



ELA Virtual Learning

6-8/Essential Literacy

April 20, 2020



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Lesson: April 20, 2020

Objective/Learning Target:

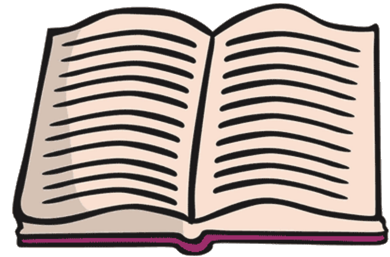
I can identify the main idea and theme of a passage of text.



Warm-Up

Set the timer and read for 5 minutes.

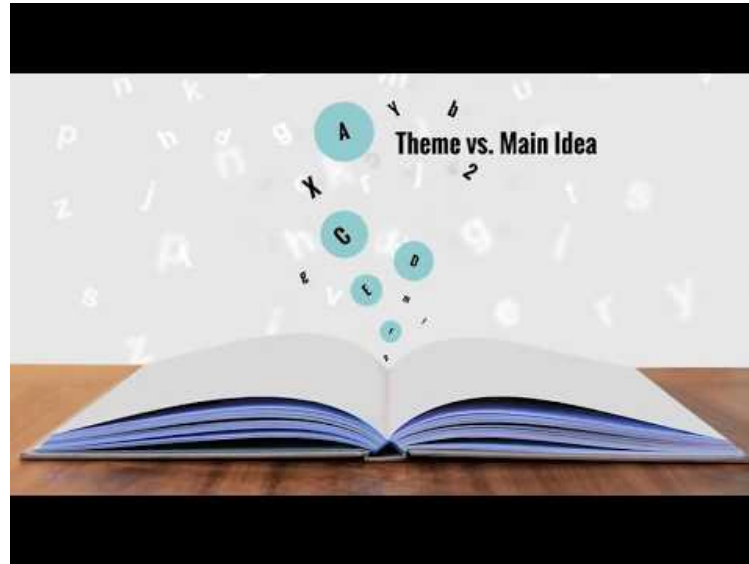
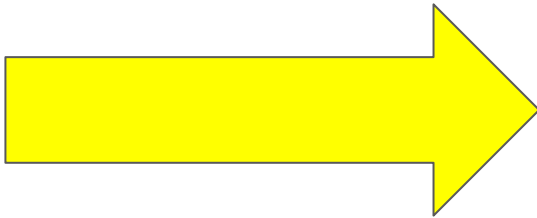
When the timer goes off, write the most **important** thing that happened during your reading time on your notebook paper.





Learn

When reading a passage of text, the main idea and theme can often be confused. Watch the [video](#) to learn more about differentiating between the main idea and theme of a story.



Learn

Main Idea vs. Theme Notes

- **Main Idea:** Can also be called **central idea**.
 - What the story, article, or paragraph is *mostly* about.
 - Authors won't explicitly tell us the main idea. We have to make inferences, or educated guesses, about what the main idea is for each text.
 - Main ideas are *always* specific to the text. (Ex: *The Lion King's* main idea – A young lion cub grows up to defeat his evil uncle and reclaim the kingdom.)
 - All of the details within the text should support the main idea.
- **Theme**
 - **The life lesson or moral that the author wants to tell the reader.**
 - Theme is also supported by the details within the text.
 - Like main idea, authors won't tell us what the theme of a novel or story is. We have to make inferences, using supporting details as clues.
 - Theme is much bigger than main idea.
 - Themes are *always* general. (Ex: *The Lion King's* theme: What's done deceitfully will always be discovered.)



Practice

On your notebook paper, number 1-4. You will practice finding the main idea and theme of 4 different passages. An example is done for you.

	Main idea	Theme
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		



Practice

Example


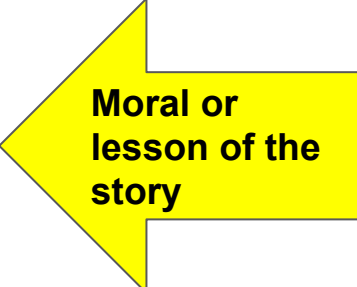
Two weeks ago, Anthony moved to small-town Johnsonville from big-city Dallas. Anthony had a lot of friends in Dallas, and he was the fastest runner of them all, but today he didn't feel fast at all.

It was track and field day at his new school, and he was wearing his fastest pair of shoes. Today, they weren't making him feel so fast. Anthony missed Dallas, and with every step he took, he missed it even more. He remembered running through the grass with his friends, so far ahead of the pack that he had become known as "Lightning McAnthony."

Now, he worried that the rest of the track team wouldn't like him, or that he wouldn't be the leader of the pack anymore. The horn sounded, signaling Anthony to the starting line. His palms were sweaty, and he stepped forward as he repeated to himself, "I think I can, I think I can."

The race started and Anthony flew from the starting line like a bolt of lightning. Anthony finished the race several steps ahead of the next closest competitor. The boys at the finish line cheered for Anthony and patted his back in celebration. He had believed in himself and now others did too. Johnsonville or Dallas, he would always be Lightning.

