

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Authors often reveal **themes**—big ideas or messages about life—through lessons their characters learn. To identify a theme of your text, list the lessons learned by the story’s characters that stand out to you most.

Character(s)	Lesson Learned	Evidence	Page #
Example: Ponyboy from <i>The Outsiders</i>	Ponyboy learns that Darry’s harsh treatment is a sign of concern and love, not hate.	“Darry did care about me.... When he yelled ‘Pony, where have you been all this time?’ he meant ‘Pony, you’ve scared me to death.’”	p. 98
Example: Ponyboy from <i>The Outsiders</i>	Ponyboy realizes that Cherry is not so different from himself.	“Maybe the two different worlds we live in weren’t so different. We saw the same sunset.”	p. 41

Look over your notes in the table above. Do any particular lessons about life or humanity stand out or repeat? Write down the **theme** that interests you most.

Example: *Judgments based on assumptions are not always true.*

**Theme**

Next, use your theme to come up with your **thesis**, or the interpretation of the text that you will develop in your essay. Try using this sentence frame: \_[What I notice in the text that leads to the lesson learned]\_ suggest(s) that \_[theme]\_.

Example: *Ponyboy’s relationships in *The Outsiders* suggest that judgments based on assumptions are often mistaken.*

**Thesis**