

Narrative

Narrative

- Last week: Worldbuilding
- This week: Storytelling

Modes of writing used in an essay:

- **(Description essay):**
DESCRIPTION to show how something looks, feels, smells, sounds or tastes
- **(Narrative essay):**
NARRATIVE to tell what happened to your subject (plot: intro/climax/resolution)
- **(Example essay):**
EXEMPLIFICATION to give specific instances of a general group or idea , making the general specific
- **(Classification essay):**
CLASSIFICATION to explain what categories your subject belongs to
- **(Comparison/contrast essay):**
COMPARE AND CONTRAST to trace similarities and differences
- **(Definition essay):**
DEFINITION to explain what your subject is or does
- **(cause and effect essay):**
CAUSE AND EFFECT to explain what caused something or what its effects are
- **(argumentative essay):**
ARGUMENT to make a case or justify a position
- **(process essay):**
PROCESS to explain how to do something or how something occurs, how one thing leads to another.
- **(projection essay):**
PROJECTION to project yourself in something else (another/animal/plant) and try to understand that thing from inside out, give a voice to the voiceless,
- **(lyrical essay):**
LYRICALIZE (write personally poetically) to uses many poetic tools to convey creative nonfiction.

Narrative essays

- The aim of a narrative essay is to describe a course of events from a subjective vantage point, and may be written in first-person (“I” or “we”) or **third person** (“he,” “she,” “it,” or they”) perspective. Though not always chronological, narrative essays do follow the development of a person through a series of experiences and reflections. The focus of the essay is often to more clearly identify the point of view of the narrator, and to express common features of subjectivity.

Use **narration** (pp. 121–30) to tell a story about some aspect of your topic: “I was seven years old the first time I snuck out of the house in the dark.” —Lynda Barry, “The Sanctuary of School”

- **Robin Wall Kimmerer**
- Professor of Environmental and Forest Biology



'A hymn of love to the world'

ELIZABETH GILBERT



BRAIDING SWEETGRASS



Indigenous Wisdom,
Scientific Knowledge and
the Teachings of Plants

ROBIN WALL KIMMERER

2013



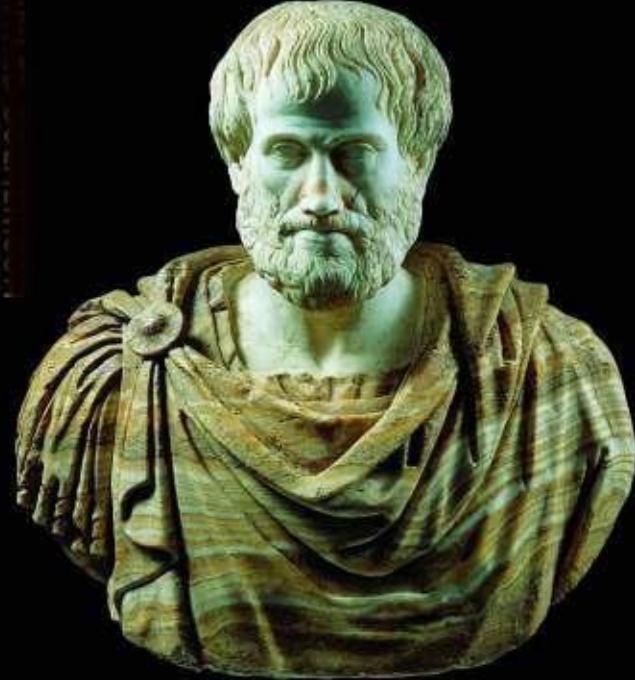
Sky Woman by Bruce King (Oneida)

TURTLE ISLAND

Bioregional Sanctuaries



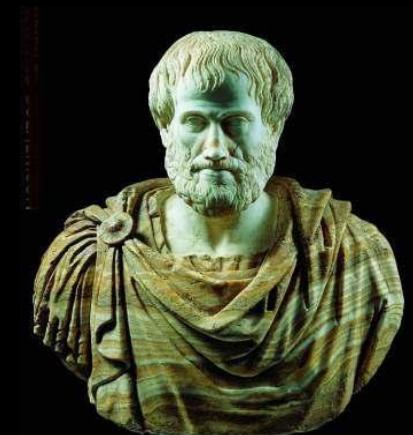
TRAGEDY



Aristotle (384 BC. - 322 BC.)

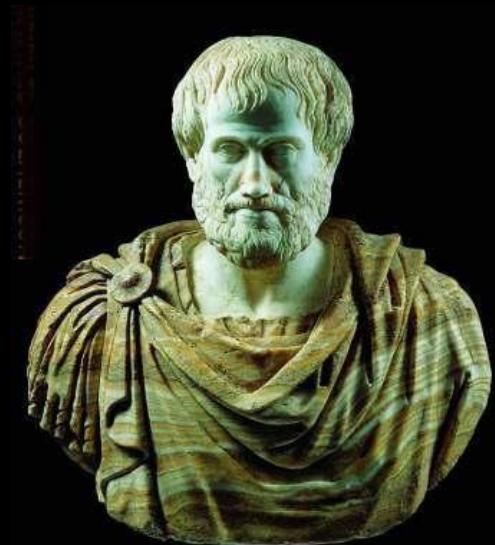
Plot/mythos

- not one thing after another
- but one thing because of another



Aristotle (384 BC. - 322 BC)

