

What's THE MEssage?

Finding the theme of a story or poem

What is THEME?

- The theme of a text is its underlying meaning or main idea.
- A theme is UNIVERSAL--it applies to everyone, and can stand up to changes in time period.
 - This is why a novel written hundreds of years ago can still be relevant to today's readers!

There are many different ways to examine theme, so we wanted to be sure to familiarize you with the method we plan to use this year.

How to find the theme:

- Often, we are taught that a theme is a one word, big idea. However, this can become confusing to students as a story about “family” might contain wildly different “meanings” or “main ideas” as they apply to family.
- We will begin by looking at “Topic Themes,” which are the one word themes you are probably MOST used to. Examples of topic themes are:

Family

Friendship

Bravery

Acceptance

Honesty

Kindness

Loyalty

Spirituality

Love

Society

Sacrifice

Overcoming Adversity

Expanding the “topic theme”

Once we have selected a topic theme for a story, our job is to expand the theme. These are the steps we will follow in class:

1. Read the story.
2. Brainstorm topic themes for the story--select one topic theme (ex: friendship).
3. Write a sentence about that topic theme using the sentence starter:
 - a. The author feels that _____ is_____.
 - b. The author feels that friendship will help people achieve things they couldn't do alone.
4. Take out “The author feels that” from the sentence...now you have a theme!
 - a. Friendship will help people achieve things they couldn't do alone.

Let's Practice!