



**Family**



**Good vs Evil**



**Man vs Nature**



# Theme

**A Writer's  
Message**



# The Reader's Job

Part of your job as a reader is to understand what a writer is trying to say. Writers seldom come right out and tell you, “Hey, reader, this is what I want you to know.”

You need to make inferences and draw conclusions about what the writer is trying to express.



dreams





# Today's Objectives

- ☀️ What we know: (Our Focus Skills) How to identify Author's Purpose and Perspective in a text. We are familiar with Story Elements-setting, characters, plot, conflict, climax and resolution. (Strategies) We are able to make Connections, Infer ,and Evaluate when reading.
- ☀️ What we will learn: How to identify the Theme-the life lesson, moral or message in a story. (fable)
- ☀️ What we will do: Today's Objective is HOT! You will participate in an interactive PowerPoint and complete a theme graphic organizer in groups to analyze the story in order to identify the essential message or theme in a fable. (I do...We do....You do!)



# What is a **Theme**?

**Theme:** Life lesson, meaning, moral, or message about life or human nature that is communicated by a literary work.

In other words...

**Theme** is what the story teaches readers.



# Themes

A **theme** is not a word, it is a sentence.  
You don't have to agree with the theme to identify it.

## Examples

*Money can't buy happiness.*

*Don't judge a book by its cover.*



# Finding A Theme

**What To Think About:**

**What is the topic, or  
“big idea,” of the  
work?**

- The big topic is.....

**What do the  
characters say or do  
that relates to the  
topic?**

- They say...
- They do....

**What do these  
things tell you that  
is important to learn  
about life?**

- It is important to.....



# What is “The Big Idea” of a work?

Themes are usually about *Big World Ideas* like freedom, trust, friendship, courage, family, nature, good vs. evil, and so on.





**Movies:** What is “The Big Idea” for these well-known story titles?

## ***Shoulder Partners***

- Beauty and the Beast
- Where the Red Fern Grows
- Cinderella
- Goldilocks and the Three Bears
- Monsters, Inc.
- The Little Boy Who Cried Wolf
- Harry Potter Series
- Peter Pan
- Finding Nemo
- Three Little Pigs
- Little Red Riding Hood





# Were you correct?

- Beauty and the Beast: *Beauty*
- Where the Red Fern Grows: *Friendship*
- Cinderella: *Good vs. Evil*
- Goldilocks and the Three Bears: *Respect*
- Monsters, Inc.: *Helping Others*
- The Little Boy Who Cried Wolf: *Honesty*
- Harry Potter Series: *Good vs. Evil*
- Peter Pan: *Growing Up*
- Finding Nemo: *Growing Up/Honoring Parents*
- Three Little Pigs: *Planning Ahead*
- Little Red Riding Hood: *Strangers*



# What phrases Give Clues to “The Big Idea?”

**Title:** Follow the Trail

Far into the distance and to the very edge of the horizon was a path cut out by wagon wheels. If you followed that path you would find a land of gold and opportunity. This path was hard to travel and had many obstacles along the way.

My travels have finally led me to my destination. Here I can start a new life with my family. There will be no more dust, no more danger, and no more aching muscles. I can finally rest my head.

**My big idea is that the story is about a journey.**



# What Do the Characters Say and Do That Relate to the Big Idea of Journeys?

**“We have passed the halfway mark. Soon we will arrive at our new home,”** father patiently explained.

**“Will we have anyone to play with,”** Amy asked hopefully.

**“Yes, now climb back into the wagon and get ready to leave. We have many more miles to travel today.”**

Father took the horses reins into his hands and clicked his tongue to make the horses begin walking. **The wagon moved slowly across the bumpy dirt path.**



# Decide What the Theme Is

**Remember, the theme is not the topic of the work but a point made *about* the topic.**

**It is a statement about life.**

**A good theme statement shows what lesson about life is important to learn.**



# **What Do the Clues We Found Tell Us That Is Important to Learn About Life?**

**The clues talk about taking a journey, that the journey is difficult, and that the traveler will arrive at a destination with opportunities.**

**The author's message may be that *even if a journey is difficult to take, there are rewards when you reach your destination.***



# Identifying Themes

**Themes** are not explicit. (clearly stated)

**Themes** are implied. (something suggested but not actually said) You will need to **INFER!**

**Themes** are bigger than the story.

Small  
World  
of the  
Story

**Big World of the Theme.**  
Applies to the “Real” World.



## **Extract the “BIG Idea”**

- ☀️ Don't get hung up on the characters and events
- ☀️ Think beyond the small world elements to extract the BIG World Lesson



# Big Idea/Theme

- ☀️ Tim despised his old baseball glove. He wanted to play with his new glove, but he didn't have any money, so he decided to steal it. But when Tim got caught stealing the glove, his parents said he couldn't play baseball ALL summer!
- ☀️ What is the Big World Idea?
- ☀️ What is the Theme?





# The Big World Idea= Theme

☀️ The Big Idea is: Integrity

☀️ The lesson of the story is that *if you want something, you should work for it.*



# Match the Topic With a Theme Message

Courage

Revenge

Jealousy

Dreams

Be careful how you treat other people because they may treat you the same.

**revenge**

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Face your fears and you can defeat them.

**courage**

---

Do not wish for what others possess. Be happy with what you have.

**jealousy**

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Work for what you want in life and you can achieve any goal.

**dreams**

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# Review

**What is the topic, or “big idea,” of the work?**

- Preview
- Themes are usually about big ideas like freedom, trust, friendship, family, good vs evil, and so on.

**What do the characters say or do that relates to the topic?**

- What actions do the main characters take that relate to the theme?
- What are some important things they say that relate to the theme?
- How do the characters change during the story?

**What do these things tell you that is important to learn about life?**

- The theme is not the topic but a point made about the topic.
- It is a statement about life.
- A good theme statement shows what lesson about life is important to learn.



# Identifying **THEME** in a Story

The theme of a **Fable** is its moral. The theme of a **Parable** is its teaching. The theme of a piece of **Fiction** is its view about life and how people behave.

A good place to start when learning to identify theme is to look at **Aesop Fables**. These are short tales written long ago for the purpose of teaching little morals, or lessons.



# Modeled Practice

**Let's determine the Theme  
using a Graphic Organizer  
to analyze the story  
structure for clues!**





# Theme Activity

- ☀️ Move quietly into your **groups of 3** and select a “Recorder.”
- ☀️ After receiving your text (fable) and Theme Worksheet (Graphic Organizer) read silently-tracking your thinking (Reread if you finish before your partners)
- ☀️ Complete the Theme Graphic Organizer together-share ideas!
- ☀️ Raise your hands when you have finished. (the teachers will circulate and provide you with a sentence strip-for sharing)
- ☀️ Meet with the same “Story Group” and share your Themes. Make sure to explain your thinking- use HOT Questions to guide your discussions if needed.
- ☀️ Groups will present “A Fable a Day-will teach us to Live the Right Way!” We will take an assessment on Theme!
- ☀️ Future Lessons-Determining Theme in Fiction!