

I'm not a bot



Theme of a story examples

In literature, a theme is a central topic, subject, or message that the author is presenting for us to ponder. It represents the underlying meaning or main idea that the writer explores in the book. In my last article, I explored the six types of conflict in literature, and these represent six key literary themes as well: Man vs Man Man vs Nature Man vs Society Man vs Technology Man vs Self Man vs Destiny But, of course, we can tease out many more themes in literature. Themes can be as simple as love, friendship, or survival, or they can be more complex, such as the critique of societal norms, exploration of human mortality, or the struggle between individual desires and societal expectations. They often provoke thought and offer insight into the human condition. So, in this article, I want to present 25 of them to you (which include some of those listed above, of course). For each theme, I hope to present you with an example within literature that you'll likely be familiar with. Love, as one of the most intense of human emotions, also features as a core theme in not only literature, but also music, film, and theater. This theme can go in a variety of directions, but often examines the extent to which we will go in order to experience and maintain love (often at great personal cost), the way love makes us irrational or conduct extraordinary deeds of both good and evil, and of course, the experience of heartbreak. Examples in Literature Notable examples include "Romeo and Juliet" by William Shakespeare, where the two main characters sacrifice their lives for their love, and "The Gift of the Magi" by O. Henry, where a couple each sacrifice their most prized possessions to buy a gift for the other. The individual vs society theme - one of the six key types of conflict in literature - occurs when one person grapples with and stands up against established social norms, mores, and powers-that-be. It may be just one person or a group who stands up against society. An example of the former is Katniss Everdeen in The Hunger Games who starts off as a solo fighter against a dystopian government, when no one else is willing. An example of the latter is the group of children in Tomorrow When the War Began who form a band of friends standing up as a guerilla group against an occupying army. Examples in Literature "To Kill a Mockingbird" by Harper Lee is a strong example, with Atticus Finch standing up against societal racism. He is an outcast lawyer who is the only man willing to represent a Black man who is framed for a crime in a deeply racist town. This theme, derived from Joseph Campbell's monomyth theory, features characters undertaking great journeys or quests. According to the monomyth theory, there is a common motif throughout stories - both historical and fabricated - that gain currency in the social imagination. In these theories, the journey sets out on an adventure, faces challenges that lead to a dramatic personal transformation for the better, and returns home anew. Examples in Literature A quintessential example of the hero's journey can be seen in "The Lord of the Rings" by J.R.R. Tolkien, where Frodo sets out a shy hobbit having never left his shire. He goes on a journey where he develops self-belief and gains the respect of powerful people, before returning home. This theme, also known as the Bildungsroman, focuses on the growth and maturation of a young protagonist, usually a teenager. Over the course of the story, they confront and overcome personal or societal hurdles, ultimately leading to self-discovery and self-acceptance. Oftentimes, such storylines explore the unique experience of teenagers as they are developing cognitively and emotionally. Indeed, as my wife often tells me when we watch this storyline on television: "only a teenager would ever do that!" These storylines do also have important place in society because they offer young people empathetic and supportive stories that can help young people through the important coming-of-age period of life. Examples in Literature "The Catcher in the Rye" by J.D. Salinger is a key example, where the main character, Holden Caulfield, goes on a journey on his own after being kicked out of school. The journey ends with him learning that he does truly value his education and family, leading him to professing he will attend school again in the Fall. This theme explores how power can corrupt individuals and societies, and the destructive consequences that can result. This theme generally tells an important story about how power operates in society, makes commentary about injustice, and the ways in which power can bring out the worst (and best) in people. Examples in Literature This theme is often seen in political or dystopian literature, such as "Animal Farm" and "1984" by George Orwell. Similarly, in Shakespeare's "Macbeth", the titular character's quest for power leads to his tragic downfall. Another common theme is the exploration of the human capacity for making mistakes and the subsequent