trick others to get them to do what s/he wants – they can be both virtuous and nefarious. Provides comic relief.



# Character Archetypes



**Scapegoat/ Sacrificial Victim:** An animal or more usually a human whose death in a public ceremony expiates some taint or sin that has been visited upon a community.

# Character Archetypes

## The Giant/Monster/Ogre:

a character who is lonely (because they are shunned), with uncontrolled rage or strength or violence, and a lot of times they fall in love with and protect a beautiful woman.

Sometimes monsters must be outwitted by heroes



# Character Archetypes

**Serpent**: a helper and representative of evil.



# Archetypal Settings and Symbols

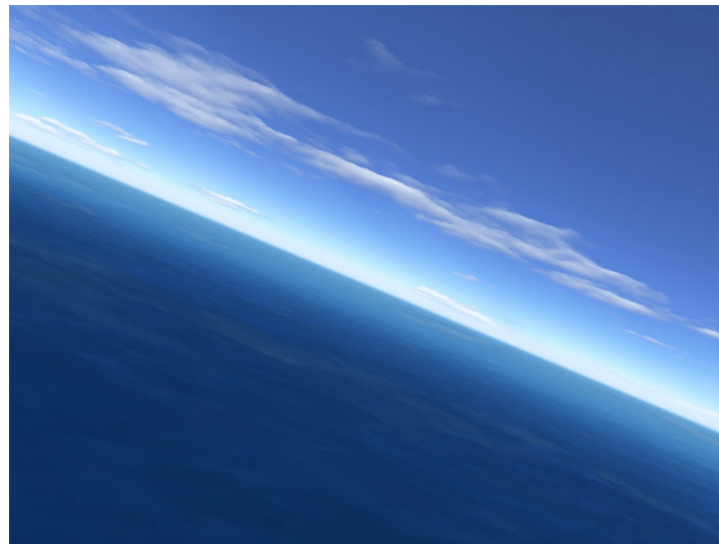
- **The Sun**: (masculine) both the giver and destroyer of life creative energy; consciousness; passage of time and life. Rising sun: birth; creation Setting sun: death
- **The Moon**: (feminine) marks the passage of time and controls the course of human events. Seedtime, harvest, tides, etc.



# Archetypal Settings and Symbols



**Water**: the mystery of creation; the life cycle (birth-death-resurrection); purification and redemption



**The Sea**: the mother of all life; death and rebirth; the unconscious

# Archetypal Settings and Symbols

**Rivers**: death and rebirth (baptism); the flowing of time into eternity; transitional phases of the life cycle; incarnations of deities.



