

# Theme

- The theme of a story is **the central idea, or insight, about life that the story reveals**
- this insight is a “truth” about human behavior according to the author
- author wants us to recognize something about life or our lives
- theme is usually not stated directly

Elements of Literature, p. 208-209, © 2005

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# Universal Themes

- Because a theme is a *generalization* about life or human nature, and because certain experiences are common to all people everywhere, authors often express similar themes
- These universal themes **deal with basic human concerns**
- good and evil, life and death, love and loss

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# How to find theme

1. Find the subject (topic of story, one word).
2. Does the main character change?
3. How is the conflict resolved?
4. Does the title have a special meaning?
5. Does your statement of theme apply to the entire story?

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