need for redemption or forgiveness. Characters may be haunted by their past actions, seeking atonement, or striving to make amends. We see this, for example, in the trope of the ghost who is stuck in this life until they achieve some degree of inner peace and redemption. It is also seen in Christian literature, where forgiveness following repentance is an important moral underpinning of the faith. Similarly, as with in the man vs self conflict trope, the character is seeking self-forgiveness and self-atonement. Examples in Literature Khaled Hosseini's "The Kite Runner" is a powerful exploration of this theme, where the protagonist, Amir, spends a significant portion of his life seeking to redeem himself for his past betrayal of his friend Hassan. Literature that explores war and peace might depict the physical and psychological impact of war on individuals and societies, the politics of war, or the tireless pursuit of peace. They may also explore the aftermath of war on people's lives. It can follow people's struggles to achieve inner peace after a conflict and the trouble of returning to civilian life. Or, they may explore the deep brotherhood forged in battle, such as in the epic Band of Brothers storyline. Of course, there are many directions we can take with this theme, but at the center is the extraordinariness of wartime, which opens the door for exploration of intense aspects of humanity. Examples in Literature "All Quiet on the Western Front" by Erich Maria Remarque provides a harrowing look at the physical and emotional trauma endured by soldiers in World War I. On the other hand, Leo Tolstoy's "War and Peace" is an expansive work that explores war from various perspectives, including the experiences of soldiers, families, and politicians. Literature is at its best when it grapples with the themes at the core of the human experience - and the inevitability of death is certainly one of these. Some works might meditate on the grief and loss associated with death, while others might use the prospect of death as a device to reflect on the meaning of life, or to explore how people live knowing they will die. Oftentimes, this theme overlaps with religiosity, or themes about seeking meaning in life. Examples in Literature "The Death of Ivan Ilyich" by Leo Tolstoy explores the protagonist's confrontation with his own mortality, leading him to reflect on the life he has lived and the value of genuine human connection. With the rising threat of climate change, this theme has seen renewed attention in recent decades. Environmental themes often explore humanity's relationship with the natural world (oftentimes, for example, showing how small and insignificant we are in comparison to nature). At the same time, other themes examine the environmental consequences of human action during the age of the anthropocene. Themes that explore conflict between man and nature represent one of the key conflicts in literature, such as when a person is challenged by being stuck in the desert or isolated from civilization and nature becomes the main antagonist or challenge to overcome. Examples in Literature Some literature might emphasize the spiritual or therapeutic aspects of nature, as seen in "Walden" by Henry David Thoreau, where Thoreau embarks on a two-year retreat to a cabin in the woods to explore simple living and the natural world. Alternatively, environmental literature, like "The Lorax" by Dr. Seuss, uses storytelling to convey warnings about environmental destruction and the importance of conservation. This theme delves into the exploration of the protagonist's place in society and their personal identity. The earlier theme of coming of age overlaps significantly here, and so too does the hero's journey, which commonly examines a hero's developing sense of self. Characters in this type of theme might struggle with societal expectations, personal self-discovery, or feelings of alienation, seeking a place or group where they feel they belong. Examples in Literature "Invisible Man" by Ralph Ellison, for instance, explores the protagonist's struggle to define his identity within a society that refuses to see him as an individual rather than a racial stereotype. Similarly, "The Joy Luck Club" by Amy Tan navigates the complexities of cultural identity and generational differences among a group of Chinese-American women and their immigrant mothers. One of the most fundamental themes in literature, good vs evil features a clear conflict between forces of good and forces of evil. This theme often pits heroes against villains in a struggle that often represents larger moral, philosophical, or societal issues. One of my complaints about many contemporary 'pop lit' and blockbuster films is that they fail to adequately examine the subjectivity of this false dichotomy - good vs evil themes are at their best when 'evil' is an elusive concept, and where we even are able to empathize with the evil character while still seeing the wrongs in their views. Examples in Literature J.K. Rowling's "Harry Potter" series is a