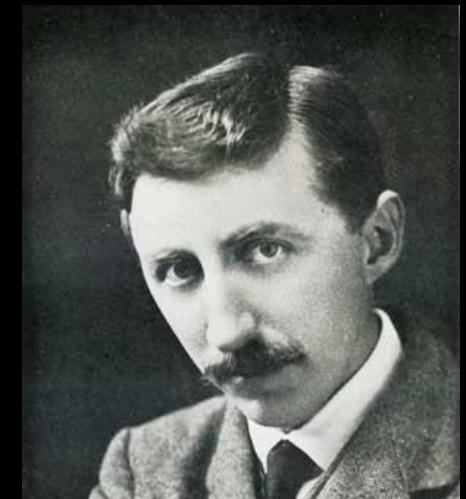
A narrative has to be:
A good structured story
A logical whole of which nothing can be
subtracted and added. (plot)
A chain of cause and effect
Beauty



Aristotle (384 BC. - 322 BC.)

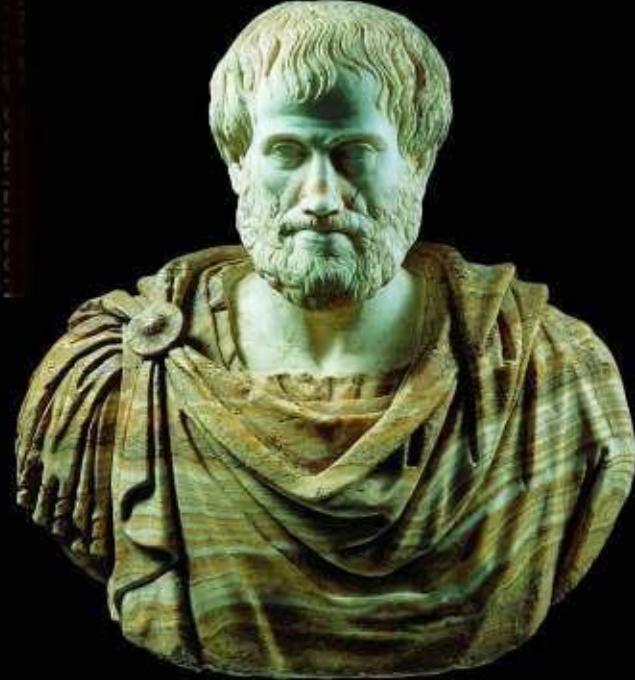
“The king died and then the queen died”.

“The king died and the queen died of grief”.



Edward Morgan Forster,
English novelist
(1879 – 1970)

TRAGEDY



Aristotle (384 BC. - 322 BC.)

Plot (connection): Three Acts

- First act (beginning)
- Second act (middle)
 - Third act (end)

Three acts

- First act (beginning)

prologue

exposition

inciting moment/incident

- Second act (middle)

intrigue

reversal (Peripeteia)

climax

recognition (Anagnoeisis)

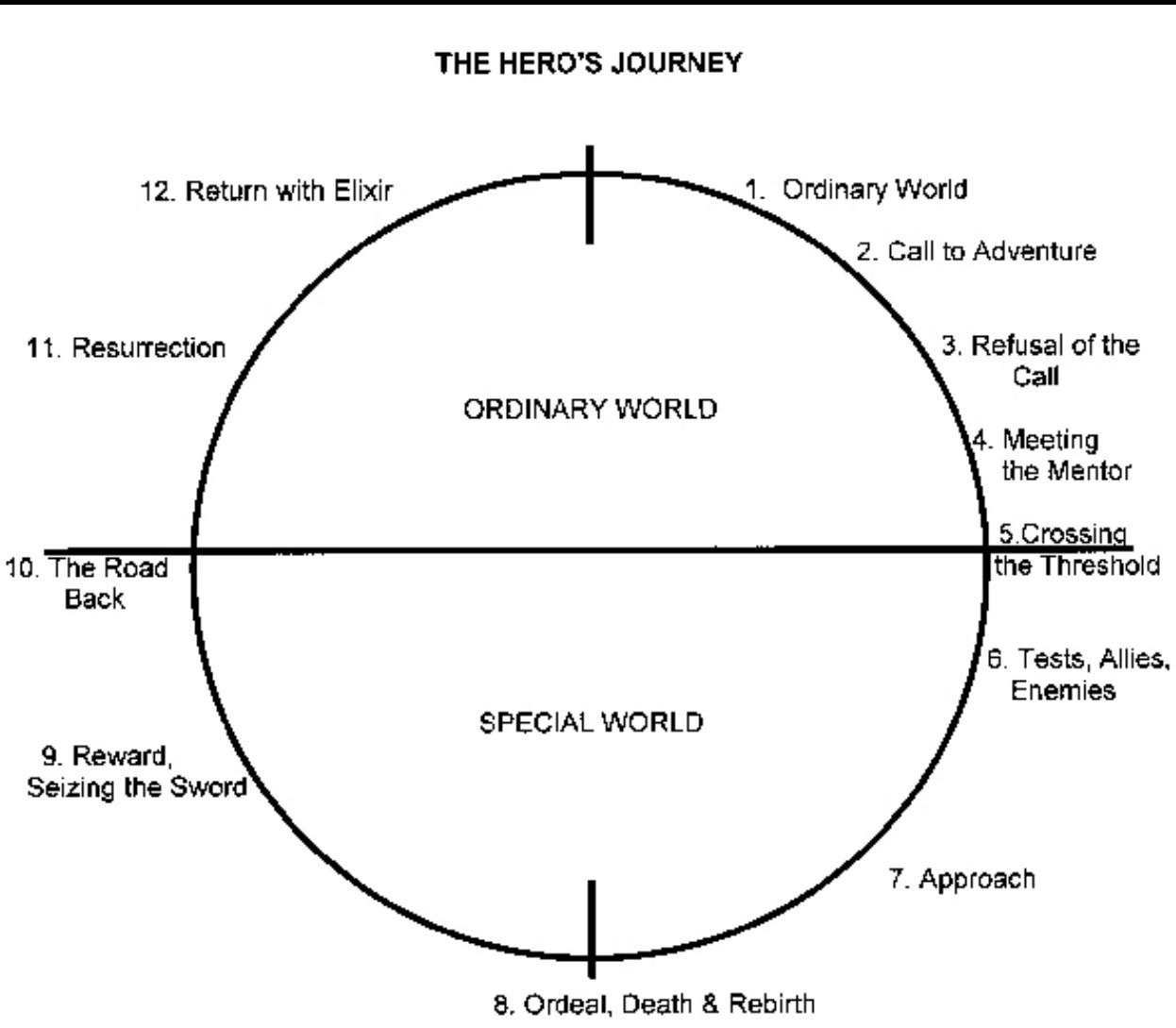
- Third act (end)

