**Writing Assignment: The Epic Hero - Rubric**

**OBJECTIVE:** Student will create a detailed epic hero and a villain or obstacle for him or her to overcome, and then craft an original short story 4-5 pages in length that tells his or her tale. Your story must be typed, double-spaced and in MLA format.

**REQUIREMENTS:** Your epic **must** contain the following elements:

* His/her story begins *in medias res,* “in the middle of things”
* The story must include at least one epic simile
* The hero’s and the antagonist’s origins must be explained
* The hero must undertake some kind of journey
* The hero must engage in one epic battle against his/her antagonist
* The hero may travel with others, but he/she must face his/her final task alone
* After the final task is successfully accomplished, the hero returns home and becomes a leader of his/her people

Your story **may** include the following elements:

* Kennings
* Alliteration
* Flashbacks
* Stock epithets

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| **Ideas and Content** | * The story is original, interesting and creative. * The writer draws from his or her knowledge of the texts. * Key details are concrete, well chosen and catch the reader’s attention; they are not predictable or cliché. * The story is well developed from beginning to end. * The characters and setting are described with rich detail, allowing the reader to see, hear and smell the events. * No important details are missing. | * The story somewhat demonstrates understanding of the texts we’ve read in class. * The story is underdeveloped, but readers can still understand the ideas presented. * The characters and setting are described, but not in great detail. * Key details are not concrete enough to allow the reader to see, hear and smell the events. | * The story does not draw from elements of texts we have studied. * Major plot elements are missing, making the story confusing. * Major details that describe the setting or characters are missing. |
| **Organization** | * The story begins *in medias res.* * The events in the story follow a logical sequence. * The pacing is well controlled- the writer slows down to provide detail and description of characters and setting. * Plot points occur in a natural and logical order- one thing causes another. * The story has a unique title. | * The story does not begin *in medias res.* * The order of events in the story is confusing and needs some rearranging. * The pace is not well controlled – more description is needed where appropriate. * Not all plot points follow a logical cause and effect. * The story does not have a unique title. | * The story does not begin *in medias res.* * Plot points are not presented in a logical order. * No effort is made to slow the pace for description of characters or setting. * Plot points are not governed by a logical cause and effect. * No unique title. |
| **Voice** | * The tone is appropriate and for the epic genre (similar to the epics we have read). * The writer presents a unique and compelling story. * The writer takes risks; the reader feels inspired or engaged. * The writer’s own unique voice shows through the writing. | * The tone attempts to match that of the epic genre. * The writer communicates his story but takes no risks; the reader does not feel inspired or engaged. * The writer’s unique voice shows through somewhat. | * The tone is not appropriate for the epic genre. * The writing is ordinary and takes no risks; the reader feels no connection to the characters or events. * The writer’s unique voice does not show through. |
| **Word Choice** | * The words are specific and appropriate. Throughout the story the writer has taken care to choose the right words and phrases. * The story’s language is natural and never shows a lack of control. Clichés and jargon are never used. * The story contains energetic verbs, precise nouns to provide clarity. * The writer uses vivid words and phrases, including sensory details to create a distinct image in the reader’s mind | * Words are correct and appropriate but lack originality and precision. * Familiar words and phrases do not grab the reader’s interest or imagination. Lively verbs and phrases are used occasionally. * The writing contains passive verbs and basic nouns but lacks distinct sensory details. | * Vague language is used and does not enable the reader to create an image of the events in the story. * Words are used incorrectly. Frequent misuses of parts of speech limits reader’s understanding of the story. * Repetition or redundancy distracts reader from the story. |
| **Sentence Fluency** | * The writer constructs sentences so that the meaning is clear to the reader. * Sentences vary in length and structure. * Varied sentence beginnings add interest and clarity. * The writing has a steady rhythm. The reader is able to read the text without confusion or fumbling. * Dialogue, if used, is steady and natural. Any fragments are used purposefully. * Thoughtful transitions lead the reader from one event to the next. | * Sentences are grammatical, but are routine rather than artful. The writer has not paid attention to how the sentences sound. * There is some variation in sentence length and structure as well as sentence beginnings. Not all sentences are constructed the same way. * The reader uses some transitional words and phrases to move the story along. | * Run-ons or sentence fragments are present. Sentences are too long, incomplete or awkward. * Nearly all the sentences begin the same way or employ the same structure. * Lack of transition words or phrases makes story chronology difficult to follow. * Dialogue is not natural or realistic. |
| **Conventions** | * Paragraphing is used and enhances the organization of the story. * Grammar and usage are correct and add clarity to the story as a whole. * Punctuation is accurate. It allows the reader to move through the piece with ease. * Correct capitalization is used throughout. * Most words, even difficult ones are spelled correctly. | * Paragraphs are used but may begin in the wrong places or sections that should be paragraphs run together. * Conventions may not always be correct, but problems with grammar are not serious enough to distort meaning. * End marks are correct but other punctuation marks such as commas, apostrophes, semi-colons and parenthesis, may be missing or wrong. * Common words are spelled correctly * Most words are capitalized correctly. | * Paragraphing is missing, uneven or too frequent. The paragraphs do not support the structure of the story. * Errors in grammar and usage are common and distracting; such errors can affect the text’s meaning. * Punctuation is often missing or incorrect. * Even common words are frequently misspelled. * Capitalization is haphazard or frequently incorrect. * The text must be read once to decode the language and then again to capture the text’s meaning. |