

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Hatchet, Day 1



Mythic Background:

The journey begins in the Ordinary World where you are bored, feeling stuck, finding your life is going nowhere, or at least not where you want it to go. But then, in this ordinary world, unexpectedly, you receive a Call to Adventure. Often from a herald, sometimes an invitation, sometimes a plea for help, often a disruption.

Key Paragraph

He was sitting in a bushplane roaring seven thousand feet above the northern wilderness with a pilot who had suffered a massive heart attack and who was either dead or in something close to a coma.

He was alone.

In the roaring plane with no pilot he was alone.

Alone.

Writing Prompt

In today's reading Brian Robeson has been dropped off by his mother at an airport to fly in a small plane to Canada where he is to spend the summer with his father. Brian thinks of his parents' divorce and about how he ended up on this flight. While in the air his pilot suffers a major heart attack, leaving Brian alone.

Using your own experiences, think of a time where you felt as if you were left alone. Think of perhaps your first day at school, a new job, being left at home by yourself, entering a new living situation or being in a new environment. Reflect on how you felt being alone in this new environment. How did you feel different in this new environment? Why did you feel this way?

Write a 1-2 paragraph narrative that focuses on:

- **Where were you?**
- **What was it that made you feel alone?**
- **How did you feel?**
- **Why did you feel that way?**
- **What did you do about it?**

Be sure to include smooth transitions in your writing that clearly set up the problem and sequence of events. Use precise language and sensory details to enhance your writing, and provide a concluding sentence to reiterate the main message of your narrative.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Hatchet, Day 2



Mythic Background

Our hero, bored and stuck is Reluctant to answer this call and even Refuses the Call; it is too different, too many obligations, he or she feels as if they cannot go through with it, not now...

Key Paragraph

Those were his choices. He could wait for the plane to run out of gas and fall or he could push the throttle in and make it happen sooner. If he waited for the plane to run out of fuel he would go farther-but he did not know which way he was moving. When the pilot had jerked he had moved the plane, but Brian could not remember how much or if it had come back to its original course.

Writing Prompt

Write about a time you had to make a crucial decision. **Write a 1-2 paragraph narrative that explains your choices and why did you choose the route you did? Was it a gut feeling? Did you measure the pros and cons for both choices? Describe the outcome using precise and descriptive language and explain whether you would make the same decision again if confronted with a similar situation. Be sure to conclude your writing with a succinct sentence that reiterates the main message of your narrative.**

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Hatchet, Day 3



Key Paragraph

He saw nothing but sensed blue, cold blue-green, and he raked at the seatbelt batch, tore his mails loose on one hand. He ripped at it until it released and somehow- the water trying to kill him, to end him-somehow he pulled himself out of the shattered front window and clawed up into the blue, felt something hold him back, felt his windbreaker tear and he was free. Tearing free. Ripping Free.

Writing Prompt

In today's reading Brian's plane goes down and when he is in the water he feels as if it grasps onto him. The water is holding him back and he needs to fight and struggle in order to break free.

Think about an experience when you felt like some external force was holding you back. It could be a friend, a feeling, a job, relative, peer etc. What was it that they were holding you back from? What did you do to break free and find happiness? How did it make you feel while you were struggling and when you were finally free?

Write a 1-2 page narrative describing the event with precise details, descriptive and sensory language. Use narrative techniques such as dialogue and sequencing to develop your narrative. Be sure to provide a conclusion that sums up the main points of your narrative. When you are finished with your writing, publish your work to an online forum of your choice (i.e. Blog, Google Docs) and provide the link to your classmates in order to receive feedback on your work.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Hatchet, Day 4



Key Paragraph

Luck, he thought. I have luck, I had good luck there. But he knew that was wrong. If he had had good luck his parents wouldn't have divorced because of the Secret and he wouldn't have been flying with a pilot who had a heart attack and he wouldn't be here where he had to have good luck to keep from being destroyed.

Writing Prompt

Recall a time when you felt lucky. What was happening? What were you doing? Who was there? What was your situation? Where were you? When did this occur? How is it that you were lucky? When you look back on this event, how do you understand its impact on your life? Was the event significant? Did you grow from it?

