

**Create a Strong Theme Statement** *Theme is the central or main message, lesson, or moral of a story. Theme is what the protagonist learns through his/her experiences throughout the course of a text.*

**Step 1:** Read and comprehend a text.

**Step 2:** Identify the conflict, the climax, and the resolution of the text. Please write using complete sentences. Direct text is not required.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Conflict** | **Climax (identify specific event)** | **Resolution (identify specific event)** |
| **Type of Conflict**  **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ vs. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** |  |  |
| **Explanation of Conflict** |

**Step 3:** Identify topics that are present in the text that could evolve into a theme. These topics should relate directly to what the protagonist learns.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Step 4:** Pick one topic (or combine topics) and focus the theme around it. Begin your theme statement with the phrase *The author wants the reader to understand…* to help begin your writing.

The author wants the reader to understand \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
  
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**Step 5:** Ask yourself a few questions to test your theme statement. Revise as needed in Step 6.

(1) Is that the purpose of the author writing the text? Is that what the author really wants me, the reader, to understand/learn?

(2) Does your theme statement span the course of the text *(beginning to end)* and relate strongly to the conflict, climax, and resolution of the text?

(3) Is my theme statement complex, specific, and strongly worded?

**Step 6:** Revise as needed to make your original theme statement accurate. Make your theme statement strong and specific, not weak and general. Remove personal pronouns (you, your, we, etc.)

The author wants the reader to understand \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
  
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**Step 7: Prove it!** Theme is developed *throughout the course of a text* (not just at the end). Provide textual evidence from the beginning, middle, and end of the text that shows and supports your theme’s development. Remember, focus on the main conflict, climax, and resolution of the text. Be selective when choosing your text; only use the strongest words and phrases. Please put quotation marks around the direct lines you write down. Note the page number(s) for each piece of textual evidence. **On a separate sheet of paper, please explain how the textual evidence supports your theme.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Textual Evidence** |
| **Beginning**  **p. \_\_\_\_** |  |
| **Middle**  **p. \_\_\_\_** |  |
| **End**  **p. \_\_\_\_** |  |

**Step 8:** Evaluate your theme statement based on your evidence. Does your theme statement fit the evidence you wrote and span the entire text, beginning to end? If so, you have an accurate theme statement! If not, you need to revise your statement. Please go back to *Step 6.*

**Step 9:** Remove the phrase *The author wants the reader to understand.* Make necessary adjustments to ensure your theme statement makes sense and reads properly.

**FINAL THEME STATEMENT: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
  
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