

Myths and heroes



The myth of the fountain of youth is as old as the world itself. **It has always been a myth because it could not be made real.** In many stories, we can find a way to become immortal might this be through the power of a fountain or a holy grail or anything else. It represents **one of the most important popular myths.**

The real breakthrough is that **the ancient myth might become reality** through the work of scientists. If it were to become real, then **it would cease to be a myth** and would turn into pure reality.

We wonder what we would do with immortality. Would we still be humans if we were immortal? Would everybody benefit from this medical achievement? If not, what kind of society would we live in?



Andrew is a hero because he is willing to sacrifice his life for the sake of his ideal.

He represents the myth of the fountain of youth because he is immortal. He possesses a gift that all humans dream of but it's because of this gift that is he denied his humanity.

We might say that if he succeeds, he will be considered a hero by his fellow robots because he will be the first to open a new era for robots. **To a certain extent, he may become a pioneer.**



Kennedy is using the famous myth of the frontier to justify the need for new challenges, whatever the cost.

He may appear to some as a new political hero since he is breaking with a long tradition of presidents before him.

He may be seen as a classical hero since he represents power. He will be followed by millions and he will fight for his country. Of course, this vision may vary depending on the political views.



The first myth tackled here is **the myth of the frontier.** Indeed, The USA have built their nation with the idea of always pushing the western frontier. When the western expansion finally reached the western coast, *other types of frontiers emerged.* Americans had to find new challenges to replace that need for something unknown.

There is also the **initiatory trip** (Voyage initiatique). People who will come back from this journey will be different because they will learn more about themselves than about anything else.

The people who will embark on this extraordinary journey are considered heroes because they represent their country and what they are about to do is so challenging that only heroes can do it.

Sacagawea, a squaw, who was part of the expedition became a very famous hero in America. She is represented on the 1\$ coin.

SPACE Discovery

WE CHOOSE TO GO TO THE MOON
OR IT HURT, OR IT FIRST!

1. Introduce the document.
2. Why is Kennedy? (or what do you know about him?)
3. What is the goal of the speech?
4. Why does he have such confidence in the capability of the American people?
5. What does he say about the technical difficulties?
6. How do you think the American people will react to this speech?
7. What is the impact of this speech on the world?

John F. Kennedy, September 12, 1961

Kennedy is using **the myth of the moon**. Nobody has ever been there because it has always seemed impossible. Only through science fiction books can you see it. But here, he is announcing that in less than 10 years, an American will walk on the surface of the Moon. **He is simply announcing the realization of a myth.**

He could be seen as a **political hero** since he is taking enormous risks in telling that to his population. He could be ridiculous if this project was to fail. He is becoming the leader of the greatest human exploration of all times. So, he represents this idea of brave explorers.

SPACE Discovery

THE MERCURY PROJECT
ALAN SHEPARD'S MISSION

1. Introduce the document.
2. Why is Alan Shepard?
3. What was his goal?
4. What is the impact of Shepard's flight on the world?
5. How do you think the American people will react to this flight?

Alan Shepard, May 15, 1961

Alan Shepard becomes a national hero because he is the first American in space. He represents the hope of a nation. Just like Lewis and Clark, he is the first American to go in this adventure. He is the American pioneer in space.

SPACE Discovery

JOHN GLENN
AN AMERICAN HERO

1. Introduce the document.
2. Why is John Glenn?
3. What did he do?
4. How do you think the American people will react to this flight?

John Glenn, February 22, 1962

John Glenn becomes a hero after orbiting the Earth because he allows the USA to catch up with the Soviets. With the success of his mission, he wipes away the shame of all Americans faced with a very powerful USSR.

John Glenn is also considered as a hero because he dedicated his life to his country. As he says in his own definition of the hero, he must dedicate his life to the others and not think about himself.

He spent his life trying to become the hero he had in mind by becoming an astronaut, a military and a politician: 3 jobs entirely dedicated to the benefit of others.