prime example, with Harry Potter and his friends constantly fighting against the dark wizard Lord Voldemort and his followers. The struggle between good and evil also underlies C.S. Lewis's "The Chronicles of Narnia." This theme highlights the dichotomy between the desire for freedom and the reality of confinement. Confinement might be physical, such as imprisonment or slavery, or it could be psychological, stemming from societal expectations or personal fears. The 'freedom' element might emerge as a wishful theme, as in many coming-of-age narratives about the young character wanting to escape their hometown confines and beat culture narratives of the 1950s; or it might emerge as a struggle with physical constraint, such as themes surrounding imprisoned POWs. Examples in Literature "The Shawshank Redemption" by Stephen King, for example, explores both the physical confinement of prison and the ways in which characters can find freedom despite their circumstances. Similarly, "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest" by Ken Kesey features characters confined in a mental institution, highlighting their struggle for autonomy against oppressive authority. This theme centers on the tension between individual freedom and societal norms. Characters might challenge authority, resist societal expectations, or fight against oppressive systems. (Here, we're looking at strong overlap with the man vs society conflict narrative). The theme may also explore an individual's rebellion against a cult or religious group which they wish to escape, rebellion against parents, or search for an extraordinary life in an ordinary world. Sometimes, characters return to their roots, embracing conformity, while others escape the orbit or their cultural norms, achieving freedom through rebellion. Examples in Literature In Ray Bradbury's "Fahrenheit 451", the protagonist, Guy Montag, rebels against a dystopian society that has outlawed books and free thought. Montag's transformation from a conformist fireman who burns books to a rebel who seeks knowledge demonstrates the struggle between conformity and rebellion. The theme of innocence vs experience often demonstrates a transition from a naive idealism to wisdom earned through experience. For example, this theme may also explore the transition from the naivety of childhood to the disillusionment of adulthood. Characters often face harsh realities or undergo experiences that shatter their innocence and lead them towards a more complex understanding of the world. Examples in Literature In "Lord of the Flies" by William Golding, a group of boys stranded on an uninhabited island gradually lose their innocence as their attempts at creating a society descend into savagery. This theme investigates the nature of reality and the power of illusion. Characters might grapple with distinguishing between what is real and what is not. In these situations, the story may play with the reader, not even allowing the reader an objective vision of what's true and what not (such as in the unreliable narrator trope). Similarly, the theme might explore how characters intentionally choose illusion over reality to escape unpleasant circumstances. Examples in Literature F. Scott Fitzgerald's "The Great Gatsby" explores this theme through the character of Jay Gatsby, who constructs a grand illusion of wealth and social status to win the love of Daisy Buchanan. Similarly, in "A Streetcar Named Desire" by Tennessee Williams, Blanche DuBois often retreats into her fantasies, unable to cope with her harsh reality. The theme of self-identity revolves around the process of understanding oneself, and it often involves characters undergoing significant personal growth or change. This theme often begins with characters experiencing a sense of unease or dissatisfaction with their present circumstances or sense of self. This feeling of discomfort acts as a catalyst for the characters to embark on a quest for self-identity, an inner journey often mirrored by an outward physical journey or experience. Example in Literature In Franz Kafka's "The Metamorphosis", Gregor Samsa wakes up one day to find himself transformed into a monstrous insect. This shocking transformation forces him to reassess his identity, no longer defined by his role as a family provider, and navigate the alienation from his family and society. This theme explores the division of society into different social classes and the resulting inequity and conflict. One of my favorite American authors, John Steinbeck, explores this theme in much of his literature. He takes the perspective of working-class Americans, examining how corporate interests make their life hard, how fellow Americans discriminate against them, and how they persevere through the relationships they build with other people in their social class. Examples in Literature In "Pride and Prejudice" by Jane Austen, the theme of social class is prevalent, influencing characters' attitudes, behavior, and prospects for marriage. The story continually highlights the injustices