(Recognition)

Catastrophe

Resolution

Exodus (the final scene or departure)

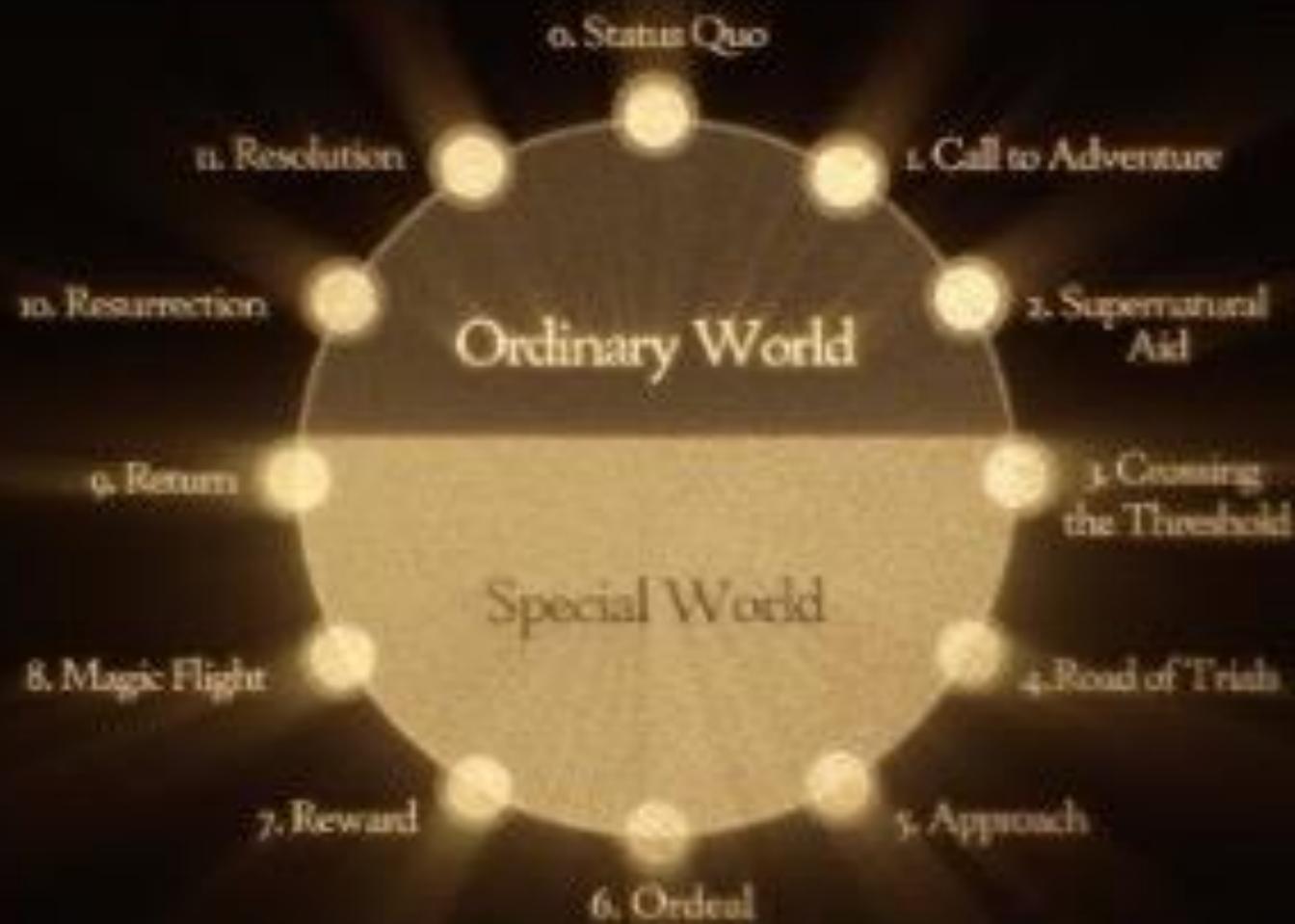


The twelve stages of the hero's journey monomyth following the summary by Christopher Vogler (originally compiled in 1985 as a Disney studio memo):

1. The Ordinary World,
2. The Call to Adventure,
3. Refusal of the Call,
4. Meeting with the Mentor,
5. Crossing the Threshold to the "special world",
6. Tests, Allies and Enemies,
7. Approach to the Innermost Cave,
8. The Ordeal,
9. Reward,
10. The Road Back,
11. The Resurrection,
12. Return with the Elixir.

