

Helpful Hint: Figuring Out The Author's Message **Using The Theme of the Book**

Even though authors write books about a variety of topics, the big ideas, or **themes**, are often similar. Once you've thought about the theme of a story, it is easier to get ideas about the author's message. What is he or she trying to tell readers about that big idea? Use this list of common themes and possible messages to help you get started.

| Theme | Possible Messages |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Friendship | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Friendships are an important part of life.• True friends are people who you can count on when things get tough.• Friendship can be found in unexpected places. |
| Family | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Families should take care of each other.• Your family will always love you.• Families are all different but all special. |
| Equality & Acceptance | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Everyone should be treated fairly.• Respect others' differences or beliefs.• Being different isn't bad. |
| Courage & Risk-Taking | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• It is good to take risks and try new things.• You can overcome your fears if you try.• It is important to stand up for what you believe.• Believing in yourself is important to achieving your goals. |
| The World Around Us | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Things in nature are important or helpful.• Things in nature are beautiful.• We should take care of our planet. |
| Honesty | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• It is always better to tell the truth.• Sometimes, the truth can be hurtful. |
| Forgiveness | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• It is important to apologize when you've done something wrong.• It's important to forgive others. |

Tips for Determining Author's Message

- This is a hard task! Break it down into three steps: First, make sure you understand what happened in the book. Then, figure out what big idea the book is about (see the other side of this sheet for some ideas.) Finally, figure out what the author might be trying to tell you about that big idea. That's the author's message!
- The author's message is similar to a lesson. After reading a book, think about what your parents or teacher would tell the main character. That might be the author's message to readers!
- Instead of trying to think about the entire book, turn to one very important part of the story. Think, "What does the author want readers to learn from this part?" Once you have your idea, think about whether or not it could apply to the entire book.

Core Read Aloud Titles to Support Identifying Theme & Author's Message

| Grade | Core Read Aloud Books |
|----------|---|
| 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Contest Between the Wind and the Sun</i> • <i>Rumplestiltskin</i> • <i>My Rotten Red-Headed Older Brother</i> • <i>Oh, Brother!</i> |
| 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Grace for President</i> • <i>Thank you, Mr. Falker</i> • <i>An Angel for Solomon Singer</i> |
| 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Rough Face Girl</i> • <i>The Story of the Three Kingdoms</i> • <i>Granddaddy's Gift</i> • <i>The Quiltmaker's Gift</i> |