

# Unit 1

## Theme Transcending Literature

English 9

# Table of Contents

#1 – How to take Cornell Notes

#2 – “The Curve of Forgetting” CN

#3 – “How to Find a Theme” CN

[How To Find a Theme-You Tube](#)

# Where We're Headed

## Reading

- Read 3 short stories and for each one:
  - determine the theme
  - write an objective summary
  - track the development of the theme using a graphic organizer
  - write a theme paragraph.

## Research

- Research how the theme of your short story transcends literature/exists in the “Real World” (in movies, songs, tv, news, etc.)

## Writing

- Explain how the theme of your short story transcends literature in a 5 paragraph essay.

## Group Presentation

- Demonstrate, in a Movie Trailer for your short story. the theme of your story and how it transcends literature.

# #4 Intro to Theme

# What is a short story?

- A brief work of **fiction**
- A **main character faces a conflict** that is resolved in the plot.
- It usually **conveys a theme**, or message about life.
- It must **accomplish its purpose in relatively few words**.

# Components of a Short Story

- Conflict
- Setting
- Character
- Point of View
- Theme

# What is Conflict?

- **Conflict is the opposition of forces which ties one incident to another and makes the plot move.**
- Types
  - **External** (outside)
    - Man vs. Man
    - Man vs. Circumstances
    - Man vs. Society
  - **Internal** (inside)
    - Man vs. himself/herself (man vs. his fear)

# What is Setting?

- The time and location in which a story takes place.
  - Place
  - Time
  - Weather conditions
  - Social conditions
  - Mood or atmosphere



# What is Character?

- The person in a work of fiction
- The characteristics of a character (STEAL):
  - What the character **says**
  - What the character **thinks**
  - How the character **effects others**
  - How the character **acts**
  - What the character **looks like**

# What is Point of View?

- The angle from which the story is told
  - First person
  - Omniscient
  - Third person

# What is Theme?

Life lesson, meaning, **moral**, or message about life or human nature that is communicated by a literary work.

In other words:

Theme is **what the story teaches readers.**

# Theme Cont.

- **A theme is not a word or a subject, it is a sentence.**
- Theme is a debatable **opinion**.
- You don't have to agree with the theme to identify it.
- There is no wrong answer if you can support it.

## Examples

*Money can't buy happiness.*

*Don't judge people based on the surface.*

*It is better to die free than live under tyranny.*

# Example

- Abstract word or idea/subject – Love
- What is the author saying about love? = Theme
  - Love, if taken to extremes, can be negative rather than positive.
  - Love can conquer even the greatest evil.

# How do you find a theme?

1. Looking for changes in the main character
2. Watching for clear statements of theme
3. Examining the title
4. Looking at the conflict

## What is the theme?

Jenny Puchovier was so excited. She had a pack of Starburst in her lunch and she had been looking forward to eating them all morning. Lunch finally came and Jenny sat down to eat her Starbursts when her *friend* Yudy sat next to her. “Let me get the pink ones,” asked Yudy. Jenny liked the pink ones best, but she thought Yudy was funny and Jenny wanted Yudy to like her, so Jenny gave Yudy all of her pink Starbursts. Before Jenny was done giving Yudy the pink ones, Carrie sat on the other side of Jenny. “Let me get the red and the orange ones, Jenny. Remember when I gave you that Snickers?” Jenny didn’t remember that, though she did remember when Carrie ate a whole Snickers in front of her, but Jenny thought Carrie was cool, so she gave her the red and the orange Starbursts. Now that she only had the yellow ones, Jenny wasn’t so excited about eating starbursts anymore.

# Identifying Themes

Themes are not explicit (clearly stated).

Themes are implied. So we must infer.

Themes are bigger than the story.



A diagram illustrating the relationship between the story world and the theme world. It features a red semi-circular background. On the left, a grey oval contains the text "Small World of the Story". A large, curved yellow arrow points from this oval towards the right. On the right, the text "Big World of the Theme. Applies to the 'Real' World." is displayed in white.

Small  
World  
of the  
Story

Big World of the Theme.  
Applies to the "Real" World.



# Themes are about the big picture.

Not “Yellow Starbursts taste bad”

Not “Yudy and Carrie are bad friends.”

Think BIGGER.

Find “Real” World advice.



Small  
World  
of the  
Story

Big World of the Theme.  
Applies to the “Real” World.

# Review

1. Theme is what we can learn from a story.
2. Themes must be inferred.
3. Themes are about the BIG world.

# CN Summary

Write a 3 sentence summary at the bottom of  
your CNs:

Something that is becoming clear to me about  
theme...

