Literary Theme

Use this key to check answers and read the explanations.

1. Which choice is a complete statement of a theme about friendship?
   A. A friendship can grow when both people learn to listen.
   B. Friendship
   C. Two friends share a bench after school.
   D. The story takes place beside a lake.
   Correct answer: A. A friendship can grow when both people learn to listen.
   The first statement expresses an idea a story could develop about friendship. The other choices give a topic, a plot event, or a setting.

2. Lena hides her broken kite because she fears looking foolish. At the park she sees three people repairing theirs together. She finally asks to join them. Which theme fits?
   A. Public parks need more space.
   B. The most expensive supplies give the best results.
   C. Asking for help can make a setback easier to face.
   D. You can learn faster by staying alone.
   Correct answer: C. Asking for help can make a setback easier to face.
   Lena changes her mind after seeing others repair their kites together. The last action connects help with a response to a setback.

3. A character repeatedly gives a new neighbor a turn to speak when the group ignores her. Which choice states a theme the story could develop from these actions?
   A. The character is the group’s newest member.
   B. Making room for others can help them belong.
   C. The neighbor is planning to move away.
   D. The story has three conversations.
   Correct answer: B. Making room for others can help them belong.
   The repeated invitations show a person making active space for another. This pattern can develop a theme of inclusion.

4. Which sentence summarizes a plot event?
   A. Trust can grow from the way we handle mistakes.
   B. Small choices can show integrity.
   C. Honesty matters most when it costs something.
   D. Niko returns to the market and gives the shopkeeper the extra change he received.
   Correct answer: D. Niko returns to the market and gives the shopkeeper the extra change he received.
   The first choice names a character and describes what he does. The others express general ideas a story could develop.

5. Omar spends weeks learning one tune slowly. At the recital he plays steadily, though a faster player stumbles. Which theme is supported?

A. The fastest performer always succeeds.
B. Patient practice can build confidence and control.
C. People should give up a hobby after a setback.
D. A large audience causes every mistake.

Correct answer: B. Patient practice can build confidence and control.
The ending connects Omar’s consistent practice with the way he handles the recital.

6. Jae sees a flooded planting bed and builds a shallow drain. The water moves away and the seedlings recover. Which detail best supports the theme that a problem may become manageable after one practical step?

A. The water moves away after Jae adds the drain.
B. The planting bed holds seedlings.
C. Jae first sees water in the bed.
D. The bed is outdoors.

Correct answer: A. The water moves away after Jae adds the drain.
The movement of the water links a concrete action to an improvement. It shows how the practical step helps.

7. Mara always races her brother to the trail marker. One day she sees him stop to help someone read the map. They finish together, too late to claim a record. Which theme best fits?

A. Only the strongest runners can help others.
B. Good maps make every trip easy.
C. A crowd makes a trail too busy.
D. What you do along the way can matter more than winning.

Correct answer: D. What you do along the way can matter more than winning.
Helping the lost person changes what the two siblings value. They give up the record and complete the trip together.

8. Kira copies a teammate’s design to finish early. During the club demonstration she cannot explain a key part. She rebuilds the model using her own notes. Which theme is most supported?

A. The best design is the one with the most parts.
B. An exact copy is always easier to explain.
C. Doing the work yourself can build lasting understanding.
D. Club demonstrations should take less time.

Correct answer: C. Doing the work yourself can build lasting understanding.
Kira’s shortcut leaves her unable to explain the model. The decision to rebuild directly addresses that problem.

9. Sam lifts a board from a narrow window in his studio each time a hesitant visitor enters. By the ending, the visitors are helping him finish a mural in full daylight. What idea does the repeated image help develop?

A. Welcoming others can make a private project a shared one.
B. A mural needs new paint whenever the weather changes.
C. People cooperate best when nobody speaks.
D. A painted wall always looks brighter from outside.

Correct answer: A. Welcoming others can make a private project a shared one.
The growing light accompanies Sam’s decision to admit others. The final collaboration connects the window to openness.

10. A narrator first describes a family’s crowded kitchen as a nuisance. Years later, the narrator finds an old recording of that clatter and plays it twice. Which detail best supports the theme that memory can transform how we value familiar things?

A. The event occurs years after the first scene.
B. The kitchen has room for several people.
C. The scene includes a recording.
D. The narrator chooses to replay a sound once considered annoying.

Correct answer: D. The narrator chooses to replay a sound once considered annoying.
The replay shows a changed attitude toward the same kind of sound. That change is stronger evidence than the setting or passage of time alone.

11. Story A: Inez reports a scoring error that cost the opposing team a point. Story B: Ben admits he cracked a borrowed bowl, though his sister is about to be blamed. What theme do both develop?

A. Leaders win by keeping decisions secret.
B. The best apology is always a gift.
C. Acting honestly can require giving up an advantage.
D. People make fewer mistakes when they hurry.

Correct answer: C. Acting honestly can require giving up an advantage.
Inez gives up an advantage in a game. Ben gives up a chance to escape blame. Both accept a cost to tell the truth.

12. A story’s opening shows Ellis fixing every problem alone. In the final scene, Ellis thanks the neighbor who watered the garden during a family emergency. How does the ending develop a theme about independence?

A. It shows that garden work never requires cooperation.
B. It shows that accepting help can coexist with taking responsibility.
C. It proves that Ellis has stopped caring about the garden.
D. It introduces the novel’s setting for the first time.

Correct answer: B. It shows that accepting help can coexist with taking responsibility.
Ellis remains responsible for the garden and recognizes the neighbor’s role. The ending broadens the character’s earlier view of self-reliance.

13. In one story a sprinter loses and recognizes a friend’s progress. In another a sprinter loses and changes a flawed training plan. What distinguishes the themes?

A. Both argue that the way people train makes no difference.
B. The first values winning at all costs. The second discourages practice.
C. Both treat speed as more important than relationships.
D. The first values another person’s success. The second treats failure as feedback.

Correct answer: D. The first values another person’s success. The second treats failure as feedback.
The two endings focus on different responses to the same kind of loss. One turns outward toward a friend. The other prompts a practical change.

14. Tessa believes every tradition should stay the same. When fewer children attend a winter meal, she asks families what food they miss and adds their dishes. Attendance grows. Which theme accounts for both the change and the outcome?

A. A tradition can survive by making room for new voices.
B. A meal’s success depends only on the weather.
C. The oldest recipe always draws the largest crowd.
D. A tradition is meaningful only when its rules are fixed.

Correct answer: A. A tradition can survive by making room for new voices.
Tessa keeps the gathering while adapting the menu. The increase in attendance shows how that change can sustain the tradition.

15. A child repairs a broken community clock to honor an uncle. Neighbors share memories while cleaning the clock case. Which theme is broad enough for both actions and specific enough to fit the story?

A. History always explains everything people do.
B. Everyone should learn to repair this particular clock.
C. Caring for something shared can help a community remember its past.
D. Children have more free time than adults.

Correct answer: C. Caring for something shared can help a community remember its past.
The statement connects the repairs and the memories to a shared purpose. It can apply to other communities and still reflects the story’s details.