Write a 2-paragraph narrative to develop this personal experience. Set out the situation clearly and using a strong personal point of view. Be sure to not only describe the event, but also make sure you reflect on specifically *why* you felt lucky. Sequence the event or events clearly so they progress naturally. Also, make sure that your conclusion reiterates the main points of your narrative succinctly.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Hatchet, Day 5



Key Paragraph

No, wait. One other thing. Those were all the things he had, but he also had himself. Perpich used to drum that into them—"You are your most valuable asset. Don't forget that. You are the best thing you have."

Writing Prompt

In today's reading Brian is feeling lost and alone. He does not know what to do with himself in his new environment and feels almost hopeless. Then he remembers a teacher, a mentor, who gave him words of wisdom that truly apply to his current situation and give him the motivation to do something.

Think of someone who has made an impact in your life, someone who has guided you at some point. **Write a paragraph describing your relationship with this person. What was this person like and what was your relationship with him/her? What situation did they help you with? Do you still keep in contact? Does the advice they gave you in the past still guide you or have relevance today? Write a detailed narrative that explains who gave you the advice, what their advice was, and why it proved to be important for you. Provide precise words and details that help illustrate your point. Be sure to use the first-person point of view and provide a conclusion that reiterates the main idea of the advice.**

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Hatchet, Day 6



Mythic Background

When the foundation myth is set in the wilderness, often the mentor is the necessity to survive. Through this necessity, our hero is called to act, and take responsibility for living on his or her own. Through experiences, both good and bad, the hero grows in his or her ability to recognize what works and what does not. For Brian, the necessity to eat and have shelter will prove to mentor him throughout his journey.

Key Paragraph

Brian leaned against the rock and stared out at the lake. What, in all of this, was there to eat? He was so used to having food just be there, just always being there. When he was hungry he went to the icebox, or to the store, or sat down at a meal his mother cooked.

Writing Prompt

Sometimes people are pushed out of their comfort zone and they are challenged to go through experiences they normally would not confront. Often in these situations people learn about themselves and grow as individuals.

In today's reading, Brian has no home and is not used to looking for food in order to survive. He is challenged to shelter and feed himself in the wilderness. He steps up to the challenge by carefully building a shelter and searching the wilderness for his food.

When have you been challenged to do something you normally would not do? Perhaps it was to care for someone, cook for yourself, take the train/bus somewhere, find your way home, or simply assemble something at home. **Write a 1-2 paragraph narrative about your experience. What was the challenge presented to you? What was your initial reaction to the task at hand? How did you go about solving your problem? Did you succeed in your first attempt? What happened in the end and how did you feel when it was over?**

Be sure to use pacing and sequencing to describe the situation clearly. In addition, use precise language to provide details. Provide a conclusion that reiterates the main ideas presented in your narrative. When you have finished writing, upload your work to the online forum of your choice (Blog, Google Doc, etc.) and provide the link to your classmates so they can provide feedback on your writing. Revise your writing if necessary.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Hatchet, Day 7



Key Paragraph

For the first time since the crash he was not thinking of himself, or his won life. Brian was wondering if the bear was as surprised as he to find another being in the berries.

Writing Prompt

After a scary or intense experience some people like to write down the events that occurred and express their emotions to help them cope. Writing your emotions down is a good way to express yourself so that you do not keep them bottled up inside.

Brian had an intense night and a scary encounter. He was up all night with diarrhea and throwing up. The following day he was frightened by a large bear, which crept up behind him, but luckily did not want to harm him. Put yourself in Brian's shoes.

Write a 1-page journal narrative about your day. Remember to include details of what you were doing, but most importantly what you were feeling during and after each experience. Specifically, provide sequencing so the events you describe are chronological. Precise details will help illustrate the day and reflect your feelings about your experience.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Hatchet, Day 8



Key Paragraph

He did not know how long it took, but later he looked back on this time of crying in the corner of the dark cave and thought of it as when he learned the most important rule of survival, which was that feeling sorry for yourself didn't work. It wasn't just that it was wrong to do, or that it was considered incorrect. It was more than that-it didn't work. When he sat alone in the darkness and cried as was done, all done with it, nothing had changed. His leg still hurt, it was still dark, he was still alone and the self-pity had accomplished nothing.

