

Introduction:

This summer you will read the required book below and identify and explain the theme of the book. You will use the attached finding theme handout to locate the theme and then write an essay explaining what the theme means and how it is used within the novel. This essay will be due the first week of school. We will then use this novel to begin our literature discussion when the school year begins. Follow the specific instructions below.

Required Book: ***Around the World in 80 Days by Jules Verne***

Essay Requirements:

Identifies a theme that makes a statement about human behavior (not a single word or main idea)

Describes the theme and what it means in context to the novel (1 paragraph)

Uses two specific examples from the novel to develop an understanding of how the theme is used (1 paragraph for each example)

Uses introduction and conclusion to effectively set-up and close out the essay

Uses correct grammar, spelling, and mechanics that are appropriate for the beginning 9<sup>th</sup> grade writer

Between 400-500 words typed

Sample Essay Outline:

I. Introduction

- A. Hook
- B. Brief summary of novel
- C. Thesis (introduces the theme)

II. Explain theme in general

- A. Overview of the meaning of the theme
- B. Overview of how the theme applies to the novel

III. Example 1 from text

- A. Explain example from the text
- B. Explain how it fits the theme

IV. Example 2 from text

- A. Explain example from the text
- B. Explain how it fits the theme

V. Conclusion

- A. Restate Theme
- B. Summarize main points
- C. End with a final assessment



# Finding Theme

## Being Literature Detectives

### Definition of Theme:

The theme is the guiding principle behind a story. In a **fable** the theme is its **moral**, in a **parable** it's its **lesson**, and in a piece of **literature** it is a **view about life and human behavior**.

### Why Theme:

The job of a writer is to form connections with its reader. While the specific events in a story may be different, theme allows the reader and writer to connect with each other. As a **reader** theme gives you the opportunity to **connect to the piece of literature and form a greater understanding and comprehension**, and as a **writer** theme allows you **to draw in your reader and make your writing more interesting**.

### Finding Theme:

1. Look for **main ideas**. What is the story about- write down a couple words (**single words**): love, friendship, courage, conflict, decisions, knowledge...
2. Determine which **two words** have the most **support** in the story. Locate some **examples**.
3. Make a **general statement about life** using those two words that you can support with details from the story.