

# What is theme?

- Central and underlying meaning of the story.
- Big idea the author wants the reader to take away from the text - writer's view of the world or a revelation about human nature.

# Common Themes found in Literature

<b>Acceptance</b>	These books have characters who respect & accept others' differences and beliefs.
<b>Courage</b>	These books have brave characters who have the strength to overcome a fear or accept a risk.
<b>Perseverance</b>	These books have characters who never give up even when facing difficult times.
<b>Cooperation</b>	These books have characters who work together to solve a problem or achieve a goal.
<b>Compassion</b>	These books have characters who want to make those who are suffering feel better.
<b>Honesty</b>	These books have characters who find that it is best to always tell the truth.
<b>Kindness</b>	These books have friendly characters who are generous and considerate of others.
<b>Loyalty</b>	These books have characters who trust each other and never turn their backs on their friends.

# How to Find the Theme

- It is common for stories to have multiple themes.
- Theme can be stated explicitly or implicitly. *For example, fables explicitly state the theme at the end.*
- Unlike the main idea, the theme can often be found at the conclusion of the story.
- Most often, readers have to infer the theme based on... character traits, motivations, actions, emotions, and values.

# Teaching Theme

- Double Entry Journal
- Story Quilts
- Herringbone Graphic Organizer

# Double Entry Journals

- Open ended tools that can be used in numerous ways.
- To encourage students to consider theme and evidence from the text, have them record the them in the left column with evidence from the text to support it in the right column.

Theme

Evidence From the Text (with page #)



# Story Quilts

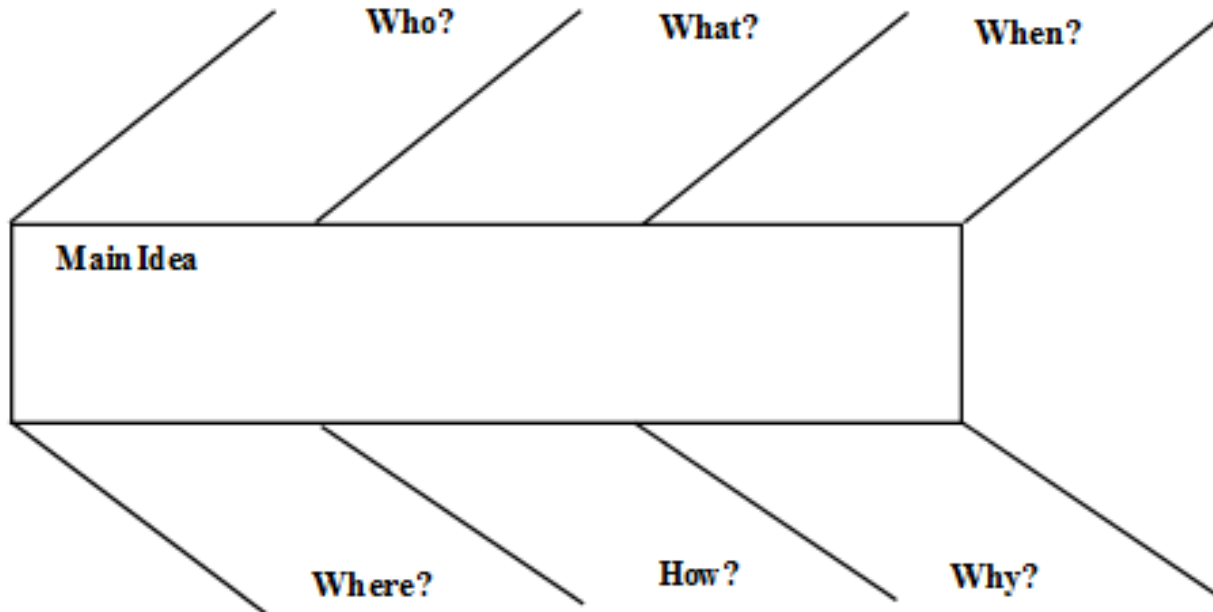
- Determine the theme of the story through symbolic drawings.

## **Procedure:**

1. Have students select a quote or write their own to demonstrate the theme of the story.
2. They then make a symbol to represent the quote.
3. Using these symbols and quotes, the students will make a quilt square on paper or cloth.
4. After all the squares are completed, assemble the quilt on a bulletin board or into the quilt (if using cloth).

# Herringbone Graphic Organizer

- Provide students with a framework for making decisions about main ideas and important supporting details in text.



# Sample Questions about Theme

- What message did you take away from reading this text? Which clues helped you determine this theme?
- Which passage in the text is most significant? Why?
- How does the changes the main character undergoes help you determine the message of the book?
- What affected your interpretation of the theme the most: the plot, the characters, the setting?



# Your Turn!

Now ask yourself:

- What is theme?
- What is a strategy for teaching students to find the theme when reading?



# Check for Understanding

- What is theme?
  - The central and underlying meaning of the story.
- What is a strategy for teaching students to find the theme when reading?
  - Double Entry Journal
  - Story Quilts
  - Herringbone Graphic Organizer