Campbell describes 17 stages of the monomyth





Randomly

Narrative ==> plot ==> cause and effect chain with conflict

Narrative writing focuses on events; it tells what happened

- particular event (someone is doing something/action)
- the plot
- the narrator
- point of view
- setting (time and place)

In real life, **events (actions)** often occur randomly or chaotically.

But in a narrative:

- they must be told or shown in some orderly sequence (the plot),
- by a particular person (the narrator),
- from a particular perspective (the point of view),
- within a definite time and place (the setting).

- particular event (someone is doing something/action)
- the plot
- the narrator
- point of view
- setting

Little Miss Muffet

Little Miss Muffet sat on a tuffet, eating her curds and whey (the watery part of milk).

We have someone
(MissMuffet)
who is doing something (eating)
at a particular time (the past) in a particular place (on a tuffet).

PLOT

Plot can be achieved by introducing:

- a conflict into the action,
- bringing the tension to a high point (the climax),
- then releasing the tension—

in other words, by giving the action of the story:

- a beginning,
- middle,
- and end.

set up a situation;

introduce a conflict;

build up the dramatic tension until it reaches a high point, or climax;

then release the tension and resolve the conflict.

INTRO:

*Little Miss Muffet sat on a tuffet, eating her curds
and whey (the watery part of milk).*

MIDDLE:

*Along came a spider and sat down beside her ...
(conflict)*

INTRO:

*Little Miss Muffet sat on a tuffet, eating her curds
and whey (the watery part of milk).*

MIDDLE:

*Along came a spider and sat down beside her ...
(conflict)*

END:

*And little Miss Muffet, frightened, went away
(resolve the conflict and release the rising tension)*

Add dialogue

Quoting direct speech like this helps readers to imagine the characters as real people.

The waiter yelled with scary eyes:
“It’s a poisonous tarantula!

INTRO:

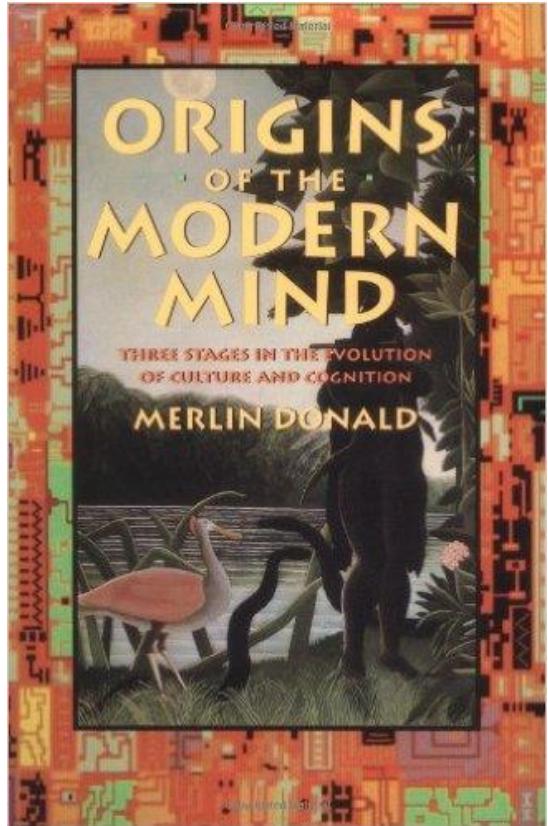
Little Miss Muffet sat on a tuffet, eating her curds and whey (the watery part of milk).

MIDDLE:

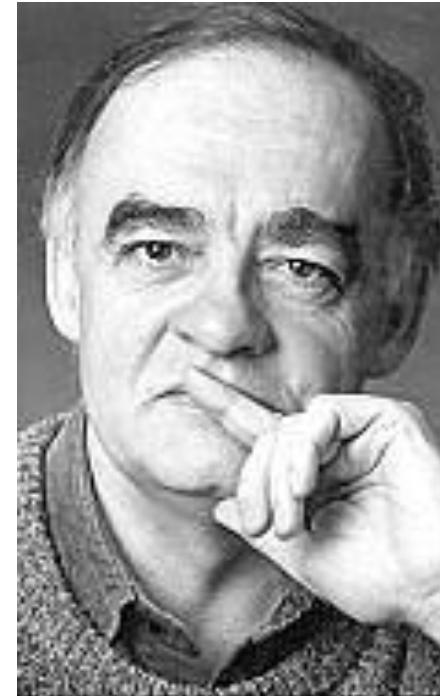
Along came a spider and sat down beside her ... (conflict)

END:

And little Miss Muffet, frightened, went away (resolve the conflict and release the rising tension)



Merlin Donald
"Origins of the Modern Mind":
Three stages in the evolution of culture and cognition,
1991



Merlin Donald
Canadian psychologist,
neuroanthropologist,
and cognitive neuroscientist



Swan Lake at Benedum Center Pittsburgh Ballet.



