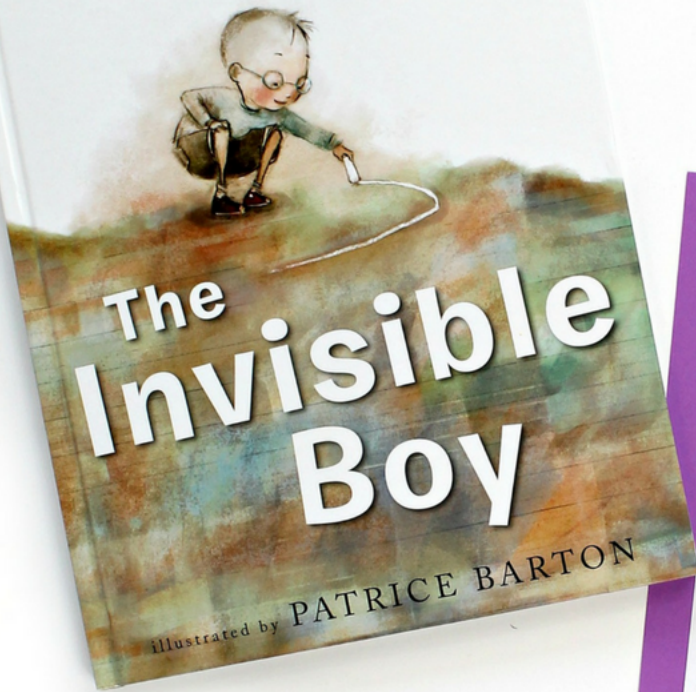



# TEACHING THEME

IN THE UPPER-ELEMENTARY CLASSROOM



**DETERMINING THEME**

 *The Invisible Boy*  
By Trudy Ludwig

1) What is this story about (answer in a word or two)?  
Being left out

Build a list of topics from the story. Then work to turn those topics into themes.

Topics: An issue or subject matter addressed in a text.	Theme: A message or lesson from the story that you can apply to your own life.
<u>Being left out</u>	

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Check out my blog post at  
*Young Teacher Love Blog*

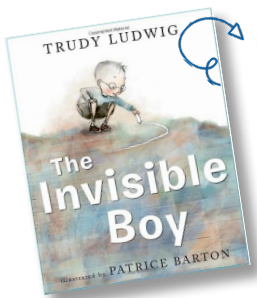
Click **HERE** to see more.

# DETERMINING THEME

what is theme? ↻

A MESSAGE OR LESSON FROM THE STORY THAT YOU CAN APPLY TO YOUR OWN LIFE.

- It's the lesson or message the author wants you to learn from the story.
- The author won't explicitly state it – you often have to infer the theme.
- There can be more than one theme.
- It's not specific to the story you are reading.
- The theme is universal. It applies to everyone.



let's use this text as an example

Being excluded makes Brian sad.

Excluding people hurts their feelings.

This is NOT a theme. This is specific to the story and is the main idea.

This IS a theme. This is not specific to the story. It is universal and applies to everyone.

## QUESTIONS TO HELP YOU FIND THE THEME:

- How did the character respond to the conflict or challenge? Did the character make a good choice or a bad choice? What happened to the character as a result? What can you learn from that character's decision?
- Did the character learn anything from their decision(s)? How can you apply that to your own life?
- Would you do the same thing as the character? Why or why not? What do you think the author is trying to teach you from the events of the story?

# DETERMINING THEME

what is a topic 

TOPICS ARE THE SUBJECT MATTER ADDRESSED IN A STORY. THEY ARE TYPICALLY ONE WORD AND WILL TELL STUDENTS WHAT A STORY IS MOSTLY ABOUT IN A WORD OR TWO. THE LIST OF TOPICS THAT YOU CREATE ABOUT A STORY WILL HELP STUDENTS TO FIND A THEME.

Let's take a look at the difference between topics and themes 

 one-word topics are not themes! But you can use these topics to help you find the theme.

Topics: An issue or subject matter addressed in a text.	Theme: A message or lesson from the story that you can apply to your own life.
Courage	It takes courage to do the right thing.
Justice	Actions have consequences.
Honesty	Always tell the truth.
Love	It's better to love than to hate.

# DETERMINING THEME

what is main idea ↻

THE MAIN IDEA OF A TEXT IS A SENTENCE THAT EXPLAINS WHAT THE STORY IS MOSTLY ABOUT.

Let's take a look at the difference between the main idea and theme ↻

specific to the story

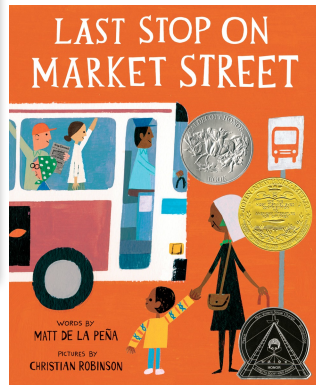
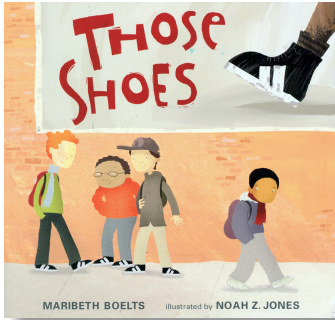
<p>Main Idea: The main idea of a text is a sentence that explains what the story is mostly about.</p> <p>*Answers the question: What is this story about?</p>	<p>Theme: A message or lesson from the story that you can apply to your own life.</p> <p>*Answers the question: What lesson does this story tell me about life?</p>
Brian was upset that he wasn't invited to the party.	You should always try to include others.
Brian was happy that he didn't have to sit alone at lunch.	No one likes being alone. Making friends can make you happy.
Brian was sad when no one noticed him.	Being alone can make you sad.

