

One can easily say that the script for Star Wars by George Lucas was amply based on the structure of the Hero's Journey. Having said this, however, the structure is, at times, not perfectly followed. This could be a result of the fact that Star Wars turned out as a trilogy, and although it was planned as a single film, Lucas always had the idea of making more, and so possibly kept the idea of expanding the Hero's Journey over multiple films in mind.

At the beginning of the movie, we are presented with the protagonist's (Luke Skywalker) everyday life. This is a life that we are all familiar with, as although it is set on a different planet, it relates to the decisions being made in our own lives: the young adult wanting to leave home and go abroad (in this case to another planet), and the family wanting them to stay. The fact that this is so relatable makes it simpler to imagine that life in space is possible, and so makes the rest of the movie more believable.

This introduction to Luke's world is technically already an example of the Hero's Journey not being followed perfectly, as this introduction is not the first thing we are presented with, but the second. This could be explained by the fact that presenting Luke on Tatooine might not have been the most exciting start to a film, and so that they started with the attack on the rebel ship, which also let them give background to the call to adventure.

Which leads us to the next part of the movie: Luke finding the distress call on R2D2, and in doing so, being led to finding Obi-Wan Kenobi. This is a quite literal call to adventure, and can be related to many tales and stories: the lady in distress calls to the handsome prince to come and save her. It could be argued that the call to adventure is actually Obi-Wan asking Luke to follow him to Alderaan, but I prefer sticking to Leia's message as it is the first event that changes Luke's everyday life.

Here, however, the call is not directed towards Luke, but towards his future mentor, Obi-Wan, and so we are presented with another deviation from the Hero's journey: the mentor is found and met before the refusal of the call. This could be explained by the fact that there is, technically, no refusal of the call: it is even shown at the beginning that Luke will do anything to leave Tatooine. It thus seems that Luke goes straight to accepting the call. However, it could be argued that the refusal of the call comes not from the protagonist's will to keep things as they are, but rather from his family's: in this case, the uncle wanting him to stay to help at the farm. This could be the flesh and blood representation of the hidden side of Luke that wants to stay at home, like most young adults.

This hesitation, however, is fully removed when the empire comes and kills Luke's Family. This would represent the disappearance of the young adult's doubt's, the definite change of mind that buries all needs to stay at home. This event also represents the occurrence in the Hero's Journey that changes the protagonist's everyday life forever, and that makes it so that nothing will ever be the same again. He is forced to accept the call for the greater good, and leaves for Alderaan with Obi-Wan.

This is the start of the longest section of the film, where Luke and Obi-Wan will meet their allies, fight their enemies, and pass or fail their tests. The first of these is the meeting with the first ally, Han Solo, and his friend Chewbacca. They represent the first part of what will become a set of allies used to defeat the enemy, with the second ally being princess Leia. This concept of building a guild or group of allies is present in many films, and helps give the audience a feeling that the protagonist is stronger, is not alone, and so gives hope of success.

This section also comes with its enemies, in this case Darth Vader, Storm Troopers and more or less everyone else in the Death Star. These could be related to mythology, when considered along with the tests: Luke's training, fighting and outwitting the storm troopers, and escaping the trash compactor. This concept of steps to overcome can be found in all Hero's journey films since this structure was based in part on Mythology, where the tests are even more evident: the hero travelling to a faraway destination, encountering difficulties along the way. This is best represented by Homer's Odyssey, with the cyclops as an example of a test and enemy.

These events happen during the approach to the in-most cave, represented by the infiltration into the death star. They help to tighten bonds between the characters and give the audience a greater understanding of who they are as people.

The approach to the in-most cave, in my opinion, would be the infiltration and escape from the Death Star, as although it does not represent an actual approach to an ordeal (or at least not a conscious one), it can be described as the rising action of the plot, as well as the period where the characters get to know each other. It happens at the same time as the latest encounters and tests, and so accentuates the culmination of apprehension towards a presently unknown ordeal.

The ordeal comes in the form of the death of Obi-Wan Kenobi, after a fight with Darth Vader. This sparks multiple new connections, such as Luke's confirmed hatred towards Darth Vader, but it also brings a sense of defeat, as Luke appears very affected by the loss of his mentor. At this point, the audience feels that, although the mission is accomplished, the allies have failed to keep the group complete. This sacrifice, however, is rewarded by the plans of the Death Star being safely brought to the allies, but also by the continuation of Luke's training through the death of his mentor, which presumably was the reason for Obi-Wan's death in the first place.

The road back is the final example of a deviation from the Hero's Journey, as it comes in the form of an attack rather than a return: the attack on the death star. It is, however, unmistakably this section of the Journey as it contains the resurrection. The road back could, however, technically simply be the road back to the rebel base, as it would seem like the adventure is finished, but is then re-launched with the attack on the death star. This, in my opinion, isn't as likely, as the audience would barely even see the road back, and the attack on the death star couldn't be classified in the structure.

During the road back, two resurrections occur, the first one being Luke almost sacrificing himself to destroy the death star even though his companions were shot down. The second one would be Han Solo coming back to help Luke in the decisive moments of battle, even after everyone thought he had left. Both fit the structure equally well, Luke's being relevant as it happens to the protagonist, but Han's representing more of a rebirth as his act was in no way forced upon him.

The elixir could be many things in the movie, from the physical medals receive, to the freedom of the rebel base and the won battle against the greatest force in the galaxy. Anyhow, they all represent the victory of the good over the evil.