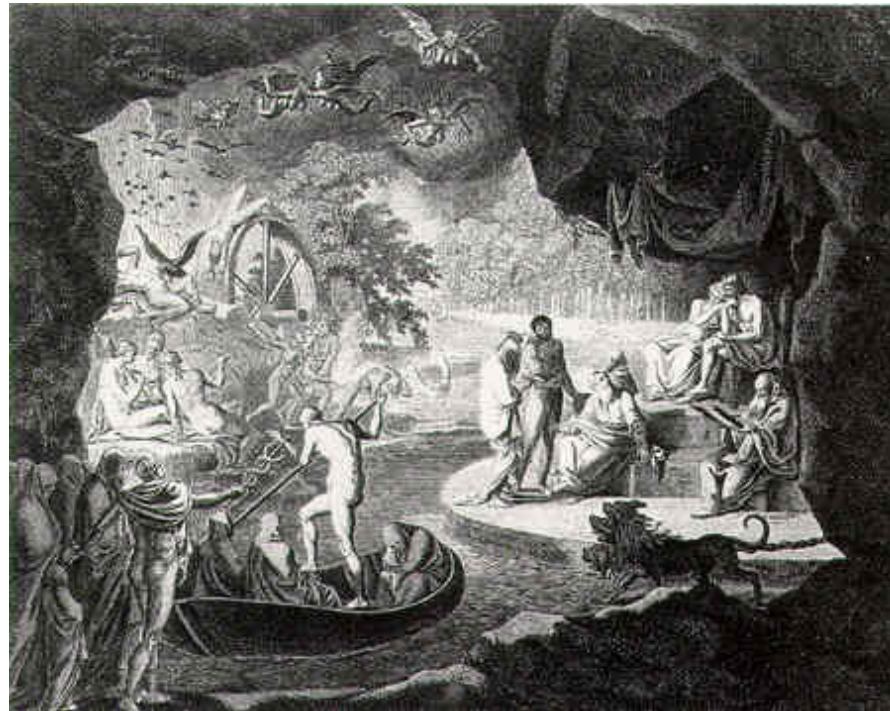


# Archetypal Settings and Symbols

**The Whirlpool:**  
symbolizes the  
destructive  
power of nature  
and fate



# Archetypal Settings and Symbols



**The Underworld**: a place of death; represents an encounter with the dark side of the self

# Archetypal Settings and Symbols

**The Threshold**: gateway to the new world; the hero must enter it to change and grow

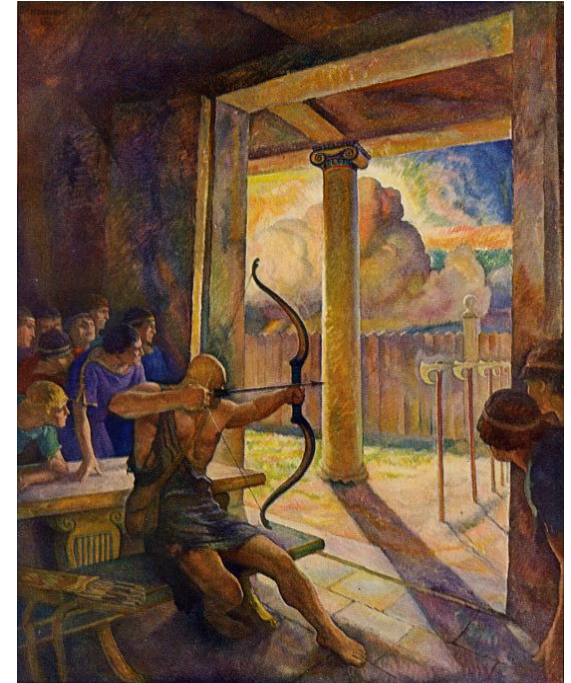


# Archetypal Settings and Symbols



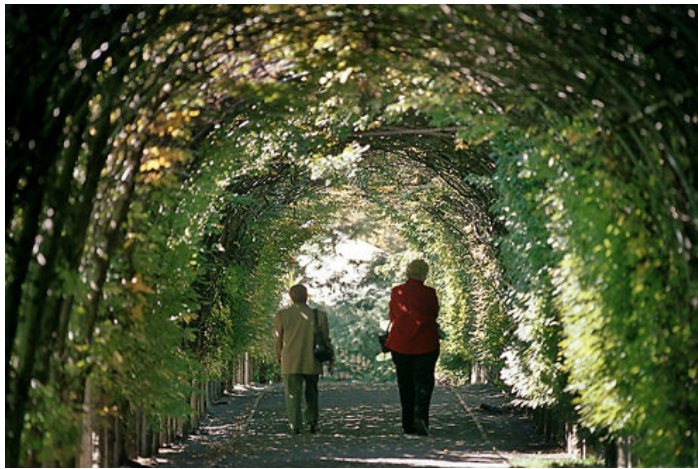
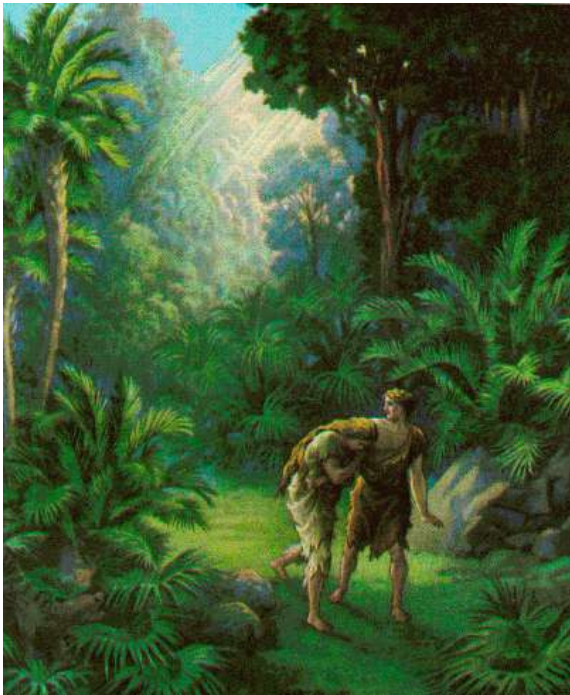
## The Magic Weapon:

