

**Worksheet 5. Thinking about Themes (teacher version)**

In literature, a theme is an author's view about the universal truths in life that reflects his or her understanding about how people behave and how the world wags.

A theme is presented indirectly within the elements of a story and the reader is expected to extract it. There can be multiple themes in a work of fiction, but there is usually one major theme that binds all the story elements together.

It is not just a topic (e.g., friendship); it is an idea (e.g., a true friend does not go away when things get tough).

Instructions: The chart below lists some themes; devise storylines authors might develop to create and convey those ideas.

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Storyline</b>
A crisis situation can bring the best out of people.	Seeing a house on fire as they walk home from school, two teens brave smoke and flames to rescue a baby and a kitten.
In real life there is no such thing as a hero.	Faced with a gun-wielding bank robber, two rookie police officers run and hide behind their squad car, allowing the criminal to escape with a toddler as a hostage.
True love lasts forever.	When a soldier returns from active duty afflicted with post-traumatic stress disorder, his fiancée lovingly supports him through long months of therapy before their joyful wedding a year later.
Relationships are complicated, messy, and unreliable.	A woman is devastated to find that her husband of twenty years has had a two-year affair with a neighbor; what she does not recognize is that she herself has been emotionally distant and uncommunicative for a long time.
Military service turns children into mature adults.	Several high school graduates prone to practical jokes and hours of computer games leave for boot camp at Parris Island and return home for a visit three months later, obviously transformed into responsible adults.
War is useless and evil.	During a skirmish in a village, soldiers begin targeting small children and women civilians trying to hide in surrounding fields.