Writing Prompt

Have you ever woken up suddenly from a dream and felt like the dream was trying to tell you something? **Write a short narrative describing a dream you remember having and try to explain the significance of the dream.**

Be creative: use pacing, dialogue, or reflection to allow for an in-depth perspective of the dream. Also, use sensory details or precise words to illustrate your point succinctly. Sequence events so they build a coherent whole.

Finally, conclude your writing with a summary of the main points of the dream and what you think it meant. When you are done writing your dream, spend 1-2 sentences explaining the difference between your dream and the dream that Brian has in today's reading. Use specific examples from the text to support your comparison.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Hatchet, Day 9



Key Paragraph

I have a friend, he thought-I have a friend now. A hungry friend, but a good one. I have a friend named fire.

Writing Prompt

Today's reading talks about crossing the threshold into the world of adventure. This is the act of courage that propels us fully into our story, not unable to turn back until the story's end. Often some event forces us to act. And when we act, there may be powerful people or forces (like nature or lack of experience) blocking our way. Can you think of a time when you finally made up your mind to do something? Something that:

- Takes courage
- Or is difficult for you?
- Or you had been putting off?
- Or not looking forward to?
- Or avoiding?
- Or dreading having to do?

And you finally decided to do it. When you started on your way to do it [This is crossing the threshold]:

- Did anyone or anything get in your way?
- Did any thoughts or doubts get in your way?
- Did you find it difficult to actually carry your plans out?

Write about your experience being sure to describe:

- What you made up your mind to do
- What this would require of you [the threshold you would have to cross]
- What did/did not get in the way
- What ended up happening

After using the bulleted lists above to brainstorm, write a 2-paragraph narrative.

In the first paragraph, describe a time that you made up your mind to do something: use details, pacing, sequencing, and other literary techniques to add clarity and add to your personal reflection.

In the second paragraph, analyze how the author of the *Hatchet* uses the heroic journey to help develop the main events and plot of the novel. Use your class notes as well as the text to help support your analysis. When you have finished your writing, provide a conclusion for both paragraphs that sums up the main points of each.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Hatchet, Day 10



Key Paragraph

At dark he settled in again for the night, next to the fire with the stack of short pieces ready to put on, and he ate the rest of the raspberries. During all the work of the day his leg had loosened but it still ached a bit, and he rubbed it and watched the fire and thought for the first time since the crash that he might be getting a handle on things, might be starting to do something other than just sit.

Writing Prompt 1

Explanations are not excuses. Explanations give us information to fill us in on something we know nothing about or are not sure about. Explanations can also tell us the steps taken to learn something or express why we feel a certain way.

In yesterday's reading Brian learned how to build a fire. He struggled with it and his struggles were clearly explained to us. We were given the description of the steps he took, and his thought process throughout the experience as he moved towards mastery.

In today's reading Brian works to keep the fire going. Again, we are given the explanation of how he struggles to do so.

In a narrative paragraph explain a specific situation where you struggled to learn something. What was it that you were attempting to learn? Did you get help? What steps did you take to achieve your goal? How did you finally master it? How did you feel throughout the struggle? How did you feel when you mastered it? Your writing should develop smoothly and include transitions. Be sure to use reflection to explain what you learned from the situation. Use precise words and sensory language to illustrate your point. When you have finished writing, upload your work to the online forum of your choice (Blog, Google Doc, etc.) and share the link with your classmates so you can receive feedback on your work.

Writing Prompt 2

Think about a best friend you have had. Think about all you have been through together. Now, **write a narrative paragraph in which you describe your relationship with this person. What was he/she like? What made him/her your best friend? What did you go through together to form such a strong bond? Where is he/she now? Your writing should develop smoothly and include transitions. Use precise language and reflection to help explain your relationship. When you have finished writing, upload your work to the online forum of your choice (Blog, Google Doc, etc.) and share the link with your classmates so you can receive feedback on your work.**

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Hatchet, Day 11



Key Paragraph

None of that used to be in Brian and now it was a part of him, a changed part of him, a grown part of him, and the two things, his mind and his body, had come together as well, had made a connections with each other that he didn't quite understand. When his ears heard a sound or his eyes saw a sight his mind took control of his body. Without his thinking, he moved to face the sound or sight, moved to make ready for it, to deal with it.

