

Theme Lesson

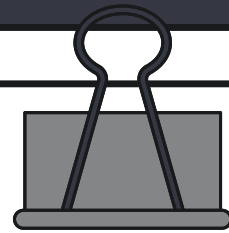
Review the story element of theme through...

- Definition slides
- Literary and film examples
- Interactive exploration group activity
- Individual writing assessment + rubric



Created by The Word Nerd, Amanda Zieba

Theme Lesson



Hey there, Teacher Friend!

Theme can be a hard lesson to teach, in part because it feels (especially to a middle schooler) so abstract. This lesson is my attempt to make this story element more concrete (and hopefully engaging and fun).

On the next few pages you'll see posters that you can print. Make them big! Laminate them for reuse... or keep them as single pages and have students rotate from table to table recording their ideas... it's up to you and what you think will work best for you/your students/your classroom environment.

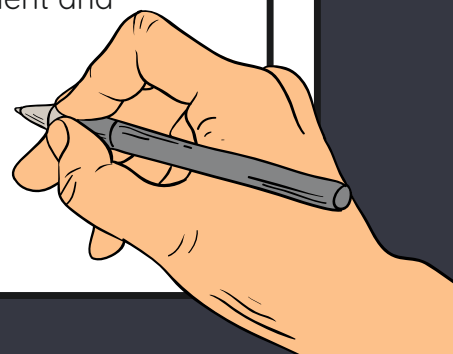
On each poster, students will record books and movies they think showcase the targeted theme. There is also a space for them to include evidence to support their choice. Set a timer, give students a dedicated time at each poster and the rotate. Hopefully, seeing other examples will jog their memory and help them think of more examples. If you are worried they won't be able to come up with any at the first station on their own, add one in yourself to get them going.

After students have been to all the stations, share the themes and their examples aloud. Ask students which they think best exemplifies each theme and why. Each individual or small group could prepare a statement to share with the class, identifying their choice and argument in favor of their exemplar example. (page 15) Then, share them aloud! Perhaps a healthy discussion will ensue! (At least, that is my goal/hope!) A rubric for evaluating their written responses is included. (page 16/17)

Finally, vote! Come up with a BEST EXAMPLE LIST and post it in your classroom. In future class periods, compare the results from class to class. Bonus tip: Have some of the books the students mention on hand to disperse to students suddenly interested in checking them out. And one last idea, you could do a grade level vote for the movies that were suggested and watch it as a reward for excellent engagement and participation.



Happy Teaching!
Amanda
The Word Nerd

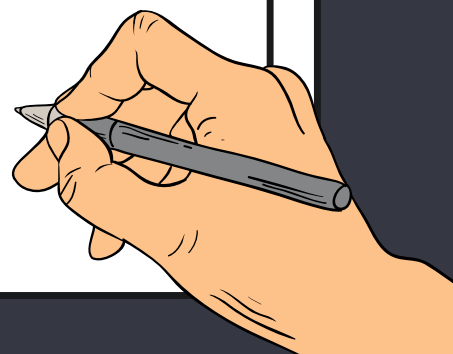


Theme Lesson

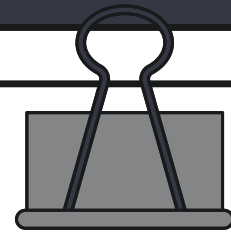


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Theme Lesson



Examples in Literature and Film

Circle of Life

- Film: The Maker (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YDXOioU_OKM) or Bao (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7q2HGxwu8Ms>)
- Literature: Where the Red Fern Grows by Wilson Rawls and Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes by Eleanor Coerr

Coming of Age

- Film: La Luna (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7UMecxjQAvk>)
- Literature: The Lost Year by Katherine Marsh and/or Ender's Game Orson Scott Card

Faith vs. Doubt

- Film: Coin Operated (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5L4DQfVlcdg>)
- Literature: The Giver by Lois Lowry and/or Divergent by Veronica Roth

