Theme: The Search for Meaning

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Hour: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Guided Notes

**🡺 What is a Theme?**

**Theme:** Life lesson, meaning, **moral**, or \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_or human nature that is communicated by a literary work.

▶ In other words…

**Theme is what the story** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

A **theme** is **not a word**, it is **a** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

You don’t have to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_with the theme to identify it.

***Examples:***

* *Money can’t buy happiness.*
* *Don’t judge people based on the surface.*
* *It is better to die free than live under tyranny.*

*Let’s practice together…*

Jenny Miller was so excited. She had a pack of Starburst in her lunch and she had been looking forward to eating them all morning. Lunch finally came and Jenny sat down to eat her Starbursts when her *friend* Mariah sat next to her. “Give me the pink ones,” demanded Mariah. Jenny liked the pink ones best, but she thought Mariah was funny and Jenny wanted Mariah to like her, so Jenny gave Mariah all of her pink Starbursts. Before Jenny was done giving Mariah the pink ones, Carrie sat on the other side of Jenny. “Give me the red and the orange ones, Jenny. Remember when I gave you my Snickers?” Jenny didn’t remember that, though she did remember when Carrie ate a whole Snickers in front of her. Jenny thought Carrie was cool though, so she gave her the red and the orange Starbursts. Now that she only had the yellow ones, Jenny wasn’t so excited about eating Starbursts anymore.

**🡺 Identifying Themes**

▶ Themes are not **explicit** (clearly stated).

Themes are \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Themes are \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_than the story and they can be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to other \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ situations.

▶ Themes are about the BIG picture.

Not “Yellow Starbursts taste bad”

Not “Mariah and Carrie are bad friends.”

Think \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

**🡺 Review:**

1. Theme is what we can \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ from a story.
2. Themes must be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
3. Themes are about the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

**Reading 1**

Once there was a mean little boy who lived in a small village. This mean little boy loved to mess with people, so one day he ran up to a sheep herder and shouted, “WOLF! WOLF! A wolf is attacking the town!” The sheep herder grabbed his gun and ran to defend the town, but realized he had been fooled when the boy started pointing and laughing at him. “Ha ha! I made you jump,” said the boy. Then the boy ran up to a farmer and shouted, “WOLF! WOLF! A wolf is attacking the town!” The farmer grabbed his pitchfork and ran to defend the town, but when the boy started pointing and laughing at him, he realized he had been tricked. As the boy went back to his family’s farm laughing about the funny trick he played, he saw a real wolf in his father’s chicken coop. As the wolf ate all of his father’s chickens, the boy screamed over and over again, “WOLF! WOLF! Please help us!” But nobody came to help him.

▶ What is the theme of the story? *(Remember to use the steps of the Profundity Chart!)*

▶ What happens in the story that leads you to believe this?

**Reading 2**

Angie loved to draw. She made colorful designs of people’s names with bright hearts and flowers. One day she lost her own markers, so she borrowed her teacher’s. The school day was ending, but Angie wanted to keep coloring, so she took the teacher’s markers home and lost them in her messy room. She came back to school the next day and wanted to color again, so she asked the teacher for more markers. The teacher replied, “Sure, Angie, but this is my last pack.” Angie said she would be careful, but by the end of the day the markers were scattered all over the floor and the custodian swept them up and threw them away. When Angie came in the next day, she asked the teacher for more markers, but she was disappointed to find that there weren’t any more. “I don’t know where all of my markers went,” said the teacher, “but I don’t have any more.” Angie had to draw her pictures with drab pencils.

▶ What is the theme of the story? *(Remember to use the steps of the Profundity Chart!)*

▶ What happens in the story that leads you to believe this?

**Reading 3**

Jenny hated her math class. She didn’t understand the concepts, and not knowing how to do the work frustrated her. She asked the teacher for help, but he spoke so fast and used such big words that she still couldn’t understand. When the teacher asked if she understood, she just nodded her head, but was still very confused. Jenny’s friend Katie knew that Jenny was having trouble. Rather than just giving Jenny all of the answers, Katie explained to Jenny how to solve the problems. Katie spoke clearly and at Jenny’s level, and Jenny was happy that she finally learned how to do the work. Later in the week, Katie was having trouble in science class. She didn’t understand the water cycle and was really frustrated. Seeing that Katie was having problems, Jenny, who understood science very well, helped her study. Both girls made honor roll that quarter.

who understood math very well, taught Katie coordinates. Both girls made honor roll that quarter.

▶ What is the theme of the story? *(Remember to use the steps of the Profundity Chart!)*

▶ What happens in the story that leads you to believe this?