

**11th Grade Summer Reading:
“Overcoming the Monster” Plot Structure
20,000 Leagues Under the Sea by Jules Verne**

Assignment: Read the unabridged version of the novel. Write a literary analysis essay explaining how the novel fits into the archetypical plot pattern of “Overcoming the Monster.” Students should prepare a draft essay for the first day of school. The final essay is due in TurnItIn.com on August 11, 2017.

See below for detailed requirements for the essay and an explanation of the terminology and concept above. You will receive login information for TurnItIn.com on the course syllabus the first day of class.

Explanation of literary theory:

An **archetypical plot** is a **pattern** of telling a story. *Different types of stories* use different patterns. One pattern is known as “Overcoming the Monster.” *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* by French author Jules Verne is a classical story which follows this pattern of development. Other stories which follow this pattern are *James Bond*, *Star Wars*, *Perseus*, *War of the Worlds*, *Beowulf*, and *Dracula*.

Each of these “Overcoming the Monster” stories have **5 meta-plot structures** in common:

1. Anticipation Stage (The Call)
2. Dream Stage (Initial Success)
3. Frustration Stage (Confrontation)
4. Nightmare Stage (Final Ordeal)
5. Miraculous Escape (Death of the Monster)

Your challenge is to read *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*, and then write a six paragraph essay in which you explain how the novel fits into the archetypical plot of “Overcoming the Monster.” Each of the five stages should be described in one paragraph each, and then you should compose a concluding paragraph, discussing the work as a whole, and making a broader point about literature in this category. The five body paragraphs should include details from the text (that means quotations) and an explanation of how the details prove the stage occurred. Be reminded that our school’s policy regarding plagiarism will be administered and applied to this and all other essay assignments throughout the year.

If you need any help with this assignment, contact me at rebeccahagues@calvaryknights.com. Don’t be shy to ask. I teach because I love to help.

11th: The 5 meta-plot structures of the “Overcoming the Monster” Plot Pattern

1. Anticipation Stage and Call

The reader learns about the monster from afar, including its powers and reign of terror over the nearby community, and the hero accepts the call to defeat the monster. We gradually learn of the monster’s fearsome reputation, and how it is casting its threatening shadow over some community, kingdom, or mankind in general.

2. Dream Stage

The hero prepares to fight the monster while it is still a comfortable distance away, although the distance between the two is decreasing. In film, a training montage usually fits in right about here. The hero may even seem immune to danger.

3. Frustration Stage

It’s here! The monster! And it’s even worse than we thought! The monster’s power is revealed in all its terrible glory, and it looks like our hero is in way over his or her head; he seems tiny against such a strong opponent. Indeed, it seems he is slipping into the monster’s power.

4. Nightmare Stage

Cue the epic battle music, because it is ON. And it’s not going well for our hero, who is being absolutely pummeled by the monster. But wait! Just as all hope is lost and it appears our hero is defeated, the tide of battle takes an unexpected turn in the hero’s favor.

5. The Thrilling Escape from Death, and Death of the Monster

The monster is defeated, the hero emerges victorious, and the grateful people present him/her with treasure, a kingdom or something to rule over.

Note: Not every “Overcoming the Monster” story will follow the pattern perfectly. If there are deviations from the core pattern, you should definitely explain those in your essay.

Works Cited

Booker, Christopher. *The Seven Basic Plots: Why We Tell Stories*. Bloomsbury Continuum, 2016.

Bureman, Liz. “The Seven Types of Plots: Overcoming the Monster.” *The Write Practice*, 2017, thewritepractice.com/7-plots/.

11th Grade Rubric: Summer Reading Literary Analysis Essay
(/15) MLA Style, 8th edition: Format: heading, header, double space, margins, title, font. Citations, Works Cited Page for novel, Bible, and all other resources used.
(/10) Introduction. Be sure to mention essentials for a Literary Analysis Essay.
Author, title, time, period, & setting of work
Thesis of Paper. example: {Novel} follows the archetypal plot structure of the _____.
(/10) Plot Stage 1: Anticipation Stage and Call
Explain stage
Give 2 pieces of textual evidence (quotations) proving the novel has (or doesn't have) this stage. You must use " " and novel page numbers to cite the quote. Give commentary or explanation of how the quotation you chose proves your point about the stage
(/10) Plot Stage 2: Dream Stage
Explain stage
Give 2 pieces of textual evidence (quotations) proving the novel has (or doesn't have) this stage. You must use " " and novel page numbers to cite the quote. Give commentary or explanation of how the quotation you chose proves your point about the stage.
(/10) Plot Stage 3:Frustration Phase
Explain stage
Give 2 pieces of textual evidence (quotations) proving the novel has (or doesn't have) this stage. You must use " " and novel page numbers to cite the quote. Give commentary or explanation of how the quotation you chose proves your point about the stage.
(/10) Plot Stage 4: Nightmare Stage
Explain stage
Give 2 pieces of textual evidence (quotations) proving the novel has (or doesn't have) this stage. You must use " " and novel page numbers to cite the quote. Give commentary or explanation of how the quotation you chose proves your point about the stage.
(/10) Plot Stage 5: Thrilling Escape from Death/Escape from Monster Stage
Explain stage
Give 2 pieces of textual evidence (quotations) proving the novel has (or doesn't have) this stage. You must use " " and novel page numbers to cite the quote. Give commentary or explanation of how the quotation you chose proves your point about the stage.
(/15) Conclusion
Restate Thesis
Synthesize body paragraphs
Address Broader Picture: Identify a message the author might be conveying in writing this book. Does this message line up with a biblical worldview? Or does it contradict what Scripture teaches?
(/10) Grammar, conventions, spelling
_ /100