

**Theme** refers to a message about **life** or **human nature** in literature.

- ▶ Authors develop theme through the **main events** of the plot.
- ▶ **Theme** is analyzed by understanding the **main events**.

**Theme:** Things are not always as they seem.

**Analysis:** The **Beast was feared** due to his outward appearance. Not only is **the Beast kind**, he actually is **a cursed Prince**.

adapted from **Beauty and The Beast** by Gabrielle-Suzanne Barbot de Villeneuve

### Excerpt 1

The Beast dropped his paw he had clamped on the scared merchant. "I shall spare your life, but on one condition, you bring me your daughter!" **The terror-stricken merchant** promised he would do so. When the merchant reached home in tears, Beauty agrees to go live with the Beast.

### Excerpt 2

**In the beginning, Beauty was frightened of the Beast.** As time passed, she found in spite of the Beasts awful behavior and looks, he was actually kind. Beauty was amazed to discover **she enjoying their conversation**. As days passed, Beauty and the Beast **became good friends**.

### Excerpt 3

"No, dear Beast," said Beauty, "you must not die. I cannot live without you." Beauty cried, when suddenly, she saw the palace sparkle with light; everything seemed to give notice of some great event...the **Beast transformed into a prince**.

## CFU

How do the main events that happen at the end of *Beauty and the Beast* develop the theme? **"The main events at the end show ..."**

In your own words, what is theme? **"Theme is \_\_\_\_\_."**

**Theme** refers to a message about **life** or **human nature** expressed in literature..

- ▶ Authors develop theme through the **main events** of the plot.
- ▶ **Theme** is analyzed by understanding the **main events**.

### Examples of Theme:

1. Never give up on your dreams.
2. Treat others the way you want to be treated.
  3. Looks can be deceiving.
4. Crime does not pay off in the end.

### Not examples of Theme:

1. Please use your manners.
2. Fractions are important to learn.
  3. Friends like to laugh together.
4. The criminal was caught near the bank.

### CFU

Which statement(s) below might be a theme?

- A** My friend Henry is wise.
- B** Money cannot buy you happiness.
- C** In science class, we learned about cells.

1. Read the text.
2. Identify the main events of the plot. (underline)
3. Analyze the theme.(answer)

### **The Gift of the Magi** by O Henry

1. Della finished her cry and attended to her cheeks with the powder rag. 2. Tomorrow would be Christmas Day, and she had only \$1.87 with which to buy Jim a present. 3. She had been saving every penny she could for months, with little result.

4. Twenty dollars a week doesn't go far. 5. Expenses had been greater than she had calculated. 6. Many happy hours she had spent planning for something nice for him.

7. Now, there were two possessions of the James Dillingham Youngs in which they both took a mighty pride. 8. One was Jim's gold watch that had been his father's and grandfather's. 9. The other was Della's hair. 10. It reached below her knee and made itself almost a garment for her.

11. On went her old brown jacket; on went her old brown hat. 12. Where she stopped the sign read: "Madame Sofronie Hair Goods of All Kinds." 13. "Will you buy my hair?" asked Della. 14. "I buy hair," said Madame. 15. "Take yer hat off and let's have a sight at the looks of it." 16. Down rippled the brown cascade. 17. "Twenty dollars," said Madame, lifting the mass with a practiced hand. 18. "Give it to me quick," said Della.

#### **1. What is Della's conflict?**

- A** She has a valuable pocket watch.
- B** She doesn't earn enough money.

- C** She doesn't know what to get her husband for Christmas.
- D** She doesn't have enough money to get her husband a Christmas gift.

*adapted from* **The Gift of the Magi** by O Henry

19. His eyes were fixed upon Della, and there was an expression in them that she could not read, and it terrified her. 20. It was not anger, nor surprise, nor disapproval, nor horror, nor any of the sentiments that she had been prepared for. 21. He simply stared at her fixedly with that peculiar expression on his face.

22. "Jim, darling," she cried, "don't look at me that way. 23. I had my hair cut off and sold because I couldn't have lived through Christmas without giving you a present.

24. It'll grow out again--you won't mind, will you?"

25. "You've cut off your hair?" asked Jim. 26. "Cut it off and sold it," said Della.

27. "You say your hair is gone?" he said, with an air almost of idiocy. 28. "You needn't look for it," said Della. 29. "It's sold, I tell you--sold and gone, too. 30. Jim drew a package from his overcoat pocket and threw it upon the table.