not specific to the story

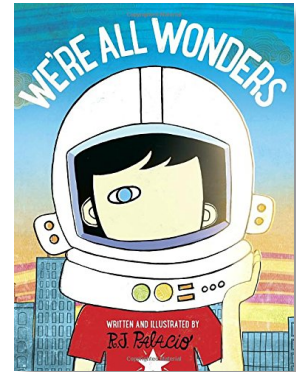
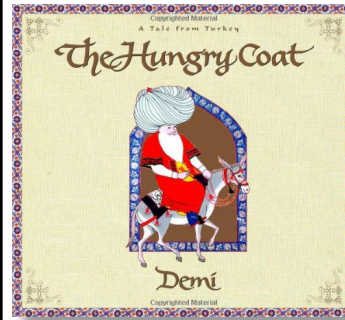
# DETERMINING THEME MENTOR TEXTS

CLICK EACH PICTURE

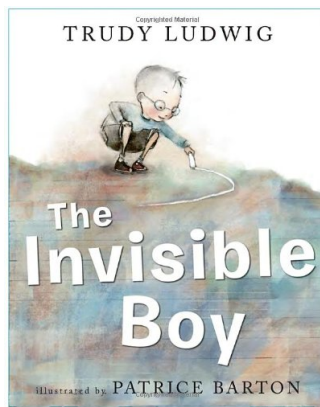
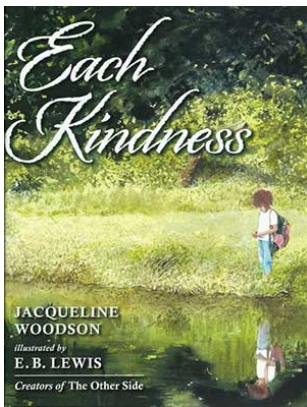
- Help those who are less fortunate.
- Kindness is rewarded.



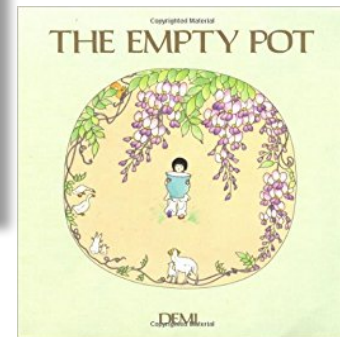
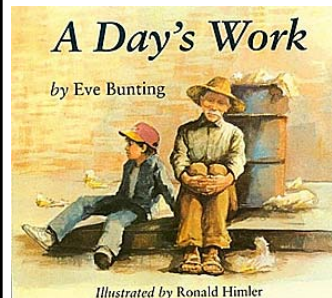
- Don't judge others based on how they look.
- What matters most is what's on the inside.



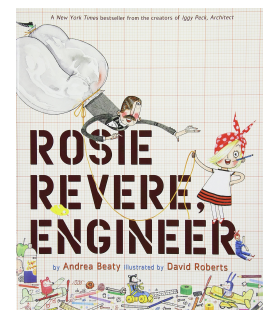
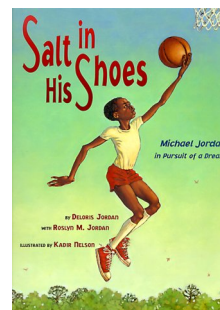
- Excluding people hurts their feelings.
- You should always try to include others.



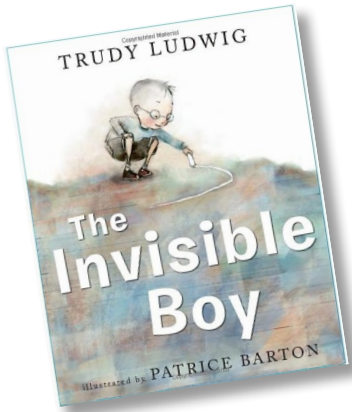
- Honesty is the best policy.
- When you make a mistake, fix it and make it right.



- Never give up.
- Practice Makes you better.



# DETERMINING THEME



## The Invisible Boy

By: Trudy Ludwig

1.) What is this story about (answer in a word or two)?

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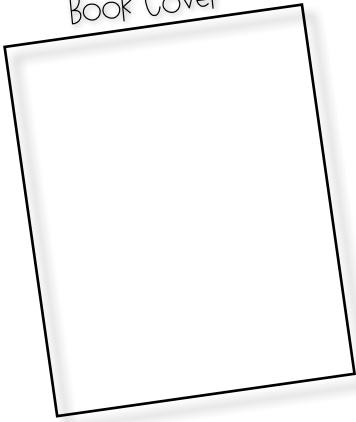
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Build a list of topics from the story. Then, work to turn those topics into themes.

Topics: An issue or subject matter addressed in a text.	Theme: A message or lesson from the story that you can apply to your own life.

# DETERMINING THEME

Book Cover



Title: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

1.) What is this story about (answer in a word or two)?

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Build a list of topics from the story. Then, work to turn those topics into themes.

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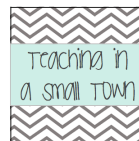
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KEEP IN TOUCH



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