*Shrek*: A Study of Archetypes and Other Literary Devices

I. The Hero’s Journey -- a common archetype in literature and film. Epic heroes like Homer’s Odysseus and film heroes like Shrek follow the three basic steps of this archetype: departure, initiation, and return.

Directions: Answer the following on a separate sheet of paper in complete sentences.

Shrek’s Journey

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Stage of Journey | Questions and Ideas to Ponder |
| Recognition of Flaw | 1. What is Shrek’s flaw?
2. Does Shrek become aware of this flaw; if so, when?
 |
| Departure from Home | 1. Why does Shrek decide to leave home?
2. On what quest does Farquaad send Shrek?
3. What is Shrek’s true quest?
 |
| Relationship with Guide | 1. Who is Shrek’s guide?
2. Why does Shrek allow this guide to join him?
3. What does this guide teach Shrek?
4. Why is this guide an appropriate one in relationship to Shrek’s flaw?
 |
| Tasks or Adventures  | 1. Identify three of Shrek’s tasks or adventures and what he learns from each situation.
 |
| Love | 1. How does Princess Fiona fit the princess archetype?
2. What, if anything, does Shrek learn from Fiona?
 |
| Return Home Changed | 1. Why does Shrek decide to return home?
2. Upon return, how has Shrek changed?
 |

II. Allusions -- a brief reference to an historical, literary, mythological…figure, event, or object that offers greater meaning to the current work.

Directions: Identify at least three allusions mentioned during the film and think about how each mention offers greater meaning to the plot, characterization, and/or theme in *Shrek*. (on a separate sheet of paper)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Allusion | Significance |
| 1. |  |
| 2. |  |
| 3. |  |

III. Archetypes-- With *Shrek*, DreamWorks clearly questions the archetypes we model across time and space. Think about what these traditional archetypes teach society and think about what message *Shrek* suggests; for example, how can Shrek be a hero and an ogre?

Directions: Explain how three of these characters breaks the mold of the archetype.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Archetype | Character |
| Hero | Shrek |
| Princess | Princess Fiona |
| Guide (Trusted Companion) | Donkey |
| Villain | Lord Farquaad |
| Ogre (Beast) | Shrek |