Apaches in Costume Dance the
Mountain Spirits Ceremony.



homo erectus ritual dance
re-enact events and scenarios
creating a sort of gestural proto-theater
of everyday life ==> rituals
kind of precursor of spoken stories

Merlin Donald:

"When mimesis takes the form of a collective, or group, action, one common outcome is ritual. Ritual and its derivatives in theatre, differs from most other forms of mimetic representation in that it is a collective act in which individuals play different roles. A well documented, widespread example from human Paleolithic cultures is the acting out of conquest, often without the use of any words. A mimetic representation of the enemy is accompanied by chanting, drumming, and communal mimetic dance."



mimesis as **external communication** ==>
mimetic skill results in sharing knowledge
without every member of the group having to reinvent that knowledge
collective conceptual model of society
expressed in communal collective play and ritual
and in social structure
create customs
Play ==> dance ==> creativity

ritual re-enact/re-present scenarios
==>precursor ==> spoken narratives
==> precursor ==> mythic stage



Mimetic stage ==> building blocks mythic stage
(Spoken language/storytelling)

- event perception (episodic memory)
- standardization gestures in relation to sounds
- auto-cueing (abstract from specific situation)
- rituals pre-cursor narratives/rhythm/structure

The Mythic stage

Mythic stage

- characterized by spoken language, use of words ==> stories/myths
- lexicon and evolvement grammar, rules (not written)
- Lexicon: total stock of words and word elements that carry meaning
- building blocks book toddler
- You need first event perceptions
- apples ==> different apples

Why called mythic stage

- spoken language ==> narrative tool ==> myths
- structures grasp/explanations
- origin world
- how to relate to nature
- how to live a good life
- hunt/fertility/survival ==> rituals to survive ==> cave paintings
- animals/symbolize something





creation myths



homo erectus: rituals



Joseph Campbell
(1904 – 1987)
American mythologist

Ritual ==> precursor ==>
reenacting
Campbell ==> told stories
about supernatural
departed, hoping to
atonement
totem
initiation boys
womb land, dependent animal
learn ritual to perform
rite of passage

General view of the 'great hall' at Lascaux, France, c. 16000-14000 BC. Pigment on limestone rock.



Day to day story telling in the prehistoric shared oral culture eventually produced collective standardized narrative versions of reality, particularly of the past events, these become what we call the dominant myths of a society

a gathering we can have today around family table exchanging anecdotes and accounts of recent events does not look much different from a similar gathering in prehistoric time, talks flow freely in a narrative mode stories are told and disputed and a collective version of recent events is gradually hammered out



- **Robin Wall Kimmerer**
- Professor of Environmental and Forest Biology





Sky Woman by Bruce King (Oneida)

1. Beginning

- Skywoman falls from the sky world.
- She descends toward a watery earth inhabited only by animals.
- Birds rise to catch her and gently carry her down.

2. Conflict

- There is no land for her to live on.
- The animals try to help: one after another they dive to the bottom of the sea to bring up soil, but each fails.
- The world seems uninhabitable for humans.

3. Resolution

- The muskrat, though small and fragile, sacrifices itself and manages to bring a handful of soil to the surface.
- The soil is placed on the back of the great turtle, forming Turtle Island.
- Skywoman scatters the seeds she brought, and the earth flourishes with plants, animals, and the beginnings of human life.

1. Beginning

- God creates Adam and Eve and places them in the Garden of Eden.
- They live in harmony with each other, with the animals, and with God.
- Everything is provided in abundance; they may eat from every tree except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
- There is innocence, carefreeness, a paradisiacal state.

2. Conflict

- The serpent tempts Eve to eat from the forbidden fruit.
- Eve eats and also gives some to Adam; together they break God's command.
- Their consciousness changes immediately: they become aware of their nakedness, and they feel shame and fear.
- God confronts them, and the transgression becomes undeniable: harmony has been broken.

3. Resolution

- Punishment follows: the serpent is cursed, Eve will suffer pain in childbirth, and Adam will toil to earn his bread.
- They are banished from the Garden of Eden and lose their direct closeness to God.
- Yet there is also a hint of hope in the resolution: God makes garments for them, and in some theological interpretations this moment marks the beginning of the larger story of redemption.

- A) Think about writing a short creation story of about 500 words. This story should have a beginning, a conflict, and a resolution. The resolution can also be an unhappy ending, like in the story of Adam and Eve.
- Together, decide which value(s) you find important to express in the story, what the story might be about, what the setting/situation is, and look for elements that could create conflict and resolution. (10 min)
 - Individually, write your own story (with a beginning, conflict and resolution) based on these components. (10 min)
 - Read your stories to each other and create one common story. Try to make this version shorter, keeping only the core elements. Make it readable.(10 min)

The Narrative Self

The Narrative Identity

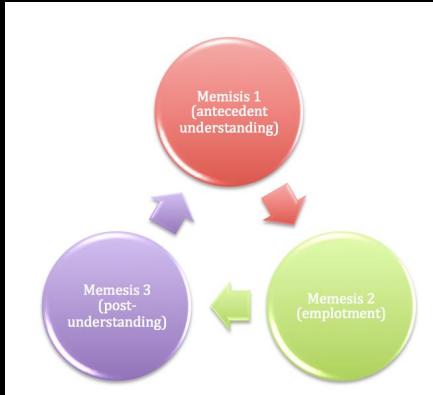


Paul Ricoeur (1913 – 2005)

Ricoeur about narrative:

"[...] a structured sequence of events configured by a plot; narratives are stories.

A plot is the ordering of events, and the establishment of causal relationships between them, that it gets an organised whole with a *beginning, middle* and an *end*.



