

HOW TO TEACH THEME

Theme is the lesson or message of the text that is typically a view of life, human nature or elements of society.

THE MOST COMMON THEMES IN LITERATURE

Man Struggles Against Nature

Man is always at battle with human nature, human tendencies or the aging process

Man Struggles Against Societal Pressure

Mankind is always struggling to determine if society's way is the best way for him to live

Man Struggles to Understand Divinity

Mankind tries to understand and make peace with God

Crime Does Not Pay

Honesty is valued and criminals will eventually be caught

Overcoming Adversity

Man accepts a challenging situation and turns it into triumph

Friendship is Dependent on Sacrifice

You must be willing to occasionally set aside your own desires for the benefit of the friendship

The Importance of Family

It is honorable to make sacrifices for family in order to overcome life's adversities

Yin and Yang

Just when you think life is finally going to go your way, something challenging happens to balance it all out

Love is the Worthiest of Pursuits

Love conquers all

Death is Part of the Life Cycle

Death and life are intricately connected

Sacrifices Bring Reward

Sacrifices and hard work pay off in the end and are worth the challenges endured along the way

Human Beings All Have the Same Needs

Rich or poor, educated or not, all human beings want to have their basic needs met

HOW TO TEACH THEME

STEP 1

Using three adjectives and specifics from the text, describe the character at the beginning.

At the beginning of the text the character was _____, _____ and _____.

STEP 2

Using three adjectives and specifics from the text, describe the character at the end.

At the end of the text the character had changed to _____, _____ and _____.

STEP 3

In two sentences or less, describe the event that caused the character to change.

The climax or turning point in the text was _____.
This event caused the character to change from _____ to _____ because _____.

STEP 4

In light of your sentences from Step 3, make a decision about which of the Common Themes best describes the text (refer to "Common Themes" from the front of this tab).

If there are more than two themes that fit, use evidence from the text to make the best choice.

STEP 5

Share or write about the theme using this frame:

"The theme became apparent as I analyzed the character and found _____.

When I compared and contrasted the character from beginning to end in relation to the climax of the text, I found that the character had changed from _____ to _____.

I concluded that the theme of the text is _____."