

Theme vs. Main Idea

Theme

The overall *message* from a story. It's the insight into life that you gain through reading.

**It is the LESSON LEARNED.

The theme is **non-specific.

**Does not include names of people or places.

Ex: Bravery is not thinking about what the dangers are; it means ignoring them to do what is right, even if it means risking your own life.

- * Life is about the journey.
- * Friendship is a strong force.
- * Always stand up for what you believe.
- * Determination is the key to success.
- * Courage is the key to bravery.
- * Truth is not always the right answer.
- * Ignorance is bliss. (Kirsti)

Main Idea

It is a *STATEMENT* that quickly *sums up* what the story is about.

- Who?
- What?
- When?
- Where?
- Why?
- Sometimes How?

The main idea is **specific about the story.

Ex: A 10-year-old young girl named Anne Marie goes on a dangerous mission in 1943, during the Nazi occupation in Denmark, to save her best friend.

When creating your theme statements remember to analyze the text for the following information:

1. Recurring ideas
2. Sarcasm
3. Contrasts
4. Subjects

Use each of these elements to create a theme statement that identifies a message/lesson that the author is conveying in the writing.