Writing Prompt

In today's reading Brian notices himself undergoing a change. The way he acts now is different than before, and it is for the better because it allows him to survive in his environment.

Think of a time when you noticed you were changing. Perhaps you changed your eating habits, or you started to work out. Other possibilities may include but are not limited to: taking interest in a hobby, stopping an action or spending less time with friends to be with yourself and your family. What was inspiring the change? How old were you when this change occurred? Did anyone inspire you to change or was it something that just happened naturally? Why was this change significant in your life?

Write a 1-2 paragraph narrative that develops your experience; sequence the events naturally to build a sense of cohesion and smooth progression of events. Use precise words or sensory details to make the experience as life-like as possible. When you have finished your writing, conclude by summarizing the main points of your change and what led you to change.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Hatchet, Day 12



Mythic Background

In mythology, stories of the heroic journey introduce us to the hero through a series of tests that clarify who are enemies and who are allies. The journey always includes companions, and always leads to a series of increasing conflicts and an ordeal in which these allies and enemies will be critical. On the way to ordeal, the hero experiences conflict with those he or she meets along the way: people, forces, places. This is the Approach to the Inmost Cave [Christopher Vogler, Joseph Campbell].

This is the area or zone of approach where the hero is going deeper into the special world and getting closer to the ordeal, the crisis that must inevitably erupt. This is the crisis that will test his or her courage, and call on everything he or she has to offer, everything he or she has learned. This approach can be fast or slow, mountainous or a desert journey, a physical struggle or even a romance. It is very often a series or progressive set of choices and tests, getting closer to the real test.

Brian is left alone and hopeless after the plane leaves him behind. His will to survive and carry on will be tested and he is Approaching the Inmost Cave.

Key Paragraph

He could not play the game without hope; could not play the game without a dream. They had taken it all away from him now, they had turned away from him and there was nothing for him now. The plane gone, his family gone, all of it gone. They would not come. He was alone and there was nothing for him.

Writing Prompt 1

The Unit theme is courage. Courage has been defined as “risk for a reason.” In today’s reading Brian took a risk in putting all of his hopes in the belief that the signal fire would save him and that the plane was going to stop for him. The unexpected happened to Brian. His actions produced different results than he would have expected. However, it can be argued that Brian acted courageously as he had a plan and followed through with it in the efforts to be rescued. **Write a 1 paragraph narrative describing how Brian acted courageously. Use pacing and description along with precise and sensory details to illustrate your point. If you feel he did not act courageously explain why. Back up the main points of your narrative with reasons and examples. Use evidence from the text to make your explanation strong. Be sure to end your paragraph with a conclusion that reiterates your stance. Upload your writing to the online forum of your choice (Blog, Google Doc, etc.) and provide the link to your classmates so they can provide feedback.**

Writing Prompt 2

Think of a situation in which a friend took a risk and acted courageously. Your friend may have stood up for you, or perhaps put everything on the line to prove a point or stand up for something he/she believes in. **Write a narrative paragraph that uses**

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description and reflection to explain your friends' actions. Be sure to include precise, sensory details to elaborate on how your friend was feeling while performing this courageous act. When you have finished writing, be sure to add a concluding sentence that sums up your friend's actions. Upload your writing to the online forum of your choice (Blog, Google Doc, etc.) and provide the link to your classmates so they can provide feedback.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Hatchet, Day 13



Mythic Background

In Greek mythology, Hades is the god of the underworld, the gates of which are protected by Cerberus, the dog of Hades. Specifically, the 3 headed dog of Hades. Cerberus made sure that none of the dead could leave the underworld and none of the living could enter it. Cerberus is described as a fierce and fearful creature with 3 vicious dog's heads, a tail something like a dragon or other kind of serpent. Sometimes more elaborate descriptions indicated hundreds of other heads including snakeheads all over his back. In any event, not a real friendly creature. Only Orpheus got past Cerberus although Heracles tried to bring him back to earth.

Orpheus was a singer, musician, and poet who played the lyre. He loved his wife, Eurydice very much. She was bit by a snake and died. Orpheus went to the underworld to get her back, and through many tests of courage, love and the use of his art, he got her back. Using his lyre, Orpheus once charmed even Cerberus to get past him to rescue his wife Eurydice. On the way back to the world Orpheus looked back when he was told not to, and he lost Eurydice forever.

