

A.P. Lit. and Comp. April 9th, 2020

Learning Target:

Students will be able to identify specific universal themes in an A.P. worthy text.

Success Starter

After watching the link to the video below, you are going to write a one sentence mantra. A mantra is a saying/belief/affirmation- and in this case one with a universal theme- that some people repeat to themselves to find focus.

So- what would be one of your personal themes?

Video Link: [Themes in Literature](#)

Recitatif: Universal theme

You will be reading a short story by Toni Morrison called “Recitatif”.

In Recitatif, you will encounter several universal themes.

Remember, what truly makes a theme “universal” is its ability to be learned from a multitude of people from various demographics. The message of a theme must be one that rings true for mankind. The message of a universal theme is not myopic—anyone who chooses to read a text meaningfully could walk away learning a theme’s message if it is truly universal.

Theme Notes:

Link to text: [Recitatif by Toni Morrison](#)

Recitatif is divided into several sections over several decades. While you are reading, brainstorm specific topics, subjects, and events that come to mind while you are reading each section of the text. When you are finished, go back through each section/decade of the text and find any commonalities then answer the following question for each section:

1. What is a lesson Toni Morrison would want you to learn from this section? Support your answer with specific details from the text.

The “Spine”: Specificity in theme

To respond that “friendship” is a theme in “Recitatif” is simply not enough.

What about “friendship”?

If you are wondering if the theme you have found is “AP specific”-is it making a claim or expressing a detailed idea?

While the theme of “friendship” is not enough, “friendship is color blind” could be a theme you could make an argument for with specific details from the text.

It is also a universal theme.

Short Answer Question

Answer the following question specifically and using text-based details from Recitatif.

1. What are three important universal themes in this story?

Answer: Expectation/Links

Answers will vary. However, each answer should include a specific “universal theme” in each answer, along with multiple text-based details to support each answer.

[Sickness and Disability in Recitatif](#)

[Friendship vs Family in Recitatif](#)

[Childhood vs Adulthood](#)