Fate vs. Free Will

- Film: Umbrella (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bl1FOKpFY2Q>)
- Literature: A Wish in the Dark by Christina Soontornvat

Good vs. Evil

- Film: A Joy Story (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZQGuVKHtrxc>)
- Literature: A Wrinkle in Time by Madeline L'Engle and/or Between Monsters and Marvels by Alysa Wishingrad

Hubris

- Film: Lifted (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LVL0c6FrLi0>)
- Literature: Percy Jackson and The Lightning Thief by Rick Riordan

Identity

- Film: Snack Attack (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6YSxJnqCr8I>)
- Literature: The Crossover by Kwame Alexander and/or Okay Witch by Emma Steinkellner

Justice

- Film: The Bridge (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X_AfRk9F9w)
- Literature: The Hunger Games by Suzanne Collins and The Red Queen by Victoria Aveyard

Pursuit of Love

- Film: The Blue Umbrella (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t5aziLb8Irl>)
- Literature: The Selection and One for the Murphys

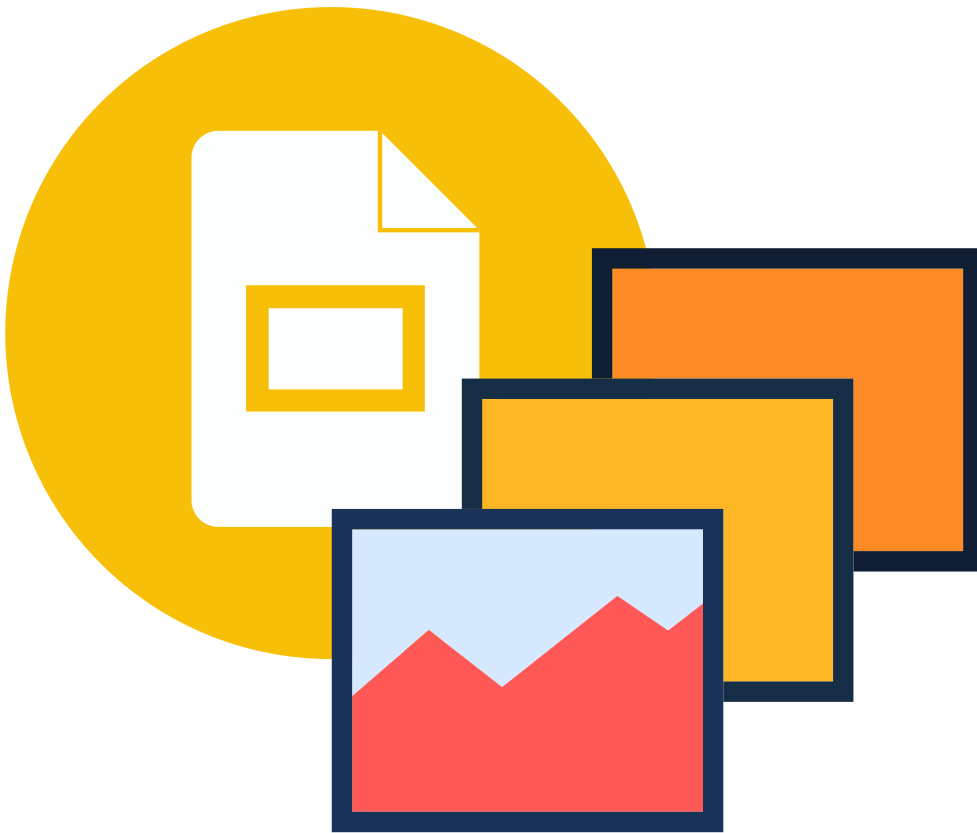
Revenge

- Film: Presto (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Wa4gLSn8Hc>)
- Literature: Children of Blood and Bone by Tomi Adeyemi

Survival

- Film: Partly Cloudy (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PfyJQEIsMt0>)
- Literature: Alone by Megan E. Freeman

Use these slides
to introduce/review
Theme.