Brian experiences death in this chapter when we learn of his attempted suicide. He tries to kill himself out of the hopelessness that he feels but in the end cannot do it. When he awakes the next morning he is "reborn" and begins a new life and way of being in the wilderness.

In the heroic journey, as we approach the conflict we reach the central crisis – and the hero finds him or herself in the horrible mess he or she most feared – the Ordeal has come and the hero must summon everything heroic in the self to get through it – the moment has come. The plane passed over Brian and left him behind in the wilderness. He is left alone and sees no option but to try and kill himself. However, he does not and cannot follow through with it and is reborn.

Key Paragraph

Still there on his side and the sun come up and when he opened his eyes he saw the cuts on his arm, the dry blood turning black; he saw the blood and hated the blood, hated what he had done to himself when he was the old Brian and was weak, and two things game into his mind-two true things.

Writing Prompt 1

Brian has come into a situation he did not think would happen- he was abandoned and lost all hope of being rescued. He tries to avoid the pain by attempting something dangerous and mad that he later feels angry for doing.

Have you ever been in a situation where you ran into something you never expected? Something or someone or some situation you never thought could or would occur, or were totally unprepared for? Or found yourself in a dangerous situation you did not expect at all? This is not necessarily a negative situation. It might have been very

positive but unexpected. What happened? How did you feel? What did you do? What do you think about it now?

Write a 1-2 paragraph narrative in which you compare your experience in a dangerous or unexpected situation with the heroic journey in Greek mythology. How do you resolve the conflict? Be sure to use your notes from class to guide your analysis. Use precise and sensory details in your writing, and be sure to use techniques such as pacing and dialogue to create a coherent piece of writing.

Writing Prompt 2

You could answer writing prompt 1 for a situation that happened to someone else if you have enough information to answer all of the questions.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Hatchet, Day 14



Mythic Background

In the heroic journey, as we approach the conflict we reach the central crisis- and the hero finds him or herself in the horrible mess he or she most feared- the Ordeal has come and the hero must summon everything heroic in the self to get through it- the moment has come. Harry has been left alone, tries to kill himself and when he cannot do it is reborn. By being reborn he has started entering the Ordeal and finally comes into it when he learns the vital knowledge of survival "Food is everything."

Key Paragraph

Early in the new time he had learned the most important thing, the truly vital knowledge that drives all creatures in the forest-food is all. Food was simply everything. All things in the woods, from insects to fish to bears, were always, always looking for food-it was the great, single driving influence in nature. To eat. All must eat.

Writing Prompt 1

In this chapter Brian has fully entered the Ordeal. He is on the final stretch to confronting evil. **Write a 1-2 paragraph narrative about a time when you were in the final stretch of completing something difficult. Explain the situation and set out the problem clearly using techniques such as pacing, description and reflection. Provide sensory details and descriptions that make your readers root for your success. When you have finished your writing, be sure to provide a conclusion that sums up your experience. Upload your writing to the online forum of your choice (Blog, Google Docs, etc.) and provide the link to your classmates so they can offer feedback on your work.**

Writing Prompt 2

You may answer the writing prompt above for someone else, if you have enough information to do so thoroughly.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Hatchet, Day 15



Mythic Background

You have survived and won, you claim your victory and leave with your Reward which you can celebrate. Brian has killed a foolbird and is able to eat meat. He now possesses the power and knowledge to kill a foolbird, prepare it to eat by plucking the feathers and cleaning out the insides and cook it. He is now better suited to survive in the wilderness.

Key Paragraph

It had always been so simple at home. He would go to the store and get a chicken and it was all cleaned and neat, no feathers or insides, and his mother would bake it in the oven and he would eat it. His mother from the old time, from the time before would bake it.

Writing Prompt

Brian has come to terms with his reality- he is alone in the Canadian wilderness and has himself to depend on for his survival. He explores and challenges himself by wanting to do more for himself like eating meat. It is truly a challenge for him to do so, but in the end he comes up with a great reward- he obviously eats meat, but most importantly he gains confidence in himself.