Determine the main idea and theme of the passage.

 What the story is MOSTLY about	Main Idea	Theme	 Moral or lesson of the story
	Anthony was running for the first time at his new school, and he was worried about how he would do and what others would think.	Believe in yourself	



Practice

Practice #1

Jane's cousin smirked and said, "It's not a lie if you don't tell." Turning away, she sneakily slipped the Snickers bar into her coat pocket. Jane felt her face turn red as her heart pounded with fear. She had never thought of stealing, much less being a witness to such a crime. Winona skipped off, whistling as she waved goodbye to the gas station clerk. Jane ran quickly to catch up, but then stopped suddenly in front of the clerk. She slowly walked over to the employee, explained that her cousin must have forgotten to pay and insisted on paying for the candy bar. It was Jane's last dollar bill, but she proudly handed it over to the clerk. She felt good about what she had done and looked forward to sharing the candy bar with Winona.

After splitting the Snickers bar, Winona said "See, it's not a lie if you don't tell".

Jane replied with a smile "But, you told me."

Determine the main idea and theme of the passage.



Practice

Practice #2

The angry customer stomped up and slammed the bag of food on the counter in front of James. The bag split down the side and french fries poured out of the rip. The man barked at James about how the restaurant had messed up the order. James smiled at the man and offered to make him a new lunch. He even offered to throw in a free dessert. James stepped out from the counter and handed some kids meal toys to the angry man's children. He apologized again to the red faced man and offered to get him a soda while the family waited on the new order. The customer just crossed his arms and huffed. James smiled again and offered the children free milkshakes. The man's frown finally began to turn, and he calmly smiled at James, apologizing for overreacting. James smiled to himself. He was proud that he had done just as his father had told him. "Kill them with kindness." It worked every time.

Determine the main idea and theme of the passage.



Practice

Practice #3

Carolyn looked across the row of tables at Madeline. For years, Madeline sat at the lunch table by herself, quietly eating her sack lunch. She had heard enough about Madeline to know that she would never get within ten feet of her! All of the other girls in class had spread rumors about her for years, but this was the first year Carolyn was in the same class.

“Stay away from that weirdo!” the kids had said.

As Carolyn wrote her name on her paper, the teacher announced that this would be a partner activity. Excited about choosing their first partners of the year, the kids let out a collective sigh when Ms. Joe told them she had already selected their partners. The children waited anxiously to hear who their partner would be.

Carolyn sat frozen when her name was called alongside Madeline’s. “But, but, but. I, I. I need a different partner,” Carolyn stammered, to no one in particular.

Madeline made her way over to Carolyn’s desk and sat down. Carolyn, wanting nothing more than to get this over with, asked the first getting-to-know-you question on their paper.

“Oh! My favorite show is Dog with a Blog, too!” Carolyn shouted. As they completed the questionnaire, Carolyn was amazed to find how much they had in common. Within minutes, the girls were giggling with one another. When they were finished, Carolyn got up to go back to her seat, but turned back around.

“Would you like to sit with me at lunch today?” Carolyn asked Madeline.

Determine the main idea and theme of the passage.



Practice

Practice #4

“I didn’t mean to!” Connor shouted from the front yard. “I didn’t even see him coming when I threw the ball in his direction.”

Mom sighed, frustrated with her son.

“I said I was sorry! It won’t happen again!” he stammered.

Mom shook her head and silently walked back into the house. She couldn’t help but remember yesterday when Connor had “accidentally” hit his brother in the face with a remote control. The day before that, she had heard the same “I didn’t mean to!” story from Connor when he “accidentally” broke his little sister’s crayons in half. She knew that her son was a kind child at heart, but things like this just couldn’t keep happening.

Later that night, Connor’s brother came crying up the stairs. Mom listened as the little boy told the story about how Connor had tripped him as he came down the stairs. Enough was enough. Mom marched upstairs to confront Connor. When she arrived at the top of the stairs, he started his story with, “But, it was just an accident!” With a sigh, mom told Connor to go to his room. She knew she couldn’t trust his stories anymore.

Determine the main idea and theme of the passage.



Practice Answer Key

	Main Idea	Theme
Passage 1	Jane's cousin stole a candy bar, but she decided to make right by paying.	Honesty is the best practice.
Passage 2	James had to deal with a difficult customer.	Be kind, even when others are not.
Passage 3	Carolyn had heard bad things about Madeline, but she soon found out how much they had in common.	Don't let other people's opinions influence you.
Passage 4	Connor was always hurting people, and his mom couldn't trust him anymore.	Actions speak louder than words.



Additional Practice

REFLECTING ON MAIN IDEA & THEME

1. How are theme and main idea the same and how are they different?
2. How can you tell the difference between main idea and theme?
3. What does the main idea include that theme doesn't?
4. What generalizations can you make about theme?

Think about a book you have read or movie/TV show you have seen.

See if you can determine the main idea and theme!