- Symbolizes extraordinary quality of the hero
- No one else can wield the weapon or use it to its full potential
- Usually given to the hero by the mentor figure



# Archetypal Settings and Symbols

**Garden**: paradise; innocence; unspoiled beauty (especially feminine); fertility; new birth; hope



# Archetypal Settings and Symbols

**Tree**: inexhaustible life due to its growth, proliferation, and generative and regenerative processes; wisdom



# Archetypal Settings and Symbols

**Caves and Tunnels**: rebirth, passage, death of the old life



# Archetypal Settings and Symbols

**Fountain**: rebirth, renewal, life





# Archetypal Settings and Symbols

**Islands**: remoteness from society and the island's isolation from all other societies; helps insulate people from other cultures so that their culture remains true to itself; blocks outside influences



# Archetypal Settings and Symbols

**Desert**: spiritual aridity, death, nihilism, hopelessness



# Archetypal Settings and Symbols

**Fire**: both protective and destructive; symbolizes human knowledge and industry



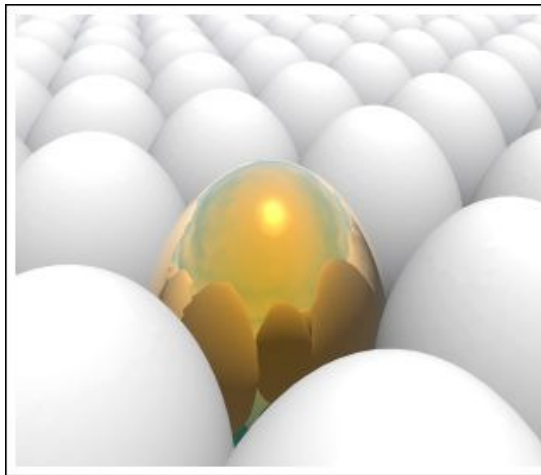
# Archetypal Settings and Symbols

**Circle (sphere)**: Wholeness, unity, perfection, eternity



# Archetypal Settings and Symbols

**Egg (oval)**: The mystery of life and the forces of generation



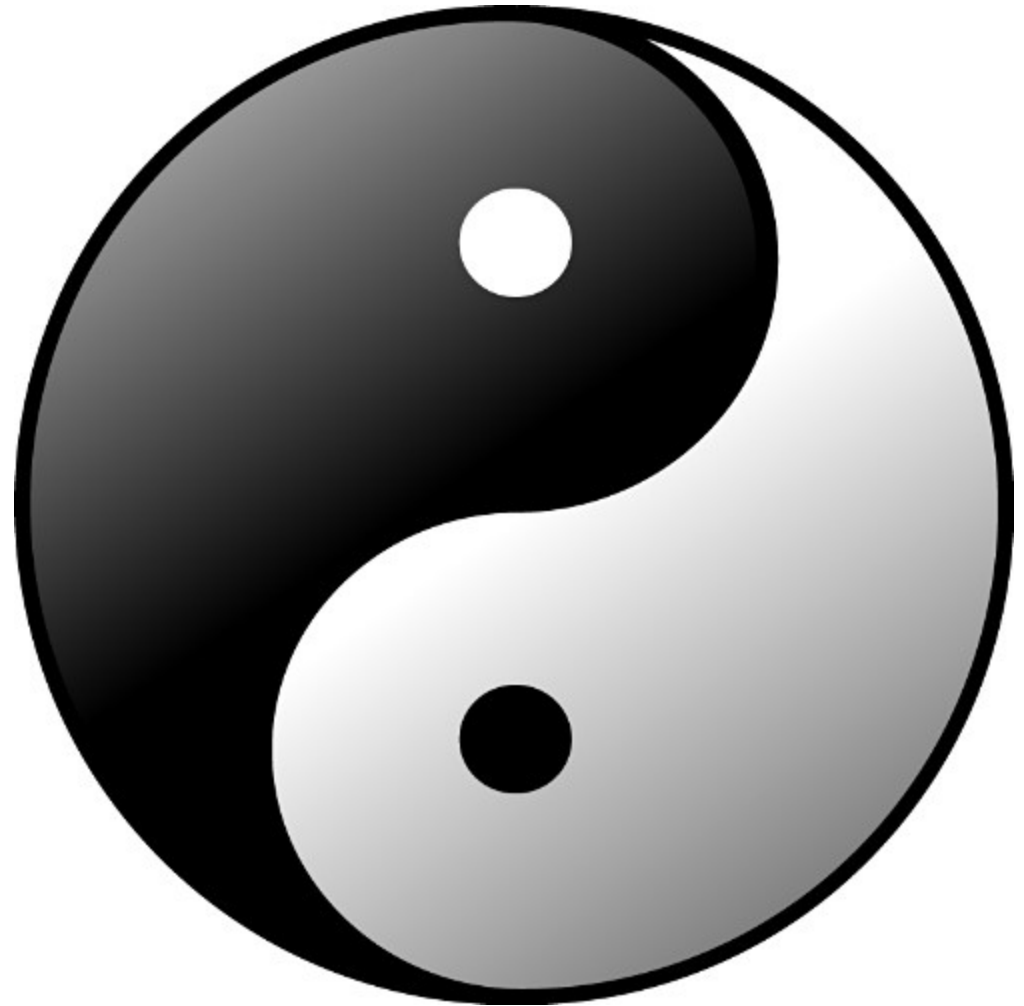