<https://www.canva.com/design/DAF5thmrS00/vvfGm2CrZb9PqbvWRHRFtg/edit?>

[utm_content=DAF5thmrS00&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link2&utm_source=sharebutton](https://www.canva.com/design/DAF5thmrS00/vvfGm2CrZb9PqbvWRHRFtg/edit?utm_content=DAF5thmrS00&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link2&utm_source=sharebutton)



** Use the following pages for
your students to take notes.

Created by The Word Nerd, Amanda Zieba

Notes Sheet

Theme

- A _____

- A _____ or “take away” learned or experienced through the _____ and their situation.

- If done well, theme can add a meaningful _____ to a story that will help you _____ the story to your real life as well as learn an important lesson.

- Theme is _____ than _____.

- Theme occurs _____ times throughout the story.

- Theme can be _____ or obvious.

- Theme can also be defined as the _____ or underlying _____.

If you had to tell a new student who missed today's lesson about theme, how would you explain it in your own words?

THEME NOTES

CIRCLE OF LIFE

COMING OF AGE

FAITH VS. DOUBT

FATE VS. FREE WILL

GOOD VS. EVIL

HUBRIS

THEME NOTES

IDENTITY	

JUSTICE	

PURSUIT OF LOVE	

SURVIVAL	

ADDITIONAL NOTES

Theme: Circle of Life

Definition:

Books with this theme explore the ideas that what comes around, goes around and that life isn't a permanent state. These books help us understand that death is an evolution rather than THE END.

Examples

In the space below, list examples of books and movies that showcase this theme/lesson learned.

As a group, identify the example that best models this theme. Circle it or mark it with a star.

Theme: Coming of Age

Definition:

This theme involves the intense experiences of transitioning from a child to an adult, and how these growing up experiences shape the future of the main character.

Examples

In the space below, list examples of books and movies that showcase this theme/lesson learned.

As a group, identify the example that best models this theme. Circle it or mark it with a star.

Theme: Faith vs. Doubt

Definition:

Whether it's faith in a religion, a higher being, other people, or belief in their own self, believing is a difficult task for the main character in books with this theme. Through the story they discover if their long held faith is worth hanging on to.

Examples

In the space below, list examples of books and movies that showcase this theme/lesson learned.

As a group, identify the example that best models

Theme: Fate vs. Free Will

Definition:

The main character ponders how much of our actions as humans are decided by fate and how much is dictated by free will.

These main characters wonder: are we in control of our own lives, or not?

Examples

In the space below, list examples of books and movies that showcase this theme/lesson learned.

As a group, identify the example that best models this theme. Circle it or mark it with a star.

Theme: Good vs. Evil

Definition:

This story features an external battle between good and evil forces... a battle whose outcome will have a large impact.

Examples

In the space below, list examples of books and movies that showcase this theme/lesson learned.

As a group, identify the example that best models this theme. Circle it or mark it with a star.

Theme: Hubris

Definition:

A story in which the main character exudes excessive self-confidence as well as the terrible decisions that arise from it. (Hint: often found in mythology)

Examples

In the space below, list examples of books and movies that showcase this theme/lesson learned.

As a group, identify the example that best models this theme. Circle it or mark it with a star.

Theme: Identity

Definition:

The main character wrestles with the question: Who am I? "Identity" refers to the qualities that make one person different from another. How much of a difference exists between one person and another? Is that difference important? Why?

Examples

In the space below, list examples of books and movies that showcase this theme/lesson learned.

As a group, identify the example that best models this theme. Circle it or mark it with a star.

Theme: Justice

Definition:

What makes a society just? Justice, in its broadest sense, is the concept that individuals are to be treated in a manner that is equitable and fair. These theme looks at the consequences of just and unjust actions and what qualifies those actions to be just and/or unjust.

Examples

In the space below, list examples of books and movies that showcase this theme/lesson learned.

