



ELA Virtual Learning

8th grade

Determining Theme

April 21, 2020



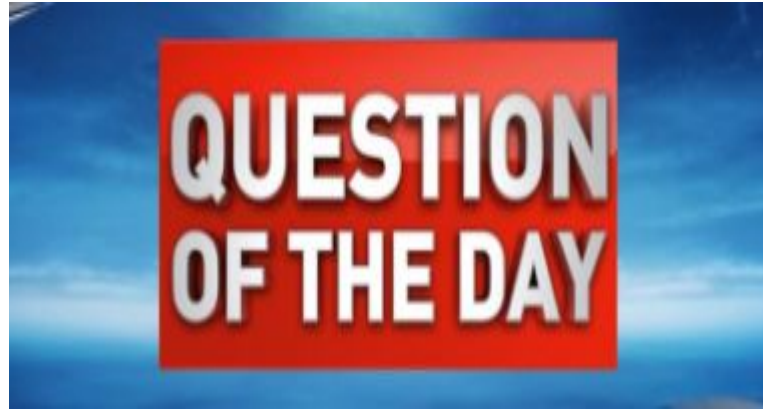
Grade/Course
Lesson: April 24, 2020

Objective/Learning Target:

- I can determine the theme(s) of a text.
- I can analyze the development of the theme(s) over the course of a text.
- I can write clear answers to constructed response questions with explained supporting evidence and relevant reasoning.



LET'S REVIEW



**How can I determine the
theme of a text?**

What is theme?

Theme refers to the underlying message of a story or poem.

Theme is a big idea, something that you can learn about life in general.

Determining Themes

Sometimes, an author will come right out and state the theme of a story or poem.

I looked at all the candy I could buy. I had the dollar, right here in my hand, but suddenly I didn't feel hungry. I wished that I hadn't stolen the dollar. I wished that I hadn't taken the money from my brother's bank.

"I don't think I want to buy anything today," I muttered quickly to the clerk. Then I ran from the store. I had learned something important—it's better to be honest than to have money.

Finding Themes

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Determining Themes

When a theme is stated, it's usually found at the end of the poem or story.

General Reading Hint: Look at the last page of a story to see if you can find a stated theme (not absolute).

Inferring a Theme

Sometimes, though, the theme is not stated. Then, you need to make an inference (a conclusion reached on the basis of evidence and reasoning.).

We knew that it was time to set the butterfly free. We had seen it make its chrysalis and emerge. Then it had flown around in the cage, trying to stretch its wings. Although we felt a little sad, we opened the lid to the cage one evening. The butterfly seemed confused and didn't leave at first. Then, in one burst of zigzag fluttering, it erupted from the cage and flew all the way to the end of the yard and down the hill by the school.

"That was the right thing to do," Aidan said.

"I know," I answered, even though I already worried about the butterfly. What would it eat? How would it live?

What clues
lead us to
the theme?

Inferring a Theme

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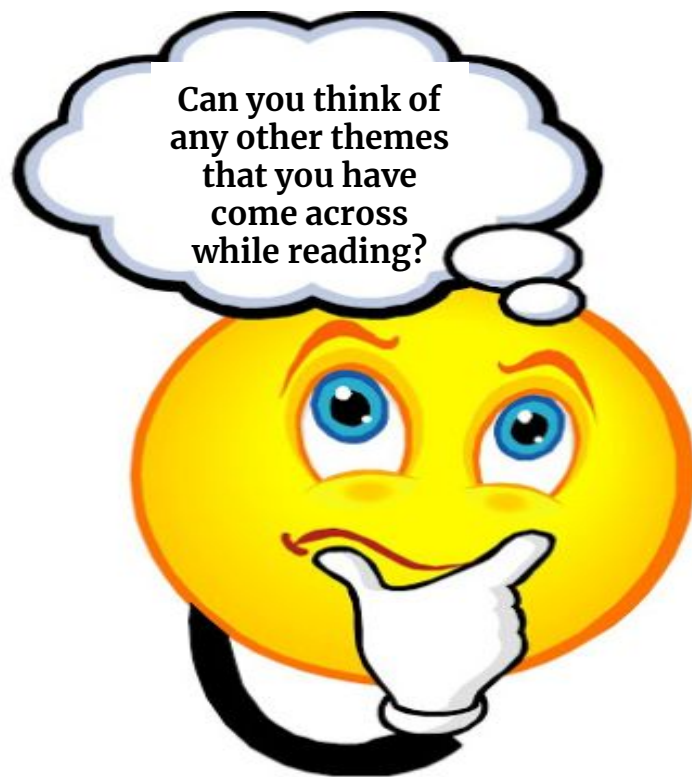
"I know," I answered, even though I already worried about the butterfly. What would it eat? How would it live?

You've probably read something with this theme before! The same themes often appear over and over.