# Archetypal Settings and Symbols

**Triangle (pyramid)**: The Christian Trinity; stages of life; hardship



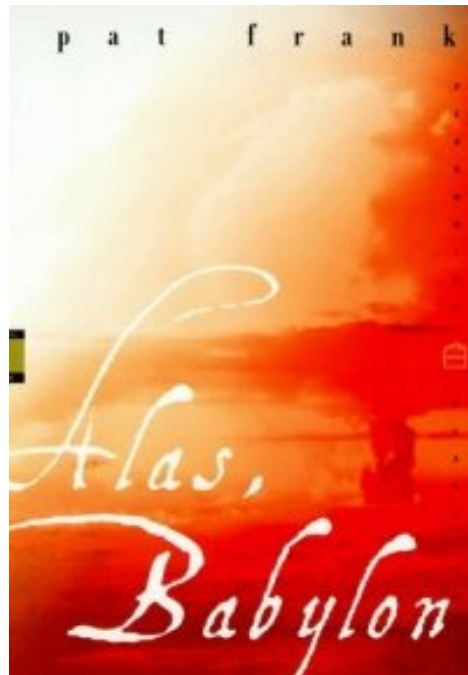
# Archetypal Settings and Symbols

**Yin-yang**: the union of the opposite forces of the yin (female principle, darkness, passivity, the unconscious) and the yang (masculine principle, light, activity, the conscious mind)



# Color Archetypes

**Red**: blood, sacrifice, passion; disorder; violence





# Color Archetypes

- **Green**: *in a positive context – growth; sensation; hope; fertility; in a negative context – death and decay*



# Color Archetypes

- **Blue:** highly positive – associated with truth, religious feeling, security, spiritual



# Color Archetypes

**Black**: chaos, mystery, the unknown; death; evil; the unconscious



# Color Archetypes

**White**: *positive aspects* – light, purity, innocence; *negative aspects* – death, terror, the supernatural



# Color Archetypes

**Brown**: neutralizing, earth, hearth, home, outdoors, reliability, comfort, simplicity



# Color Archetypes

**Orange**: concentration, psychic energy, balance, enthusiasm, demanding attention, vibrant, warmth, encouragement



# Color Archetypes

our friendship gives me the warm fuzzies like a cute pair of pink bunny slippers.