Prefiguration (mimesis 1)
Pre-understanding
actions/intentional behaviour
Stories/images

Configuration (mimesis 2)
bits and pieces
new stuff
try to put it an own coherent story
begin-middle-end

Refiguration (mimesis 3)
- provisional endpoint
- change
-act
- the other



Paul Ricoeur (1913 – 2005)

We bring the past into the present (while focusing on the future on the basis of our expectations) to inform us and therefore, create narratives.

Narratives allow us to make sense of ourselves, and by organizing our life events into a plot, we humanize time that might otherwise become “fragmented moments”.



Paul Ricoeur (1913 – 2005)

"I come to understand myself as a character within the stories I tell about myself, and I see possibilities for being other-wise in the stories of others. Reading opens my world to endless possibilities, to variations of self that I can assume as-if they were real."



Paul Ricoeur (1913 – 2005)

Saint Nicholas (Sinterklaas)

Mimesis 1/Prefiguration
(past/memory)

Mimesis 2/Configuration
(present)

Mimesis 3/Re-figuration
(future)

Mimesis 1/Prefiguration (past/memory)



Arrives with boat from Spain, in the middle of November
On December the fifth we celebrate his birthday,
we get presents
children's party



Black Petes are servants of Saint Nicholas



Story goes back to a saint died on 6 december and before the day off death childeren placed a shoe by the stove shoe in the church, changed into birthday 5 dec







Black Petes are servants of Saint Nicholas



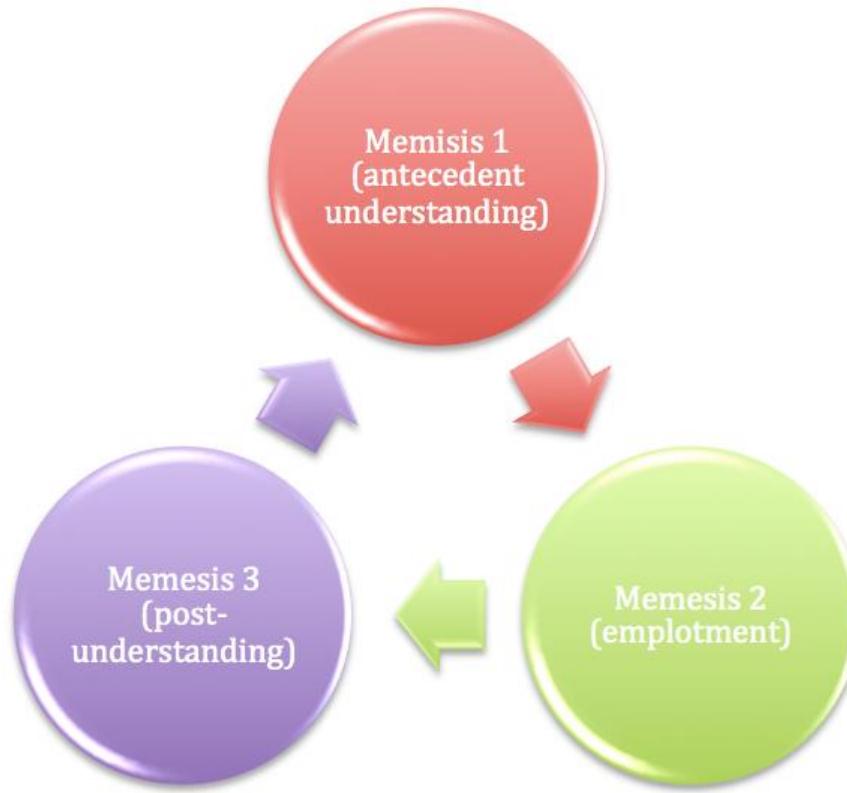
The serious vicissitudes of naughty Grietje and Pietje related to the youth by Uncle Abraham, with drawings by Daan Hoeksema. Its first edition appeared in oblong format in 1915

De ernstige lotgevallen van stoute Grietje en Pietje aan de jeugd verhaald door Oom Abraham, met tekeningen van Daan Hoeksema. De eerste editie ervan verscheen in oblong formaat in 1915

Mimesis 1/Prefiguration
(past/memory)

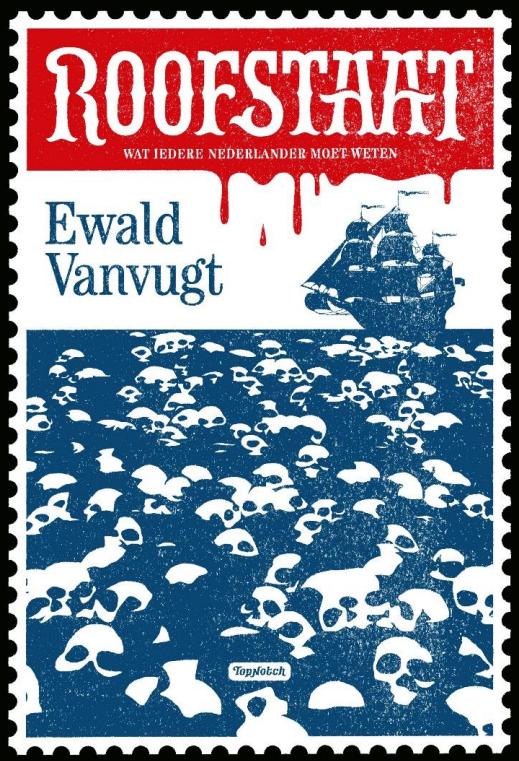
Mimesis 2/Configuration
(present)

Mimesis 3/Re-figuration
(future)



Hermeneutic Circle of Ricoeur:

We, as readers, gain understanding of our lives and of our world by engaging in what a narrative reveals;
that which is prefigured and configured is refigured.
We reconfigure our prior understanding of who and where we are.



