



# 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. Rather, it is 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 can be expressed in a single sentence.

A summary is a synopsis of the main points of a text. It is what the story is “about” in the concrete sense. The summary of a story will describe the overall plot, the main characters, and the story’s theme. A summary usually requires several sentences.

**DIRECTIONS:** Complete the Venn diagram.