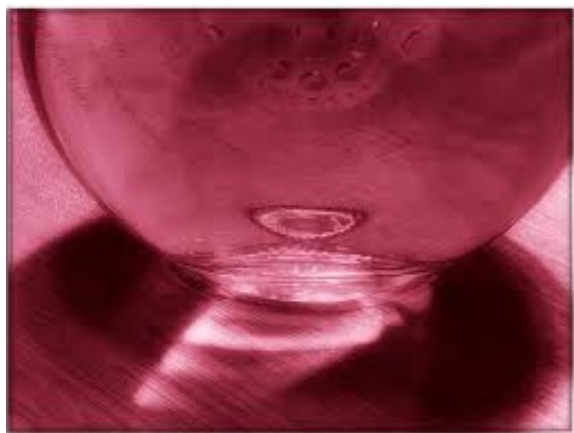


**Pink**: true love, friendship, attraction, romance, spiritual awakening, togetherness



# Color Archetypes

**Purple:** magical forces, power over obstacles, royalty, nobility, spirituality, ceremony, transformation, wisdom





# Color Archetypes

**Yellow**: joy, happiness, optimism, imagination, hope, sunshine



# Color Archetypes

**Gold**: greatness, value, wealth



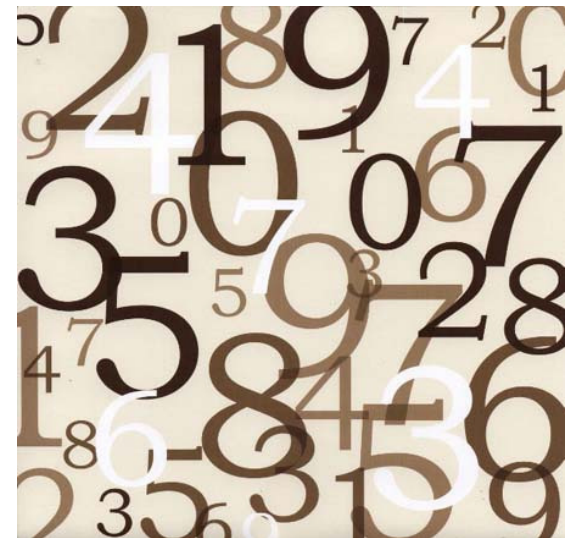
# Number Archetypes

**One (1)**: ultimate unity; identity; equality; existence; general harmony, peace, and tranquility

**Two (2)**: contrasts; diversity; inequality; division; separation; disorder; confusion; change

**Three (3)**: light; spiritual awareness and unity (cf. The Holy Trinity); the male principle; completeness; divinity; soul of the world

**Four (4)**: associated with the circle, life cycle, four seasons; female principle; earth, nature; four elements (earth, air, fire, water)



# Number Archetypes

**Five (5)**: divine grace

**Six (6)**: evil connotations, devil;  
ambivalence; totals of labor; luck,  
chance

**Seven (7)**: the most potent of all  
symbolic numbers – signifying the  
union of *three* and *four*, the  
completion of a cycle, perfect order.

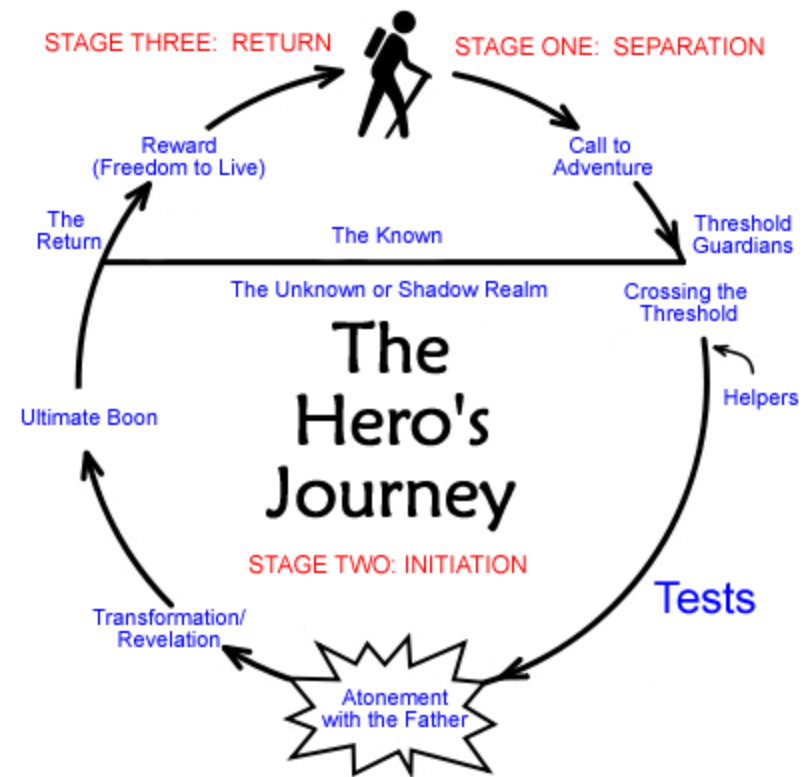
**Twelve (12)**: 12 months of the solar  
year



