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ANALYZE CRAFT AND STRUCTURE → **THEME**

The **theme** of a story is its message. The theme of a story may be a message such as “friendship is important” or “honesty is the best policy.”

In some cases, the theme is *directly* stated. In other cases, the theme is *indirectly* stated. Instead, it might be suggested, or implied. You can find an indirectly stated theme by examining story events, as well as characters’ thoughts and feelings.

DIRECTIONS: Read the passage below. Then, answer the questions that follow.

The famous actor was tired of being hounded, so he went outside dressed in an old sweatshirt, loosely fitting jeans, and socks that didn’t match. No one recognized him. He finally sat down on a bench next to an older woman, who ignored him. Finally, the actor asked her if he looked familiar. He told her his name, but she seemed unconvinced. He asked her why.

“That actor loves his looks,” she replied. “He would never look so sloppy!”

Sometimes it is better not to know what other people think of us, he thought.

1. What is the theme of the passage?

2. Is the theme directly stated, or is it suggested?

3. Which story event most clearly supports the theme?

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ANALYZE CRAFT AND STRUCTURE **THEME**

- A. DIRECTIONS:** Read the passage below. Then, answer the questions that follow.

More than a million people every year visit a building that is falling over—the Leaning Tower of Pisa, Italy. The most frequent photograph taken there is of visitors pretending to hold up the Tower. Why do so many people visit the Tower? Perhaps it has something to do with our love of rainbows and why we celebrate birthdays. We put more value on events, and even buildings, that seem to be temporary.

1. What is the theme of the passage?

2. Is the theme directly stated, or is it suggested?

3. What is one detail or sentence that supports the theme?

- B. DIRECTIONS:** Read the passage below. Then, answer the questions that follow.

Deserts are dry and dusty places, but an important lesson can be learned there. You see, because there is so little rainfall, most of the plants that live there are short and live close to the ground, such as cactus. But in the miles of dry, rocky terrain of the Mojave Desert in Southern California, there is a tree that grows—the Joshua tree. These trees have huge root systems and bloom only in cold, harsh conditions. They live for thousands of years. People travel long distances to visit them, because Joshua trees inspire them.

1. What is the theme of the passage?

2. Is the theme directly stated, or is it suggested?

3. What is one detail or sentence that supports the theme?
