

Sheet 1: Identifying Themes

Worked example:

Extract: Leo the lion spent all morning helping the younger animals build their dens. He didn't ask for a reward, he just wanted everyone to be safe and warm. Theme options: (a) Greed, (b) Kindness. Which is the theme?

Answer: (b) Kindness. The extract shows Leo helping others without expecting anything in return.

- Read this extract: 'Pip the caterpillar worked for hours to finish her book project. Even when the pages tore, she started again until it was perfect.' Which theme fits best?

Perseverance Laziness

- Read this extract: 'Nova the owl watched the stars. She realised how small she was compared to the vast, sparkling universe, but felt lucky to be part of it.' Which theme fits best?

Awe of Nature Fear of the Dark

- Read this extract: 'Max the monkey took the last banana without asking his friends. Later, he felt lonely and wished he had shared.' Which theme fits best?

The importance of honesty The importance of sharing

- Think of a story where someone learns a lesson about being brave. Write one word that describes the theme of that story.

- Match the scenario to its likely theme.

A character admits a mistake to a friend. -> Honesty A character keeps trying a hard maths puzzle. -> Determination

Self-check: Check your answers against the provided key; if you identified the 'big idea' in every extract, you have mastered this skill.

Ready for next: Once you can identify themes, you are ready to move on to Sheet 2, where we will look at how objects in stories can represent those themes (symbolism).