

## Identifying Main Idea and Theme

**Directions:** Determine what the main idea and theme are for each story and explain your answer.

Remember, the main idea is just a sentence or two that tells the main character and problem in a story whereas a theme is a lesson or message in the story. **Write in complete sentences.**

1.

**Katie Clean** invited Messy Missy to her house to work on their biology project, but Katie Clean had no idea what a visit from Messy Missy entailed. First of all, it was raining and Messy Missy neither bothered to take her boots off nor thoroughly wiped them on the doormat. Then Messy Missy ate a bag of hot chips on Katie Clean's white bedspread without asking, and Messy Missy is a sloppy eater, so hot chip powder got all over the bedspread. Katie Clean tried to be polite and ignore Messy Missy's sloppy behavior, but then Messy Missy threw her chip wrapper on the floor. Offended, Katie Clean pretended that she was sick and asked Messy Missy to leave. The next day Katie Clean asked the teacher if she could work by herself. After explaining her situation, the teacher allowed Katie to work alone. Messy Missy would have finished the assignment by herself, but she spilled grape soda all over her assignment.

What is the main idea of the story? \_\_\_\_\_

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What is the theme of the story? \_\_\_\_\_

What happens in the story that leads you to believe this is the theme? \_\_\_\_\_

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2. **Money Mark** was born rich. He never had to work a day in his life and he got everything handed to him on a silver platter. When he was six, Money Mark wanted to go to a basketball game. His father paid the starting five of the Bulls and Celtics to play a private game of Nerf-ball in Money Mark's bedroom. When Money Mark turned thirteen, he wanted to start a band. His father hired the Rolling Stones to play with him every Saturday at the family's private concert hall, though his family was never there. By the time he was twenty-one, Money Mark was bored with life. He was surrounded by a bunch of possessions that he didn't appreciate and Money Mark could find nothing new or exciting in his life. Despite his vast wealth, Money Mark never found happiness. Penny Petal was born poor. Her family hardly had anything to eat, but they loved each other. Penny Petal appreciated every thing she got. When she was six, her father walked her around the United Center before the Bulls played the Celtics. She was excited by the crazy fans and feeling in the air. She looked forward to the day that she could see a real game. When she was thirteen, she learned to play the buckets. She was an extremely talented musician, a natural percussionist, and everyone on the block loved the rhythms that poured from her palms. By the time she was twenty-one, Penny was a successful businesswoman. Now she had everything that she had ever dreamed of and she truly loved to share her wealth and happiness with her family who supported her through all of the hard times.

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3. **Tammy and Sammy** were both students in Mr. Morton’s reading class. Mr. Morton wasn’t too strict about deadlines, and Sammy took advantage of that. He did all of his homework in his other classes but never bothered to complete Mr. Morton’s reading assignments, figuring that he could complete them later. Tammy, on the other hand, completed each assignment Mr. Morton assigned the night that he assigned it. She had to stay up a little later, but she didn’t want to get a penalty for turning in her reading work late. Tammy knew reading was a core subject and that she had to keep “C” average for the entire year or she would have to go to summer school. When the end of the quarter came, Tammy and Sammy had both planned on going to the Enchanted Castle amusement park, but Mr. Morton called Sammy’s mother, and she grounded Sammy until he turned in all of his work. That weekend was horrible for Sammy. He stayed up until 2:00 AM each night and still couldn’t complete all of the assignments. The whole while, Tammy had a great time eating pizza at Enchanted Castle, watching movies late at night, and enjoying her weekend free of stress and pressure. At the end of the quarter, Sammy was lucky to squeak by with a “C” minus in reading while Tammy earned an “A.” Sammy still hasn’t learned his lesson and probably won’t complete this activity either.

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4. **Mr. Pig** and Mr. Dog were hanging out at the food court of the animal shopping mall. Mr. Pig was eating a huge feast of pizza and drinking a large jug of fruit punch and Mr. Dog was watching him eat. “Hey, Mr. Pig. If you give me a slice of your pizza, I’ll let you have the next bone I find.” Mr. Pig declined, even though it hurt his stomach to eat the last three slices of pizza. “I’m sorry, Mr. Dog,” Mr. Pig said, “but I paid for this pizza and it’s all mine.” Mr. Dog sighed and waited for Mr. Pig to finish, and then they left the animal mall together. On the way out, a lion spotted them and gave chase. Mr. Pig normally could have escaped the lion but since he was weighed down by such a large meal, Mr. Pig collapsed and the lion killed him. Mr. Dog easily escaped. Later that night while returning to the scene, Mr. Dog caught the scent of something delicious and began digging around a trash can. He found a large ham bone with lots of meat and marrow still stuck to the bone. Mr. Dog happily ate.

What is the main idea of the story? \_\_\_\_\_

What is the theme of the story \_\_\_\_\_

5. In his sophomore year of high school, Michael Jordan tried out for the varsity basketball team at Laney High School in Wilmington, North Carolina. But at five feet and eleven inches tall, the coach believed that Jordan was too short to play at that level, so Jordan was cut from the team. Jordan didn’t let this obstacle defeat him. In fact, it pushed him to work even harder. He trained vigorously and grew another four inches the following summer. When he finally made the varsity squad, Jordan averaged 25 points a game and went on to become one of the greatest basketball players in history.

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What is the theme of the story? \_\_\_\_\_

What happens in the story that leads you to believe this? \_\_\_\_\_