



Theme vs. Summary

The theme is a message or concept that the author wants the reader to take away from a literary work. The theme is sometimes described as “what the work is about” in a more abstract and universal sense. A story’s theme is not necessarily explicitly stated in a text.

- A theme should be expressed through the story events; thoughts, actions, and feelings of the characters about the story events; and what the characters learn from their story.
- A theme statement should be in a form of a complete sentence.

A summary is a synopsis of the main points of a text. It is what the story is “about” in the concrete sense. A summary should:

- Be in the form of a paragraph
- Be written in present tense
- Begin with an introductory sentence that includes the title and author of the text, as well as its main point
- Identify, in order, the facts or evidence with which the author supports the main point or present the events of the story
- Be written in your own words
- Contain only ideas that are in the original text, no opinions
- Conclude with a sentence that rephrases the main point.

DIRECTIONS: Read and summarize the assigned text. Write a theme statement for the text.