NIJGH & VAN DITMAR

Roofstaat (predatory state), 2016, Ewald Vanvugt, Herz. en verm. Reprint of: Ewald Vanvugt: *Nieuw zwartboek van Nederland overzee. Wat iedere Nederlander moet weten*. Soesterberg, Aspekt, 2011. This was again a reprint of: Ewald Vanvugt: *Zwartboek van Nederland overzee. Wat iedere Nederlander moet weten*. Soesterberg, Aspekt, 2002



Roofstaat, 2017



Columbus Italian explorer Christopher Columbus searches for a route to India, but accidentally stumbles upon the New World. On October 12, 1492, he landed on the island of San Salvador in the Bahamas. Two weeks later he finds Cuba. CATHOLICISM ==> SAINT NICHOLAS

In 1493, the year after Christopher Columbus arrived on the shores of what is now known as North America, The Doctrine of Discovery was issued: legitimizing the colonization of lands outside of Europe by European monarchies

The presiding theory of the time was that Indigenous Peoples, because they were non-Christians, were not human and therefore the land was empty or terra nullius.

The Bull stated that any land not inhabited by Christians was available to be “discovered,” claimed, and exploited by Christian rulers and declared that “the Catholic faith and the Christian religion be exalted and be everywhere increased and spread, that the health of souls be cared for and that barbarous nations be overthrown and brought to the faith itself.” This “Doctrine of Discovery” became the basis of all European claims in the Americas as well as the foundation for the United States’ western expansion.



The Doctrine of Discovery

Early civilizations didn't see themselves as possessing the land; their worldviews were more animistic. The natural world for these people was alive and had a soul. Gods and spirits dwelled in rivers, stones, and forests, and were to be respected.

But the rise of Christianity brought something revolutionary: the earth was declared dead and soulless. The Bible spoke of only one God, who gave people power and dominion over the earth. God's message in the Book of Genesis was to **Go forth and multiply, fill the earth and subdue it. Have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and every living thing that moves upon the earth.**

Diego Valadés Mexico 1533 - c. 1582 Italy
Rhetorica Christiana, The Great Chain of Being, 1579



Nationalism 19th century
(heroism)
Surinam
Education

Segment Saunta Claus Song
Daar wordt aan de deur geklopt
There is a knock on the door:

Wees maar gerust mijn kind.
Ik ben een goede vrind.
Want al ben ik zwart als roet,
'k Meen het toch goed.

It's ok my child.
I am a good friend.
Because even though I am black like soot
I have good intentions.



Group portrait by Michiel van Musscher from 1687, with a black servant behind the diplomat Thomas van Hees and his cousins. Around the neck of the servant is a metal collar



Gravure (engraving) uit 1700 van een unknown artisat/onbekende kunstenaar.

A 'black' Moor/Een 'swarte Moor'
washes the feet of De min sieke maegt

Collectie Rijksmuseum

Art-historian and conservator/curatorKolfin:

"There are similarities between
the clothes of these so-called
Morenpages and the Pietenpak.
Puff pants, tights, often also
a millstone collar, it is the same.'
The black servants became
regularly depicted
in suits with the
(bright) colors from the coat of arms
from their master;
next to the steel band around the neck
another unmistakable sign
of property".



Eglon van der Neer,
Lady with letter flanked
by a black servant, 1680



St. Nikolaas bij stoute kinderen.

Illustrations from Saint Nicholas and his servant by Jan Schenkman, an Amsterdam teacher who as one of the founding fathers of the Sinterklaas story is considered. Late 19th century. Collection Koninklijke Bibliotheek

Art historian Kolfin Rijksmuseum Amsterdam:

Black Pete goes back to all these historical images of the 19th century when Black Pete (Zwarte Piet) was added to the Sinterklaas story as we know it today.

The illustrations in, for example, the book Sint Nikolaas (1880) and his servant by Jan Schenkman, a teacher from Amsterdam who is considered one of the founders, the Zwarte Piet tooks like the slave servants of centuries earlier,



Bundel met Sinterklaasliedjes, uit de jaren vijftig van de vorige eeuw.

Collectie Koninklijke Bibliotheek

Art historian Kolfin Rijksmuseum Amsterdam:

The cover of a collection of songs for Sinterklaas from the fifties of the last century shows a Piet who has become more or less the standard.

Kolfin:

'Illustrators, perhaps without realizing it, chose the image of a child slave. That was subsequently canonized.'

Mimesis 1/Prefiguration
(past/memory)

Mimesis 2/Configuration
(present)
crossroad (2017)

Mimesis 3/Re-figuration
(future)

Mimesis 3/Re-figuration (future)

Whereas an act of configuration (mimesis 2) produces a narrativised account of where we are or where we have been, and provides some indication of where we might go,
re-figuration leads to the question of where to go next in terms of action and understanding.