# Situational Archetypes

**The Quest**: the search for someone or something that will restore peace/normalcy to a troubled land/people

**The Journey**: the hero's path; represents the journey of life



# Situational Archetypes

**The Task**: a superhuman deed that must be performed to save the kingdom, win the fair lady, or identify the hero so that he may assume his rightful position



# Situational Archetypes

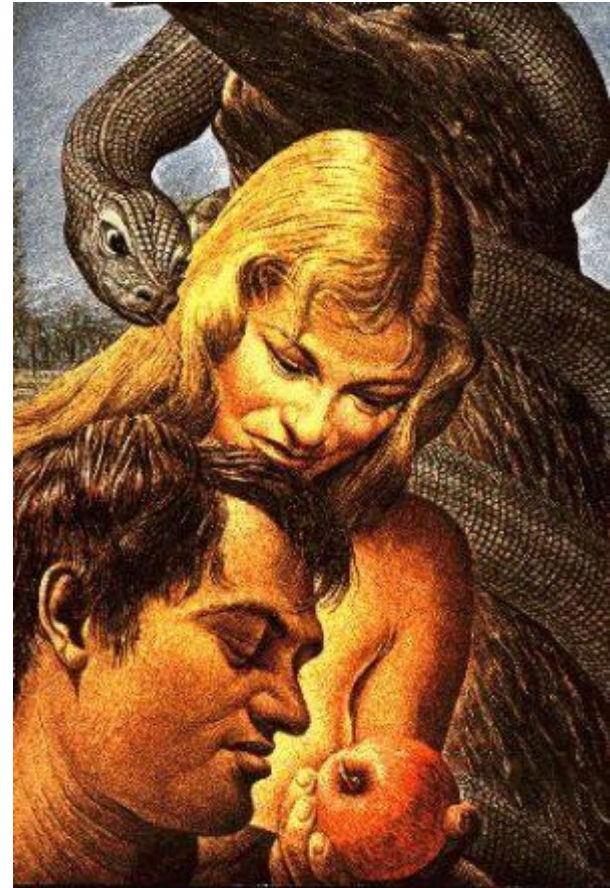


**Supernatural Intervention:** The gods intervene on the side of the hero (or, sometimes, against him)

**Innate Wisdom vs. Educated Stupidity:** Some characters exhibit wisdom and understanding of situations instinctively as opposed to those supposedly in charge (often demonstrated by Loyal Retainers)

# Situational Archetypes

**The Fall**: a descent from a higher to a lower state of being, from innocence and bliss to loss—often accompanied by an expulsion from paradise





# Situational Archetypes



**The Battle Between Good and Evil**: Does this one really require a definition? – Shows man's eternal optimism in the continual portrayal of good triumphing over evil despite great odds

# Situational Archetypes

## The Ritual:

Ceremonies that mark the rite of passage into another state.

- ▣ Sacrificial
- ▣ Initiation
- ▣ Coming of Age



# Situational Archetypes

- **Sleep/The Void**: loss of personal awareness and sense of self. Healing and true peace or loss of self can be achieved in this state.



# Situational Archetypes



## Death/Rebirth:

- ▣ Can be literal or physical
- ▣ Signifies an ending or a beginning