As a group, identify the example that best models this theme. Circle it or mark it with a star.

Theme: Pursuit of Love

Definition:

Some say love is the most important thing in the entire world. Whether it's romantic, familial, or platonic love, this kind of story is about a person's quest to find love and the conflict that comes from pursuing it.

Examples

In the space below, list examples of books and movies that showcase this theme/lesson learned.

As a group, identify the example that best models this theme. Circle it or mark it with a star.

Theme: Revenge

Definition:

This story follows a character as they attempt to find and put right wrongs that have been committed. Revenge is tempting, but is it worth it? Can revenge beget justice? And How far is too far? These are the questions a main character grapples with in a story with this theme.

Examples

In the space below, list examples of books and movies that showcase this theme/lesson learned.

As a group, identify the example that best models this theme. Circle it or mark it with a star.

Theme: Survival

Definition:

The literary theme of survival applies to stories about being about fighting against nature to stay alive, but it also applies to stories about the survival of ideas, groups, and society/humanity-at-large.

Examples

In the space below, list examples of books and movies that showcase this theme/lesson learned.

As a group, identify the example that best models this theme. Circle it or mark it with a star.

Name: _____

Chosen Theme:

Book/Movie: _____

Author/Screen Writer: _____

Directions: Use the space below to explain how your chosen story showcases the identified theme. Remember to use specific examples as evidence to support your answer.





Use this rubric to first communicate your writing expectations to students and then to evaluate the writing products they create. Students and/or peers can also use this rubric to self/peer score/evaluate the pieces of writing.

On the next page you can find a sheet with 3 rubrics to print and cut for use with this or other writing tasks.

I assign 2 points if the task was completed and done well, 1 if the task was attempted but not mastered, and 0 if the task was not attempted at all.

Task	0	1	2
Follows the prompt and stays on topic			
Uses correct grammar/capitalization/punctuation			
Thoughts are clearly presented and easy to follow			
Length is appropriate			
Format is correct (letter, fiction story, news article, diary entry, etc.)			

Total Points = ____/10

Task	0	1	2
Follows the prompt and stays on topic			
Uses correct grammar/capitalization/punctuation			
Thoughts are clearly presented and easy to follow			
Length is appropriate			
Format is correct (letter, fiction story, news article, diary entry, etc.)			

Total Points = ___/10

Comments:

Task	0	1	2
Follows the prompt and stays on topic			
Uses correct grammar/capitalization/punctuation			
Thoughts are clearly presented and easy to follow			
Length is appropriate			
Format is correct (letter, fiction story, news article, diary entry, etc.)			

Total Points = ___/10

Comments:

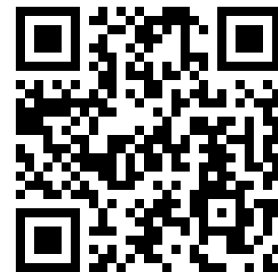
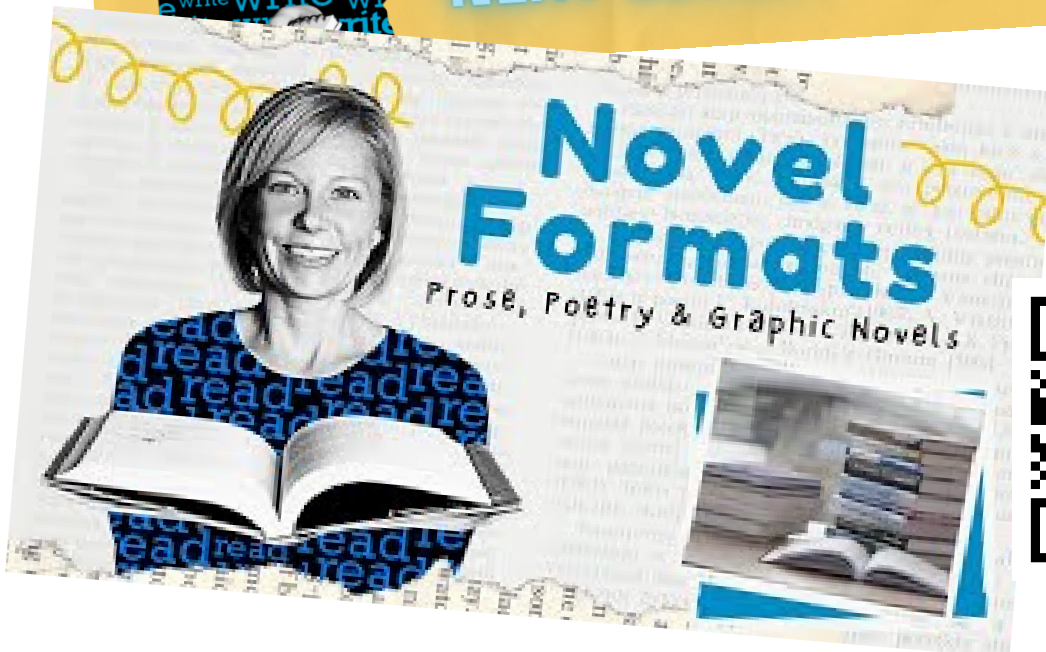
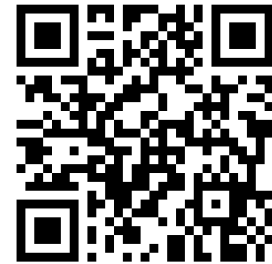
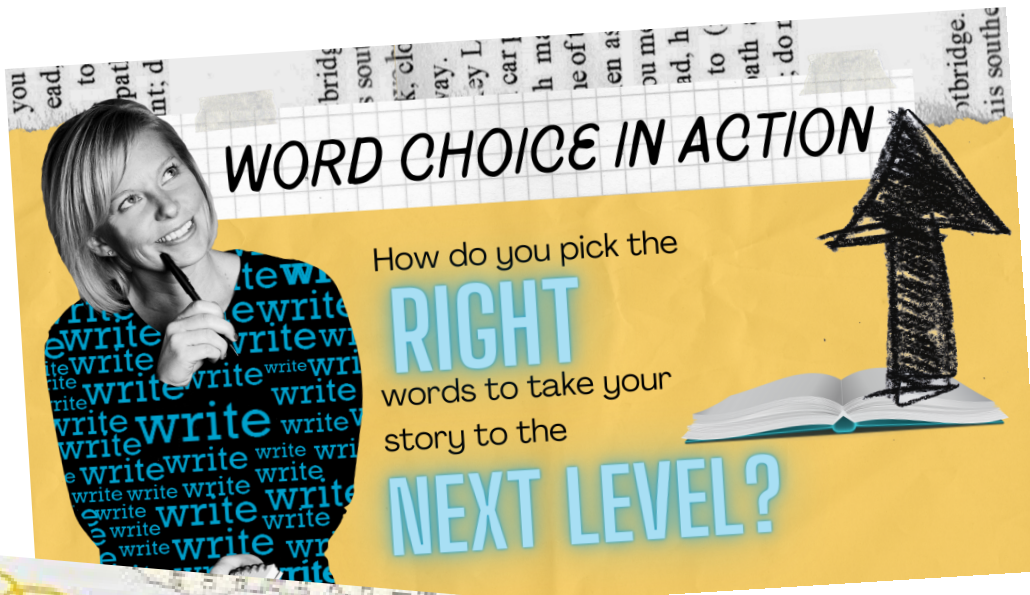
Task	0	1	2
Follows the prompt and stays on topic			
Uses correct grammar/capitalization/punctuation			
Thoughts are clearly presented and easy to follow			
Length is appropriate			
Format is correct (letter, fiction story, news article, diary entry, etc.)			

Total Points = ___/10

Comments:



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Amanda Zieba



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