SINTERKLAASINTOCHT IN DOKKUM 2017

SINTER

The Saunt Nicholas news bulletin on National television, Sad Pete learns to become a Pete, sad Pete (ziele piet) learns to go the chimney, and when she comes out of the chimney she has soot remnants on her face. 2017 home sick



JAAROVERZICHT

The soot Piet, soot-smudge Piet, or chimney Piet



De blokkade op de A7 bij Joure op 18
november 2017, Blokkeer Friezen



The soot Piet, soot-smudge Piet, or chimney Piet is a character that appears during the Sinterklaas celebration in the Netherlands and Belgium. It is a Piet with smudges of soot on their face. The soot Piet is an alternative to the traditional Black Piet. The soot smudges are explained by the soot from chimneys that the Piet has to pass through to deliver gifts.”

B) As a group, decide how you can rewrite the story of the other group so that it becomes more inclusive or exclusive. Rewrite it. (15 min)

Bartlett (1932)

Aim: To investigate the effect of **cultural schemas** on reconstructive memory

Participants: 20 male undergraduate students from the University of Cambridge in the UK

Procedure: Bartlett instigated a procedure known as **serial reproduction**, in which one participant read the story then reproduced it in writing; this was then read to a second person who then wrote his own memory of the story which was then read to a third person who then produced his own version of the story and so on.

Results: Bartlett found that the resulting stories bore little similarity to the original Native American folk tale. The changes made by the participants included:

- Omission:** Key details of the story were ignored or missed out, particularly unfamiliar or unpleasant details such as a contorted face or black coming out of a mouth. Participants even omitted the key idea that ghosts were fighting which is surprising as this is the title of the story. Ghosts were soon dropped from the re-telling of the story as they do not fit with the way that adult males see the world, particularly in relation to war; details such as a contorted face were omitted as they may have caused unpleasant memories.

- Assimilation and sharpening:** Story details were changed to suit the participants' own cultural schemas e.g. 'canoes' became 'boats'; 'paddling' became 'rowing'. Details such as the spirit wound were re-interpreted as a flesh wound with words such as 'therefore' and 'because' inserted to explain the events.

- Levelling:** The story became shorter - the original story was approximately 350 words and the participants' version was around 180 words

Conclusion: Cultural schemas contribute to the **reconstructive** nature of memory i.e. memory is not a passive state in which events are recorded like a camera would record them, instead memory is an active process in which pre-existing information and expectations may interfere with the accuracy and **reliability** of the memory

Technology



Bernard Stiegler
1952 – 2020

Technology inside/outside

- words (speak out/make an image)
- Technology externalization memory (epiphylogenetic memory)
- is an externalization memory in tools = third kind' of memory
- separate from:
 - the internal, individually acquired memory of our brain (epigenetic)
 - the biological evolutionary memory that is inherited from our ancestors (phylogenetic);

According to Stiegler's point of view, man is a technical being. From the moment we are born, our bodies are weak and dependent. We have no fur, and don't know what is to have this, no claws, no wings, no sharp teeth. We do, however, have an unprecedented ability to shape the environment to our liking: we can dress, use tools, speak, write. From the start we need techniques to survive, but also to be able to participate in the society in which we are born.

Bernhard Stiegler (philosopher)

Pharmakon—the Greek word that signifies simultaneously poison and cure.

The idea of the pharmakon can be traced back to Plato where he proposed that it is a play of opposites, poison-remedy or bad-good. Writing itself, Plato argued, is a pharmakon, both a means of recording thought and also a producer of forgetfulness.

Plato understood alphabetical writing as the Sophists' poisonous instrument for manipulating opinion and weakening memory

Writing is to be rejected as strictly poisonous to the ability to think for oneself in dialogue (oral culture) with others

Donna Haraway

Speculative fiction



Speculative fiction

HARRISON BERGERON



Kurt Vonnegut

Synopsis:

The story is set in a future (US 2081) where total equality is enforced through laws and technology. People who are too intelligent, beautiful, or strong are given handicaps (weights, masks, disruptive radios) to reduce them to the average. Harrison Bergeron, an exceptionally gifted and strong young man, rebels against this system. He throws off his handicaps, declares himself emperor, and dances with a ballerina he frees. Their brief moment of freedom is abruptly ended when the government kills them.

Diana Moon Glampers, the Handicapper General, and her agents enforce the equality laws by forcing citizens to wear "handicaps" such as ugly masks for those who are too beautiful, earpiece radios for the intelligent that broadcast irritating noises meant to disrupt thoughts, and heavy weights for the strong or athletic.

Structure:

- Beginning (situation):**

- A society where everyone is handicapped into sameness; George and Hazel Bergeron watch TV and learn their son Harrison has escaped.

- Conflict (development):**

- Harrison bursts onto live television, frees himself and a ballerina from their restraints, and proclaims a new order based on beauty and strength.

- Resolution (ending):**

- The government official Diana Moon Glampers shoots Harrison and the ballerina dead; the broadcast continues as if nothing happened. George and Hazel, dulled by their handicaps and forgetfulness, barely realize what just occurred.

George:

"If I tried to get away with it," said George, "then other people'd get away with it-and pretty soon we'd be right back to the dark ages again, with everybody competing against everybody else. You wouldn't like that, would you?"

C) The Bible starts with Genesis and ends with the Book of Revelation, which presents a vision of the future, including the Last Judgment and the creation of a new heaven and a new earth. That's why we also invite you to write a story about the coming future, for example, a story set in the year 2080. This story should also have a beginning (situation), conflict, and resolution.

- Speculate about how technology—based on what is already possible today—might have a positive (e.g. for climate issues), negative, or mixed influence, raising ethical questions.
- Speculate about a possible conflict and resolution. (10 min)
- Individually, write your own story based on this. (15 min)
- Read your stories to each other. (10 min)