31. "Don't make any mistake, Dell. 32. I don't think there's anything in the way of a haircut that could make me like my girl any less. 33. But if you'll unwrap that package you may see why you had me going a while at first," Jim said 34. For there lay the set of combs that Della had worshipped long in a Broadway window.

#### **2. How does Della resolve her conflict?**

- A** She sells Jim's chain.
- B** She sells her hair.

#### **3. What is Jim's conflict?**

- A** He did not get Della a Christmas gift.
- B** He bought a set of combs for Della's hair.

1. Read the text.
2. Identify the main events of the plot. (underline)
3. Analyze the theme.(answer)

*adapted from* **The Gift of the Magi** by O Henry

35. "Oh, no! cried Della. Jim had not yet seen his beautiful present. 36. She held the gold watch chain. 37. The precious metal seemed to flash with a reflection of her bright and ardent spirit. 38. "Isn't it a dandy, Jim? 38. I hunted all over town to find it. 39. You'll have to look at the time a hundred times a day now. 40. Give me your watch."

41. Instead of obeying, Jim tumbled down on the couch and put his hands under the back of his head and smiled. 42. "Dell, I sold the watch to get the money to buy your combs," Jim said.

43. The magi, as you know, were wise men--wonderfully wise men--who brought gifts to the Babe in the manger. 44. They invented the art of giving Christmas presents.

45. Being wise, their gifts were no doubt wise ones, possibly bearing the privilege of exchange in case of duplication. 46. And here I have lamely related to you the uneventful chronicle of two foolish children in a flat who most unwisely sacrificed for each other the greatest treasures. 47. Let it be said, that of all who give gifts these two were the wisest. 48. O all who give and receive gifts, such as they, are wisest.

### 1. Which sentence would be the best theme of the text?

- A Love conquers all.
- B Being poor leads to unhappiness.
- C Love is unselfish.
- D Being poor is not fun.

### 2. Which event(s) help develop the theme?

- A Jim sold his watch to get Della her hair combs.
- B Della got Jim a chain for his watch.
- C Della is excited about her combs.
- D Jim and Della cannot use their presents.
- E Della sold her hair to buy Jim a gold watch chain.

1. Re-read the text.
2. Analyze the theme.(answer)

**How is the theme developed over the course of "The Gift of the Magi"? Use evidence from the text to support your response.**

**How does the title and the last line(s) about the magi emphasize the theme?**

## Skill Closure

*adapted from* **The Lottery Ticket** by Anton Chekov

1. IVAN DMITRITCH, a middle-class man who lived with his family on an income of twelve hundred a year and was very well satisfied with his lot, sat down on the sofa after supper and began reading the newspaper. 2. "I forgot to look at the newspaper today," his wife said to him as she cleared the table. 3. "Look and see whether the list of drawings is there."

4. "9,499?" he asked her. 6. The husband and wife began laughing and staring at one another in silence.

12. The possibility of winning bewildered them; they could not have said, could not have dreamed, what they both needed that \$75,000 for, what they would buy, where they would go.

13. They thought only of the figures 9,499 and \$75,000 and pictured them in their imagination, while somehow they could not think of the happiness itself which was so possible.

**What is the main event?**

- A His wife doesn't believe they won.
- B Ivan and his wife might have winning lottery numbers.
- C His wife played the lottery.
- D Ivan is satisfied with his lot in life.

**Based off the passage so far, could the event of winning the lottery be a conflict? Why or why not?**

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## Concept Closure

*adapted from* **The Lottery Ticket** by Anton Chekov

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13. They thought only of the figures 9,499 and \$75,000 and pictured them in their imagination, while somehow they could not think of the happiness itself which was so possible.

**Judging from the events of the first part of The Lottery Ticket, write three possible themes.**

**Theme #1**

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**Theme #2**

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**Theme #3**

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## Summary Closure

**What did you learn today about analyzing a theme in literature?**

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### Word Bank

message  
life  
human nature  
main events  
plot

*adapted from* **The Lottery Ticket** by Anton Chekov

14. Ivan stopped and looked at his wife. 15. "I should go abroad," he said. 16. And he began thinking how nice it would be in late autumn to go abroad somewhere to the South of France . . . to Italy . . . to India! 17. "I should certainly go abroad too," his wife said.