Think of a time when you struggled for something but truly wanted the reward. What made it difficult? What was it that you were looking for or trying to do? How did you manage to do it? How did you feel when you received your reward and what did you do with it? When you received your reward did you learn anything about yourself?

Write a 1-2 paragraph narrative about a time when you worked hard to achieve something. Use precise, sensory details to describe your experience. Use reflection, description, and/or dialogue to create coherent writing. When you have finished, be sure to provide a conclusion that sums up your experience.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Hatchet, Day 16



Mythic Background

The Heroic Journey is almost at an end, but the story is not quite over because you have to either stay in this special world or return to the ordinary world-which hero's almost always do-and the real proving is on The Road Back.

Key Paragraph

But there is a difference now, he thought-there really is a difference. I might be hit but I'm not done. When the light comes I'll start to rebuild. I still have the hatchet and that's all I had in the first place.

Writing Prompt

In today's reading Brian comes in contact with the day of insanity. First, a moose attacks him, and then his shelter, weapons and fire are destroyed by a tornado. However, instead of feeling sorry for himself, instead of crying, instead of giving up, Brian tells himself that he can and he must start over.

Think of a time when you have acknowledged a change in yourself. Perhaps you normally procrastinate when doing an assignment, but one time you got it done early, or maybe you told someone to stop teasing someone else instead of passively dismissing the situation.

Write a 1-2 paragraph narrative describing how you used to be, and how you changed. Use the first person point of view and set the scene by using sensory details to describe when this occurred in your life and how you saw yourself at the time. What was it that you did or didn't do? How did you go about the change? Did it require courage? What was your reaction to yourself when it was over? Be sure to provide reflection and sequencing to produce a coherent piece of writing. When you have finished, upload your work to the online forum of your choice (Blog, Google Docs) and provide the link to your classmates so they can give you feedback on your writing.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Hatchet, Day 17



Mythic Background

What has our hero learned? Has he or she really changed? In this journey their old self really dies and is reborn as the new hero and this is where we really see it –is there a real Transformation when everything depends on it?

Key Paragraph

He fought impatience to get on the plane project and remembered sense, remembered what he had learned. First food, because food made strength; first food then thought, then action. There were fish at hand here, and he might not be able to get anything from the plane. That was all a dream.

Writing Prompt

Before Brian was reborn he would have lost his sense and tried to go after what was inside the plane. However, he is reborn and fights his impatience in order to build his shelter and gather food because he recognizes that food and shelter are a necessity to survive and what “might” be in the plane is a dream.

Write a 2-paragraph narrative describing a time when you were not overcome with temptation. In your first paragraph, consider the following questions to help you craft your response: Instead you thought of sense and reality and did the logical thing. What was the temptation, person or force pushing you away from reason? How did you overcome it? What were you thinking and feeling as you battled with yourself to make a decision? What was the outcome? Be sure to provide sensory details and precise language to present your ideas clearly and in order.

In the second paragraph, use the text of *The Hatchet* to compare your experience to Brian’s. How are you two alike? How are you different? When you have finished writing both paragraphs, be sure to provide a conclusion that sums up the main idea of your experience.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Hatchet, Day 18



Key Paragraph

Many times he thought he would not make it. With the added weight of the bag- which seemed to get heavier by the foot-coupled with the fact that he was getting weaker all the time, the raft seemed barely to move. He kicked and pulled and pushed, taking the shortest way straight back to shore, hanging to rest many times, then surging again and again.

Writing Prompt

Write about a time when you were really scared or nervous to do something important, but you did it anyway. **Explain the situation in a 1-paragraph narrative. Then describe how you felt before and after going through with it? What were your initial fears? Did they turn out to be realistic or unrealistic fears? How did they way you feel upon completion differ from the way you felt before you began this scary task? Be sure to use precise language and sensory details to make the experience as clear as possible. Remember to conclude your writing with a conclusion sentence that sums up your experience.**

Starting the Final Product:

Hatchet

Unit: Courage Requires Fortitude

Final Assignment: (Auto) Biography

Teacher Directions:

“Courage is a risk for reason, not risk for a thrill; courage requires we moderate our impulses and emotions. Courage leads us to consider our heroic journey in which we live for purposes bigger than ourselves and our wants and our needs.”