Theme
Wild creatures
should be free

Common Themes

- Persistence pays off
- Honesty is better than cheating
- Its more important to be nice than to be popular
- Be careful what you wish for
- Treat others the way you want to be treated
- Don't judge a book by it's cover

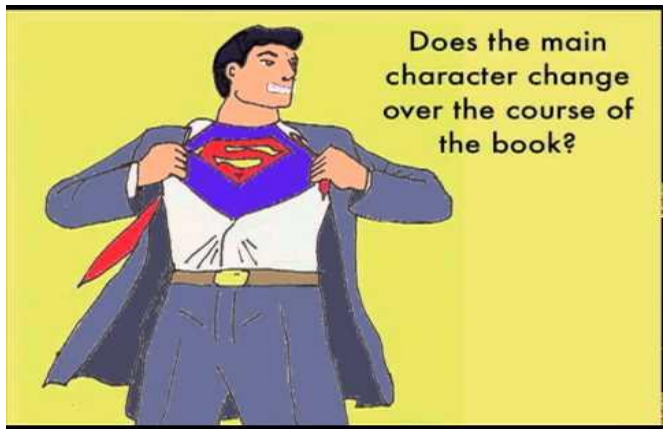


OR



YOU GOT IT

Go to next slide




Does the main
character change
over the course of
the book?

**Check out this
video**

Practice

- You will read the short story “The Murderer,” by Ray Bradbury.
 - Remember, when reading columns, read the left, then the right. Also, there are 11 numbered footnotes > definitions that will appear on p. 5.
 - You can access “The Murderer” using this [LINK](#).
- While reading the “The Murderer” think about the review you recently covered over *theme*. Use that thought process to guide your annotations of “The Murderer” as well as your own comments, questions, and connections.
- Place your annotations on your Cornell Note Sheet. See slide 14.
- On the next few slides you will brainstorm to determine possible themes of the “The Murderer.”

Student Practice

	Topic/Unit:	Name:
	<h1>Theme</h1>	Class/Period:
		Date:
<p>I can... I can determine the theme(s) of a text.</p>		
<p>Questions/Main Ideas:</p>	<p>Notes:</p>	
<p>Summary/Reflection</p>		

3 - Additional questions & thoughts

1-Annotations - See slide #13

2-Include page numbers in your annotations

4 - Your summary or reflection from your notes

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 one-word 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 Murderer.”

<div>Watch what happens to the main character.</div> <div>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?</div>	<div>Obvious statements of theme in the text</div> <div>Is it stated directly?</div>
<div>Look at the title for clues.</div> <div>Could words in the title be symbolic?</div>	<div>Look at the main conflict—who/what ultimately wins?</div> <div>Person vs. Person? Person vs. Self? Person vs. Nature? Person vs. Fate?</div>

What are some of the general topics of “The Murderer?”
What is the message about them?

For instance:

Love

Trust

Deceit

Gender

Pride

Greed

Betrayal

Human

Nature

Friendship

Family

Death

Sacrifice

Kindness

Jealousy

Freedom

Karma

Instructions: What are some possible themes of the “**The Murderer?**” Below, identify three themes you uncovered after reading and annotating “**The Murderer**” and brainstorming ideas on slides 15 and 16. Using specific examples (include page number) and details from the text, explain why your statements reflects an important theme of the “**The Murderer.**”

Theme	Reasoning (provide evidence from the story)
1.	1.
2.	2.
3. Technology has caused a loss of humanity	3. pg. 3 “The bus inhabitants faced with having to converse with each other. Panic! Sheer, animal panic!” Pg. 4 “'It'll take time, of course. It was all so enchanting at first. The very idea of these things, the practical uses, was wonderful. They were almost toys, to be played with, but the people got too involved, went too far, and got wrapped up in a pattern of social behavior and couldn't get out, couldn't admit they were in, even. So they rationalized their nerves as something else. 'Our modern age,' they said. 'Conditions,' they said. 'High-strung,' they said.”

Make the Connection: Title Soundtrack

Now, imagine you have been hired to create a soundtrack to an upcoming movie version of “The Murderer.” The producers have asked you to choose a title soundtrack that reflects the most important theme. Select a key theme from the ones you identified on your notes, then choose a song that you would use for the title soundtrack to reflect this theme. Cite lyrics from the song that help convey the theme you have chosen.

Key Theme: Technology has caused a loss of humanity

Song: Video Killed the Radio Star by Buggles

Lyrics: Video killed the radio star

Video killed the radio star

Pictures came and broke your heart

Analysis: This song points out the changing tides of technology. When videos came into the picture, listeners no longer were able to decide what the song meant to them, they were told what the song meant through the video. In a sense deadening the listeners’ imagination. Pointing out the changing tides of technology



EXAMPLE



SOUND
TRACK

Additional Resources

Don't Confuse Theme with Main/Central Idea



Ray Bradbury Theater - The Murderer part 1



How to Find a Theme



Ray Bradbury Theater - The Murderer part 3



Ray Bradbury Theater - The Murderer part 2