of a rigid class system, such as the Bennet sisters' limited prospects due to their lower social status and lack of dowries. The theme of isolation involves characters experiencing physical or emotional separation from others. This isolation can be self-wrought, caused by an individual's actions or decisions, or externally imposed, such as societal exclusion, geographical displacement, or unforeseen circumstances. This theme explores the various forms and impacts of isolation, offering a deep dive into the psychological and emotional ramifications it has on individuals. I am often compelled by storylines that use physical isolation as a metaphor for the sense of loneliness and isolatedness within the hearts and minds of the protagonists. Examples in Literature In Mary Shelley's "Frankenstein," the creature, despite his desire for companionship, is shunned and rejected by society because of his monstrous appearance. This isolation leads to profound loneliness and ultimately, a desire for revenge against his creator, Victor Frankenstein. This theme is often explored in literature through characters facing extreme conditions or challenges that test their will to survive. There is generally a conflict here, which could be man vs nature (surviving the elements), man vs man (surviving against a foe), or even man vs technology (fighting against rogue technology, such as in Terminator). Survival themes can be a window into exploration of the tenacity and resilience of the human spirit against the odds. Examples in Literature In "Life of Pi" by Yann Martel, the protagonist Pi Patel finds himself stranded in the Pacific Ocean on a lifeboat with a Bengal tiger. Pi must use his intelligence and faith to survive in this hostile environment, with the story exploring themes of resilience, faith, and the human will to live. This theme delves into the shared experiences of being human, exploring a wide range of emotions, relationships, and moral dilemmas. This theme is an examination of the joys, sorrows, conflicts, and complexities that define the human experience. This theme has been prevalent in literature across all ages and cultures, as it captures the universality of human experiences, making it timeless and deeply relatable. The human condition looks at the constants in human life, such as birth, growth, emotionality, aspiration, conflict, mortality, and how these shape our individual and collective experiences. Examples in Literature Leo Tolstoy's "Anna Karenina" provides a complex and insightful exploration of the human condition. Through its diverse cast of characters, the novel delves into various facets of humanity, such as love, infidelity, societal pressure, and the search for meaning in life. This theme critiques the idealized vision of the American Dream - the belief that anyone can achieve success and prosperity through hard work. Some all-American storylines (Like the film Pursuit of Happyness featuring Will Smith) show how the American dream is a worthy ideal. Similarly, in politics (and even real life, for American nationalists), the American dream is something people hold onto as an ever-present fundamental truth: if you work hard and dream big, you'll make it in the end. It just takes hard work. But there are many texts that challenge this idea, demonstrating how the pursuit of the American dream can sometimes be a fickle and pointless task. Below are just two examples. Examples in Literature In F. Scott Fitzgerald's "The Great Gatsby", the protagonist Jay Gatsby's pursuit of wealth and social status, driven by his love for Daisy, ultimately leads to his downfall. Similarly, in "Death of a Salesman" by Arthur Miller, Willy Loman's obsession with success and social acceptance blinds him to his family's love, leading to tragedy. This theme underpins most texts that emerge out of existentialism and absurdism. At the core of this theme is the exploration of the idea that life really has no meaning behind it. This can create some engaging and post-modernist texts whose storylines tend to meander, cut back in on themselves, and leave us at the end thinking "what a wild ride!" This theme will tend to bring to the fore the chaotic, irrational, and meaningless features of a storyline. Examples in Literature In "The Stranger" by Albert Camus, the protagonist Meursault's indifferent reaction to his mother's death, his senseless murder of an Arab, and his subsequent philosophical musings in prison all point to the absurdity and meaninglessness of life. I explore 5 more examples of existential literature here. This theme looks at the role of faith or belief systems in shaping our lives and experiences. While generally based on religion, it could also more generally represent faith in oneself, the journey of life, or family and friends. Commonly, the theme will explore how having faith - and releasing stress, anxiety, and discontent when faith underpins our worldview - can provide strength, and hope. For example, we'll commonly see this theme when exploring an unbelievably tough journey - either physically (e.g. crossing a desert) or psychologically (e.g. coming to terms with death). A darker turn, however, may demonstrate how faiths can clash and cause conflict. Examples in Literature In "Life of Pi" by Yann Martel, the protagonist Pi maintains his religious belief despite his extraordinary circumstances. His faith provides him comfort, hope, and strength to survive his ordeal at sea. This theme involves the fight for gender equality, focusing on the experiences, struggles, and triumphs of women in a patriarchal society. This theme could fit into the category of "protagonist vs society", or rather "woman vs society!" It generally attempts to reflect real social, cultural, and political circumstances to make a social commentary about current social inequalities and the underlying patriarchy. It may explore a woman's attempts to assert her place in society, her struggles with discrimination, or women's solidarity in the face of an oppressive outside world. There has been a resurgence of so-called "bonnet dramas" in recent years that explore this theme, harking back to times when the patriarchy was far more overt. Nevertheless, it can still be used in contemporary literature because, of course, the patriarchy still exists in many areas of society and women often feel this intensely. Examples in Literature In Margaret Atwood's "The Handmaid's Tale", a dystopian future is depicted where women are reduced to their reproductive functions, stripped of their rights, and segregated according to their societal roles. The protagonist Offred's experiences and memories underscore the theme of women's subjugation and their struggle for autonomy. In contrast, "Little Women" by Louisa May Alcott explores this theme through the everyday experiences of the March sisters as they navigate societal expectations and strive for their dreams in 19th century America. This theme plays on the inherent human fear of the unfamiliar or unknowable and is most commonly employed in horror, drama, and murder mysteries. The fear of unknown motif is very effective for authors who want to create suspense, dread, or anticipation. By prolonging the mystery of an unknown threat, the author can compel the reader to keep on reading until the suspense is overcome. This fear could stem from various sources: the future, death, the supernatural, or anything beyond human comprehension. A good example in film is the ongoing narrative of the 'monster' in the woods in the hit television series, Lost. Examples in Literature H.P. Lovecraft's body of work, often grouped as Lovecraftian horror, prominently features this theme. His stories frequently involve characters who encounter cosmic horrors or ancient, malevolent beings that defy human understanding, highlighting the insignificance and vulnerability of humankind in the face of the unknown. There are a few notes worthy of providing as we wrap up this exploration of examples of themes in literature. First, a theme isn't usually stated explicitly. Instead, it is revealed gradually through elements such as the actions of characters, their thoughts and dialogue, the setting, and the plot. These elements come together to express the theme or themes of the work. So, as consumers of texts, themes might be bubbling under the surface, ready to surprise us toward the end of our experience, making us finally realize the message our author is presenting us about society or humanity. Secondly, one literary work can, and often does, contain multiple themes. For example, George Orwell's "1984" explores themes of totalitarianism, censorship, the manipulation of information, and the loss of individuality and privacy. So, enjoy playing with themes - whether as a consumer or producer of literary content - and always remember to reflect on how those themes can help us dig ever deeper into an empathetic understanding of the complexity of the human condition. Literary themes are, by definition, wide and global. Thus, it is no surprise, that some themes appear again in literature, from novels and short tales to poetry and creative nonfiction. However, works that have the same theme need not have a similar plot. In fact, the beauty of the theme of a story is that it may be addressed from various angles, wherein each tale offers a unique thematic statement. In this article, we will look at some of the most common themes in literature as well as tips to identify and add a theme to your story. First, let's begin by understanding the definition of a theme. The theme of a story refers to the underlying message that the writer wishes to convey in any piece of art. Whether you're reading your favourite Disney novel or F. Scott Fitzgerald's The Great Gatsby, there will always be a recurring theme weaved throughout the plot. You will see the characters embracing or rejecting the theme of the story on several occasions, and you will see how their attitude to the theme affects the events that develop. It is critical not to mix up the theme with the primary concept. The theme conveys a message of bravery, hope, or love. The