The Archetypal Hero

What Do Luke Skywalker, Simba, King Arthur, Moses, and William Wallace all have in common?
Carl Jung and Joseph Campbell developed the idea of the archetype

- Archetype: A recurring pattern of images, situations, or symbols found in the mythology, religion, art, and dreams of cultures around the world
Archetypal Hero Traits

- Unusual Circumstances of Birth
- Leaves Family and Lives With Others
- Traumatic Event Leads to Quest
- Special Weapon
- Supernatural Help
- Proves Himself on Quest
- Journey and Unhealable Wound
- Atonement With Father
- Spiritual Apotheosis
Unusual Birth

- Often in danger or born into royalty
  - Luke w/ aunt and uncle
  - Simba born a prince
  - Moses put in basket
  - King Arthur in danger from Uther Pendragon’s rivals
Leaves Family

- Raised away from his people
  - Luke w/ aunt and uncle
  - Simba w/ Timon and Poobah
  - King Arthur w/ Merlin
  - William Wallace with uncle
  - Moses w/ Pharaoh’s daughter
A hero’s life is changed forever
- Luke’s aunt and uncle’s death
- Wallace’s wife is killed
- Arthur pulls sword from stone
- Simba fights Nala
- Yahweh appears to Moses
Special Weapon

- Only the hero can wield his weapon
  - Luke’s light saber
  - Arthur’s Excalibur
  - Moses’ staff
  - Wallace’s sword
  - Simba’s ... claws?
Supernatural Help

- Hero often has spiritual guidance
  - Luke hears Obi-Wan Kenobi
  - Arthur has Merlin
  - Yahweh guides Moses
  - Wallace dreams of his dead father
  - Simba sees Mufasa in the sky and has Rafiki help him
Proves Himself

- Hero performs feats while on Quest
  - Luke blows up Death Star, leads rebellion
  - Arthur leads battles
  - Moses perform miracles
  - Simba contemplates his life
  - Wallace leads his men against British
Journey & Unhealable
Wound

- Hero descends into a hell-like area and suffers wounding from encounter w/ evil
  - Symbolically goes where normal humans can’t and finds truth about self
Atonement With Father

- Hero either redeems father’s evil deeds or reconciles with father over wrongs done by the hero
Apotheosis

- Hero is rewarded spiritually at the end of his life
Wanna find out more?

http://tatsbox.com/hero
4am Productions “You can't see the Hobbits if you're asleep!”
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