SPACE Discovery

GENIEMI
A BRIDGE TO THE MOON

1. Introduce the document.
2. What is Project Gemini?
3. What is its goal?

Norman Rockwell, "Glimpses of Space" (1965)

ARTS
BECOMING ICONS

1. Introduce the document.
2. Why is Norman Rockwell?
3. What is the impact of this painting?
4. How do you think the American people will react to this painting?

In this document, the astronauts Grissom and Young are represented on a painting by the famous Norman Rockwell. It shows that Arts have also been influenced by the decade's challenge. By being depicted on a painting, **the two astronauts become icons for a whole generation. They are seen as heroes.**

SPACE Discovery

FIRST TRAGEDY
APOLLO 11'S FIRST MISSION

Space history: Apollo 11, January 27, 1969. The first mission of the new space program by NASA. This program is supposed to make the myth of the Moon become true.

From about the time of the first flight of the Apollo 11, the world has been waiting for the first mission of the new space program by NASA. This program is supposed to make the myth of the Moon become true.

1. **Introduce the document.**
 2. **What happened?**
 3. **Why is this tragedy important for the USA and the world?**
 4. **What is the myth about that death?**

Apollo 11 is the first mission of the new space program by NASA. **This program is supposed to make the myth of the Moon become true.**

Unfortunately, the three astronauts die in this exercise. They instantaneously become heroes since they have died for their nation in a common interest.

To prove they have become heroes, their names will be remembered until Apollo 11 and beyond since their names will be written on Apollo 11 LEM and read out loud during Apollo 11's mythical mission on the surface of the Moon.

SPACE Discovery

APOLLO 11
THE FIRST MISSION OF THE NEW SPACE PROGRAM BY NASA.

By taking this photograph, the world realizes how the Earth really is and that picture would become one of the most important and mythical pictures of the 20th century.

By achieving this perilous mission, the three astronauts become heroes since they are the first humans to see the Moon up close with their own eyes.

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Neil Armstrong instantly becomes a national hero because of his achievement.

He still is today considered as a hero since his name is the first that pops into anyone's mind when we say « astronaut ». He has become an icon for a whole generation and beyond.

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LEGENDARY

THE COUNCIL OF ELROND

In this scene, the ring suddenly becomes real. It had been lost for hundreds of years and **its story had become mythical** for everyone. But here, it reappears and **turns the myth into reality.** We understand it through the sentence Boromir is pronouncing when he lays his eyes for the first time on the ring: « *So it is true...* »

Frodo becomes a hero in this scene. He is willing to sacrifice his security for the common good. He knows the journey will be perilous but he decides anyway to attempt it. **Even if he doesn't succeed, his decision and will are heroic.**

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Qui-Gon represents the hero in the scene. He is a Jedi Knight.

Anakin idealizes the Jedi knights. For him, they can't be killed and Qui-Gon must have come here to rescue them and free all the slaves. This is the typical vision of the great hero saving everybody.

Anakin dreams of becoming a hero. He says that in his dream, he becomes a Jedi and frees all the slaves. This is why he sees in Qui-Gin, the hero of his dreams and probably a father figure as well.

Without even noticing it, Anakin tackles with the myth of immortality. For him, Jedis are immortal since no one can kill them. Of course, this is only in his imagination. But it represents a certain fascination for the young boy.



Anakin couldn't become the hero of his mother. He was not capable of saving her whereas he had the power to.

Anakin is deriving from the idealized vision of the hero he had when he was a child. He said that he dreamt of becoming a Jedi and that he would come back and free everybody. Now, he has come back, but this is a complete failure.

Because everything seems to be going wrong, Anakin thinks he needs to have more power. He says to Padmé that he will never go through that again because he will become the most powerful Jedi ever. The power he wants is **the ability to save people from death. This is linked to the fountain of youth.** He wants to find a way to get that mythical power in order to become the greatest hero ever.



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