core concept, on the other hand, is simply what the tale is about. Theme in Literature It's excellent that you now know what a theme is, but that only answers half of our question. The next part is determining the significance of a theme in books and writing. Also read about LGBTQ+ themed Books Simply said, if a tale lacks a theme, the reader may not be able to connect with it. Keep in mind that the theme is linked to the protagonist's personal journey. It connects the character's problems and passions to the exterior storyline, giving readers something to care about. What happens if that connection is broken? You'd have a narrative that goes nowhere and readers who lose interest. An effective theme must be broad enough to capture the overall meaning of the work while being particular enough to reflect the writer's personal perspective. If the theme or key concept statement adheres to the principles below it will strongly convey the writer's interpretation. When the author writes a theme, they are substituting one sentence for the whole content. That implies that they will have to compress the meaning of the story to fit it into a single phrase. For example, "The subject of the text is love and death", aptly represents what the story is about. The line "Luke defeats Darth Vader" is a story synopsis rather than a theme or major concept assertion. Instead, the phrase "Good defeats evil" is a better description of the story of Star Wars. This theme stems from what the characters do, word choice, organisation, and other rhetorical factors. Examine the ending of the tale, the last lines of a poem, or any concluding concepts to see if the text reflects what you think its basic meaning is. If it does, then the author has done a good job of portraying the theme of his story. Main Themes in Literature? Examples of Power Books Power or the desire for it causes people to do insane things, as you can see each time you turn on the news. This is, of course, mirrored in literature. From dystopias like Suzanne Collins' The Hunger Games trilogy to fantasy such as the Lord of the Rings trilogy, or George R. R. Martin's little-known series- A Song of Ice and Fire, and classics like George Orwell's Animal Farm, the theme of power has driven innumerable creative undertakings. The focus is sometimes on power's corruptive qualities, sometimes on the exchange of power between tyrannical states and people, and sometimes on the power of dreams alone. Whatever the case may be, the aspect of power remains important. Books based on Identity Identity and the labels that come with it are significant driving factors in a lot of literature. From portraying one's ethnic or racial identity, as in Brit Bennett's The Vanishing Half and Jhumpa Lahiri's The Namesake to gender identification in Alex Gino's George and mental health diagnosis in Sylvia Plath's The Bell Jar, who we are is a basic subject we must confront. Literature, for some writers, is a place to try to answer that issue for themselves or the group with whom they identify. For others, it is a place to reject the necessity for labels and embrace a self that lives at the intersections of multiple groups. This is also an issue related to how culture influences how we view ourselves and others. Books based on Family Family relationships and dynamics are the most intriguing and nuanced sources of conflict in literature. Books have always questioned what a family is and will continue to do so. Enjoy playing with themes - whether as a consumer or producer of literary content - and always remember to reflect on how those themes can help us dig ever deeper into an empathetic understanding of the world. Completely Beside Ourselves. Books on Loneliness There's no lack of loners, isolated misfits, or content-to-be-alone introverts in literature, from the classic alienated high students in The Perks of Being a Wallflower and The Catcher in the Rye to more contemporary bestsellers like Eleanor Oliphant Is Completely Fine. Whether the topic is used to demonstrate that human nature is intrinsically lonely, to condemn reliance, or to argue that loneliness is a societal luxury, stories that portray loneliness are always moving stories. Friendship Themed Books It's frequently stated that friends are the family we pick for ourselves, and the relationships we form with them are just as complex, possibly stressful, or heartwarming as familial bonds. Childhood buddies are frequently crucial to children's classics such as The Secret Garden and Charlotte's Web. Friendship is frequently lauded in stories for young readers for its selflessness and togetherness. It's still a popular topic in works about early adulthood, coming-of-age stories, and even later life, as seen by Teddy Wayne's Apartment, Zadie Smith's Swing Time, Hanya Yanagihara's A Little Life, as well as Carolina de Robertis' Cantoras. Friendship is also thematized in these stories for its absence, conflicts, shortcomings, and faults. No single friendship is similar, and the same is true of their literary presentations. The Hate