

THEME

Theme is the message or insight revealed about life within a literary work. Seldom stated directly by the author, theme must be interpreted by the reader. Not simply a topic, such as “friendship,” theme is the underlying message about a topic; “true friendship knows no boundaries,” for example. Great works of literature often have multiple themes.

Use the brainstorming boxes below to determine possible themes of the story.

Watch what happens to the main character.

What kind of person is the main character?
Does he/she meet a good or bad fate?
What does this say about people like him/her?

Obvious statements of theme in the text

Is it stated directly?

Look at the title for clues.

Could words in the title be symbolic?

Look at the main conflict—who/what ultimately wins?

Person vs. Person?
Person vs. Self?
Person vs. Nature?
Person vs. Fate?

For instance:

Love
Trust
Deceit
Gender
Pride
Greed
Betrayal
Human nature
Friendship
Family
Death
Sacrifice
Kindness
Jealousy
Freedom
Karma

**What are some of the general topics of this story?
What is the message about them?**