

Theme Topics

One process that can be used to identify the theme in a story is to recognize the *topic* of the story's theme. Once the topic has been identified, then determine what point about that topic is being made through the story. Remember that a topic is a broad, general concept that can usually be stated in one word. Sometimes a story's message may relate to more than one topic. In this case one must determine how the topics are related in the story. The list below shows some common theme topics.

Abandonment

Alienation

Ambition

American Dream, The

Birth/Childhood

Coming of Age

Commercialism/Commerce

Community

Criticism

Cruelty

Death

Education

Ethics

Family

Fate

Freedom

Futility

Gender

Grief

Guilt

Heroism

Honesty

Hope

Identity

Illness

Individual and Society

Innocence and Experience

Isolation

Jealousy

Justice

Love

Memory

Nationalism

Nature

Oppression

Parenthood

Pride

Race

Regret

Rejection

Religion

Responsibility

Science and Technology

Social Class

Spirituality

Stages of Life

Success

Suffering

Survival

Tradition

Violence

Work