U Give and A Tale for the Time Being Hope blooms in the most unexpected places, and in the world of novels, that frequently means stories of loss, misery, or calamity. Memoirs of pain or adversity, such as Paul Kalanithi's When Breath Becomes Air, tend to conclude on a hopeful note. Similarly, memoirs addressing social concerns such as racism or climate change also tend to find grounds for optimism. Angie Thomas's The Hate U Give, Richard Powers' The Overstory, and Ruth Ozeki's A Tale for the Time Being are three examples. Very Popular Romeo and Juliet Romance is another of those unbreakable forces that have sustained works of literature from the beginning of time. Romantic love is at the core of numerous genres, from literary fiction and classics like Romeo and Juliet to YA heartwarmers like Rainbow Rowell's Eleanor and Park and Casey McQuiston's Red, White, and Royal Blue to epic historical fiction like Diana Gabaldon's Outlander. Some authors enjoy this issue to produce deliciously comfortable works that provide readers with a break from their daily routine, while others wonder what it means to be reliant on another person or examine the shifting dynamics within a relationship. The friction between one's power to control one's destiny and their externally determined fate is a typical sort of conflict that can be found in many timeless masterpieces, particularly plays. From the ancient Greek play Oedipus Rex to Shakespeare's Macbeth and Christopher Marlowe's Doctor Faustus, to the beloved children's series Harry Potter and Haruki Murakami's Kafka on the Shore, the tension arising from external expectations and pressures, as well as the concept of self-fulfilling prophecies is fated to be a part of literature forever. Books on War From war poets like Siegfried Sassoon and Wilfred Owen who wrote about the toll of World War I to modern novels exploring its emotional and social consequences, stories about violence and conflict could constitute an entire genre of fiction. Adulthood Books Entering adulthood is another phase that involves numerous changes, therefore the age at which people reach this milestone is a recurrent subject. Growing up, maturing, and coming into your own are thematized in literature as diverse as Jane Austen's Emma, Jeffrey Eugenides' Middlesex, and Elena Ferrante's My Brilliant Friend to depict the uncertainty and empowerment that comes with this period of life. Lord of the Flies A good survival narrative, in which the main characters must overcome insurmountable difficulties simply to live another day, is enthralling. Almost every Jack London novel fits within this category since his characters frequently confront nature. Lord of the Flies is another narrative in which life and death play crucial roles. This idea is evident in Michael Crichton's Congo and Jurassic Park. Regrettably, the globe is warming. As the planet's temperature rises, so do our fears about our species' future, leading to an increase in the predominance of the environment or climate change as key topics in literature. With the rise of eco-fiction and "cli-fi," works like Barbara Kingsolver's Flight Behavior, John Lanchester's The Wall, and Dr. Seuss's The Lorax will be studied more than ever. Little Women & Room Our childhood years do not necessarily define us, but they do play a significant role in shaping who we desire to be. So, whether it's to nostalgically recall our childhoods, to acknowledge the bitter realisations that followed, or simply to consider the point of view of a child, childhood continues to be a prevalent theme in literature. Three examples are Little Women by Louisa May Alcott, The Red Pony by John Steinbeck, and Room by Emma Donoghue. Prominent Theme in Literature Another prominent topic is the coexistence of good and evil. Many of these other themes, such as war, judgement, and even love, are frequently seen alongside it. This is a key subject in books such as the Harry Potter and Lord of the Rings series. The concept that life begins with birth and ends with death is not new to authors. Some may look into immortality, like in Dorian Gray's The Picture of Dorian Gray, while others, such as Leo Tolstoy's The Death of Ivan Ilych, shock a character into accepting death as an unavoidable reality. The circle of life premise gets entirely flipped upside down in a narrative like F. Scott Fitzgerald's The Curious Case of Benjamin Button The majority of stories begin with a spark of an idea. You may only have a hazy sense of the narrative or a snippet of information about one of your characters, but chances are, you already know what they want to say about a certain issue. In addition, you probably already have something to say about life, the world, or human nature, and thus, want people to perceive the world in the same way that you do. So, asking about life, human nature or the planet is a great way to come up with a theme of a story. What happens in the storyline does not represent the point of a tale. Rather, the point is conveyed through how the plot's actions affect the protagonist