18. He walked about the room and went on thinking. 19. It occurred to him: what if his wife really did go abroad? 20. Ivan imagined his wife in the train with a multitude of parcels, baskets, and bags; she would be sighing over something, complaining that the train made her head ache, that she had spent so much money. 21. "She would begrudge my every farthing," he thought.

22. "The lottery ticket is hers, not mine! 23. Besides, what is the use of her going abroad? 24. What does she want there? 25. She would shut herself up in the hotel, and not let me out of her sight," thought Ivan.

26. And for the first time in his life his mind dwelt on the fact that his wife had grown elderly and plain. 27. While he was still young, fresh, and healthy, and might well have got married again.

### What is Ivan's conflict?

- A He wants to travel abroad.
- B His wife wants to go with Ivan on his travels which causes Ivan to become annoyed with her.
- C It's pleasant to travel alone, especially when you have money.
- D He thinks his wife is elderly and plain.

### Which sentence would be the best theme of the text?

- A The lottery is a good game to play.
- B Money brings out the worst in people.
- C Money can buy happiness.
- D Being poor makes you greedy.

### How is the theme developed over the course of the text?

Use evidence from the text to support your response.

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## Listening

After listening to ***All Summer in a Day*** by Ray Bradbury, answer these questions.

### 1. What is the main event?

- A People are living on the planet Venus.
- B After seven years of rain, the sun is coming out on Venus.
- C Venus has a very rainy climate.
- D The children on Venus are waiting to play outside.

### 2. Which sentence would be the best theme of the text?

- A Sometimes it is better to not speak your mind.
- B Jealousy can cause people to bully others.
- C Friends should always look out for each other.
- D You should never lock people in a closet.

### 3. Which event helps develop the theme?

- A The sun comes out on Venus for the first time in seven years.
- B Margot tells the students she used to live on Earth.
- C The students lock Margot in the closet because she has seen the sun.
- D The students run and play outside when the sun comes out.





**Writing**

**Write a summary of main events and determine the theme of the story *The Monkey's Paw*.**

**Beginning:**

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**Middle:**

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**End:**

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**Theme:**

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## Reading

### Read the book descriptions.

Then, decide which theme(s) could fit each story.

#### **Dragonwings** by Laurence Yep

Moon Shadow is eight years old when he sails from China to join his father, Windrider, in America. Windrider lives in San Francisco and makes his living doing laundry in order to send money home to his family. Father and son have never met. But Moon Shadow grows to love and respect his father and to believe in his wonderful dream. And Windrider, with Moon Shadow's help, is willing to endure the mockery of the other Chinese, the poverty, the separation from his wife and country, even the great earthquake in order to realize their dream of making a flying machine.

#### Themes:

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#### **Hatchet** by Gary Paulsen

Brian is a 13-year-old boy traveling in a small airplane to Canada to spend the summer with his father. After the pilot dies of a heart attack, Brian is involved in a plane crash in an uninhabited part of the Canadian woods. Brian then must find a way to survive, and in the process, discovers much about himself. Brian learns to solve problems that would potentially be life-threatening. He calls upon his intelligence and memory to overcome challenges, such as creating fire, building shelter, and finding food.

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- A Courage:** "Face your fears and you can defeat them."
- B Happiness:** "There's no such thing as perfect. Perfect comes at a price."
- C Perseverance:** "Never give up."
- D Family:** "Respect and cooperation are important in a family."
- E Intentions:** "Actions speak louder than words."
- F Knowledge:** "Possessing many skills will help you in tough times."

After listening or reading “Sorry, Wrong Number,” answer these questions.

**Summary:** Leona Stevenson is the spoiled, bedridden daughter of a millionaire. The telephone is her sole connection with the outside world. One day, while listening to what seems to be a crossed phone connection, she overhears two men planning a woman's murder. Leona calls the phone company and police, only to be ignored. Adding to Leona's dilemma is the fact that her husband Henry is missing. After a number of phone calls, the terrorized Leona begins to piece together the mystery. Her husband, who works for her wealthy father, turns out to be not all he seems. She finally realizes that she is the intended victim.

**1. What is the main event?**

- A Leona is home alone in New York City.
- B Leona tries to alert the police to a possible murder.
- C While on the phone, Leona overhears a murder plot.
- D Leona tries to warn Henry about the murder plot.

**2. Which sentence would be the best theme of the text?**

- A Getting involved in other people's business can cause problems.
- B Crime never pays off.
- C Never stay home alone at night.
- D Things are never as bad as you think they might be.