

Finding the Theme

4th Grade

The message underneath the plot — and why it is never one word.

The theme is what the story says about life. It is not the plot, and it is not a single word.

1 WHAT DID THE CHARACTER LEARN?

1

Themes usually arrive through a change in someone.

2 SAY IT AS A SENTENCE

2

'Friendship' is a topic. 'Real friends tell you the truth' is a theme.

3 CHECK IT AGAINST THE WHOLE BOOK

3

A theme has to fit the ending, not just one chapter.

4 MAKE IT ABOUT LIFE, NOT THE CHARACTERS

4

It should be true outside this story too.

TOPIC VS THEME

Topic: courage

Theme: being brave means acting even while you are afraid

Two readers can find different themes in the same book and both be right — if both can point at evidence.