inside. This inward transformation is referred to as your character's arc. In most cases, the way your character evolves throughout the novel is directly tied to the message you want to convey to your readers. Another technique to come up with a theme for your novel is to think about the genre. Each genre, in general, has its own theme or universal subject. Click to visit Podium School and read article on Genre. As an example: ThemesGenre/Type of storySurvival, life and death, courage, and good vs. evil are among themes exploredActionSurviving, life and death, terror, safety, and good vs. evil are among themes exploredHorrorFriendship, passion, human connection, and intimacy are all exploredRomanceJustice, injustice, safety, and good vs. evil are among topics covered in mystery Fiction.MysteryPower, revolution, equality, and corruption are all topics covered in society stories.SocietyThrillers investigate topics such as survival, life and death, and good vs. evil.ThrillerWorldview (or coming-of-age) tales delve into topics such as ignorance, knowledge, significance, and maturation.Coming of AgeSurvival, courage, honour, and safety are all themes in war storiesWar Identifying Themes and Literary Analysis - Download At some point or the other, every author would've come across the dilemma of not having a unique theme. But, here's a little secret: themes are usually always basic or cliché from the start. How many books have you read that can be summarised as "good vs. evil" or "love conquers all?" These common topics do not bore readers. They become bored of seeing the same subjects conveyed in the same way, in the same genre, with the same narrative and characters, and in the same order. So don't be concerned if your solution seems basic or cliché. As you come to know your tale better, your topic will develop, deepen, and evolve. If you can describe what your book is about and why becoming this tale is important to you, it should be enough. The majority of topics revolve around contentious beliefs that cause human conflict. By putting your characters in conflict, you'll give them an additional opportunity for action, decisions, and dialogues that will allow them and your audience to confront your theme head-on. Objects, letters, or situations that are used to illustrate your theme are known as symbols. A symbol may occur only once or several times throughout the tale. For example, a green light represents Gatsby's desire for a better life with Daisy in The Great Gatsby. He reaches for it at the start of the novel and at the conclusion, it seemed unreachable. A motif is a repeating picture or element that, via repetition, reveals the primary concepts in a tale. Again in The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald, Gatsby's continuous, opulent parties, highlight the topic of excess, consumerism, and the pursuit of the American ideal. Writing Theme Into Your Story Use a component of the storyline that appears in the stories of people of different ages, ethnicities, genders, and walks of life as your theme. Choose a theme that will remain with your reader. Consider what themes you want your reader to remember long after they've forgotten the storyline of your novel. Make your theme a part of the planning process to guarantee that it appears throughout your work. Weave your theme throughout the story. Make sure your main character experiences events that accentuate the topic as you fill in the specifics of each act. If you're juggling many storylines, check if you can have your theme appear in each of them, ideally in different ways. Many books and tales do not have a single topic. Some authors begin writing with a major idea in mind, but as they write, they discover a new topic that also resonates within the confines of their tale. Take caution not to limit your ideas to how topics have been represented in previous novels, novellas, and short stories. While some may claim that fiction has a finite number of themes, each narrative is unique. Even the most universal ideas may take on a variety of interpretations in the setting of diverse stories. What is the difference between the theme of a story and the morals it teaches? The author's moral is a specific lesson that he is attempting to impart. Meanwhile, the theme can be more generic. In fact, a tale can include several different themes. Readers discover the theme of a story as they read since they recur repeatedly. For example, the theme of Romeo and Juliet is the power of love. Love pulled these two characters together, and nothing could keep them apart. However, the moral of the story is completely different (not let old family scars fester unnecessarily). Spot out the difference between the theme of a story and the mood? The theme is the core message that the writer wishes to express, whereas the mood is a literary aspect that creates certain sensations through words and descriptions. Your readers' emotional responses might be stimulated by the atmosphere, allowing them to connect with your writing work. Share with your friends