Objective: Students will write an autobiographical or biographical narrative. The piece will follow the formula for a “heroic journey.” It should contain a theme of courage.

Directions: In reading *Hatchet*, students have followed Brian on an adventurous heroic journey. They take calculated risks and succeed by moderating their impulses and emotions, and placing the needs of others in front of their own. Each journal entry students have written has allowed them to write about their own- or someone else’s heroic journey.

1. Have students re-read all of their previously written narratives. Have them choose 5-7 that could go together to tell a story of a heroic journey. Have them sort and sequence them. These will serve as the body of each student’s rough draft.

2. Have students re-read the handouts on the steps of a heroic journey with examples provided for Hatchet, The Wizard of Oz and Star Wars: Episode IV. Have students label their chosen journal entries with the heroic journey steps they correspond to, such as Ordinary World, Call to Adventure, Reward, etc. Students will not have experienced all of these stages: only some of the stages will have been experienced.
3. Each student should end with a reflective conclusion that includes a discussion of the transformation that occurred, what he/she returned with from the experience as well as the outcome.
4. Have students correctly sequence their paragraphs, using pacing as a tool to build a coherent whole. Students should re-read their (auto) biography in its entirety, adding connecting sentences where necessary.
5. Students should type, edit and spell –check, save and print their stories. Students will upload their writing to the online forum of their choice and share the link with their classmates to receive feedback on their work.
6. Have students critique each-others writing, using the following sentences for a framework:
 - a. The Heroic Journey stage I enjoyed the most in your story was...because...
 - b. It is clear that what you got out of this experience is...
 - c. I would like to hear more about...
 - d. I would like clarification on...

Have students spell check, save and print a final copy for their portfolio.

For students whom this is too complicated, simplify as appropriate. Some students may only be able to choose 3-5 selections and edit them into a single narrative.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Hatchet, Day 19



Mythic Background

The heroic journey ends with what you learned out of all of this- did you get the outcome? Return with what you take out of this experience.

Key Paragraph

It was a strange feeling, holding the rifle. It somehow removed him from everything around him. Without the rifle he had to fit in, to be part of it all, to understand it and use it-the woods, all of it. With the rifle, suddenly, he didn't have to know; did not have to be afraid or understand. He didn't have to get close to a foolbird to kill it—didn't have to know how it would stand if he didn't look at it and moved off to the side.

Writing Prompt

Write a 1-paragraph narrative describing the end of a memorable experience in your life. The experience can be a road trip with friends or family, a vacation, getting lost and finding your way, working on a project, building something, etc. What were you feelings before you started the experience, during the experience and when it was over? What did you learn in the end? Would you go through the experience again? Is there anything you would change? Use precise language and sensory details to create a coherent piece of writing. Use techniques such as reflection, description and pacing to make your writing as detailed as possible. When you have finished writing, upload your work to the online forum of your choice (Blog, Google Docs, etc.) and share your link with your classmates so they can provide feedback.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Hatchet, Day 20



Mythic Background

The heroic journey ends with what the hero learned out of all of this. Outcome: in simplest terms, what was it that the hero learned? Brian learns skills that allow him to be more aware of his surroundings, of what he says, and how he reacts. He also learns to appreciate everything he has.

This would be a great time to complete the heroic journey bookmark or otherwise review the heroic journey in *Hatchet* as a whole.

Key Paragraph

Many of the changes would prove to be permanent. Brian had gained immensely in his ability to observe what was happening and react to it; that would last him all his life. He had become more thoughtful as well, and from that time on he would think slowly about something before speaking.

Writing Prompt

Write a two-paragraph narrative about your greatest triumph in life so far. In the first paragraph, describe the triumph and the effort it took to get there. Where the rewards internal or external- meaning, were you the only one that celebrated your success, or did others participate in the ceremony as well? What did you learn about yourself from this triumph? How did it change your life and the way you view life? Use details, reflection, and description to help craft your narrative. **In a second paragraph, compare your experience to the heroic journey. How is your greatest triumph similar to the outcome in the heroic journey? Use the heroic journey Brian experiences in *The Hatchet* as well as your class notes to help you support your comparison.**