# #5 Find the Theme!

1. We'll read each story.
2. With your partner discuss the possible theme
3. Write a theme statement in your notebook
4. Write another sentence explaining what happens in the story that leads you to believe this.

**How does the small world of the story connect to the big world theme?**

# #1

Once there was a mean little boy who lived in a small village. This mean little boy loved to mess with people, so one day he ran up to a sheep herder and shouted, “WOLF! WOLF! A wolf is attacking the town!” The sheep herder grabbed his staff and ran to defend the town, but realized he had been fooled when the boy started pointing and laughing at him. “Ha ha! I made you jump,” said the boy. Then the boy ran up to a farmer and shouted, “WOLF! WOLF! A wolf is attacking the town!” The farmer grabbed his pitchfork and ran to defend the town, but when the boy started pointing and laughing at him, he realized he had been tricked. As the boy went back to his family’s farm laughing about the funny trick he played, he saw a real wolf in his father’s chicken coop. As the wolf ate all of his father’s chickens, the boy screamed over and over again, “WOLF! WOLF! Please help us!” But nobody came to help him.

# #5 Find the Theme!

- Write a theme statement in your notebook
- Write another sentence explaining what happens in the story that leads you to believe this.

**How does the small world of the story connect to the big world theme?**

# #2

Angie loved to draw. She made colorful designs of people's names with bright hearts & flowers, but she lost her own markers, so she borrowed her teacher's. The school day was ending, but Angie wanted to keep coloring, so she took the teacher's markers home and lost them in her messy room. She came back to school the next day and wanted to color again, so she asked the teacher for more markers. The teacher replied, "Sure, Angie, but this is my last pack." Angie said she would be careful, but by the end of the day the markers were scattered all over the floor and the custodian swept them up and disposed of them. When Angie came in the next day, she asked the teacher for more markers, but she was disappointed to find that there weren't any more. "I don't know where all of my markers went," said the teacher, "but I don't have them." Angie had to draw her pictures with drab pencils.

# #5 Find the Theme!

- Write a theme statement in your notebook
- Write another sentence explaining what happens in the story that leads you to believe this.

**How does the small world of the story connect to the big world theme?**



# #3

Jenny hated reading class. She didn't understand point of view or figurative language, and not knowing how to do the work frustrated her. She asked the teacher for help, but he spoke so fast and used such big words that she still couldn't understand. The teacher asked if she understood, and she nodded her head, but she didn't. Jenny's friend Katie knew that Jenny was having trouble, and, rather than just giving Jenny all of the answers, Katie explained to Jenny how to solve the problems. Katie spoke clearly and at Jenny's level, and Jenny was happy that she finally learned how to do the work. Later in the week, Katie was having trouble in math class. She didn't understand coordinates and was really frustrated. Seeing that Katie was having problems, Jenny, who understood math very well, taught Katie coordinates. Both girls made honor roll that quarter.

# #5 Find the Theme!

- Write a theme statement in your notebook
- Write another sentence explaining what happens in the story that leads you to believe this.

**How does the small world of the story connect to the big world theme?**

# #6 - “The Necklace”

## Summary and Theme

3<sup>rd</sup> Section

# As you read...

- Think about what the topic or theme might be.
  - What can we learn from the story?
  - What can we infer from the actions of the characters and the plot?
  - How can what we learned from this story apply to the BIG world?
- Where is the theme introduced, developed, and refined?

# After you read...

- Write:
  - One paragraph objective SUMMARY
  - A THEME Statement (not a topic!)

# #6 “The Necklace” Summary and Theme

- Write:
  - One paragraph objective SUMMARY
    - Make sure you explain the following:
      - Setting
      - Character and Point of View
      - Conflict and Resolution
  - A THEME Statement (not a topic!)

# “The Necklace” Graphic Organizer

- In groups of 2-3, create a graphic organizer that depicts the development a theme from “The Necklace” (introduced, developed, refined).
- Be creative when designing your graphic organizer and when depicting the development of theme. Feel free to incorporate visuals, graphics, etc.
- Your graphic organizer must answer the following questions and include quotes (concrete details/CD) and analysis of such details (commentary/CM):
  - Where is the theme introduced? 1 Quote/concrete detail + 2 CM
  - Where is the theme developed? 1 Quote/ concrete detail + 2CM
  - Where is the theme refined? 1 Quote/concrete detail + 2CM
- Be prepared to share!!

# Example:

Story Title \_\_\_\_\_

Step 1-Abstract Word: \_\_\_\_\_

Step 2- What is the author trying to say about \_\_\_\_\_?

Theme Statement

1 CD:

Where is the theme introduced?

■

■

2 CM:

Where is the theme developed?

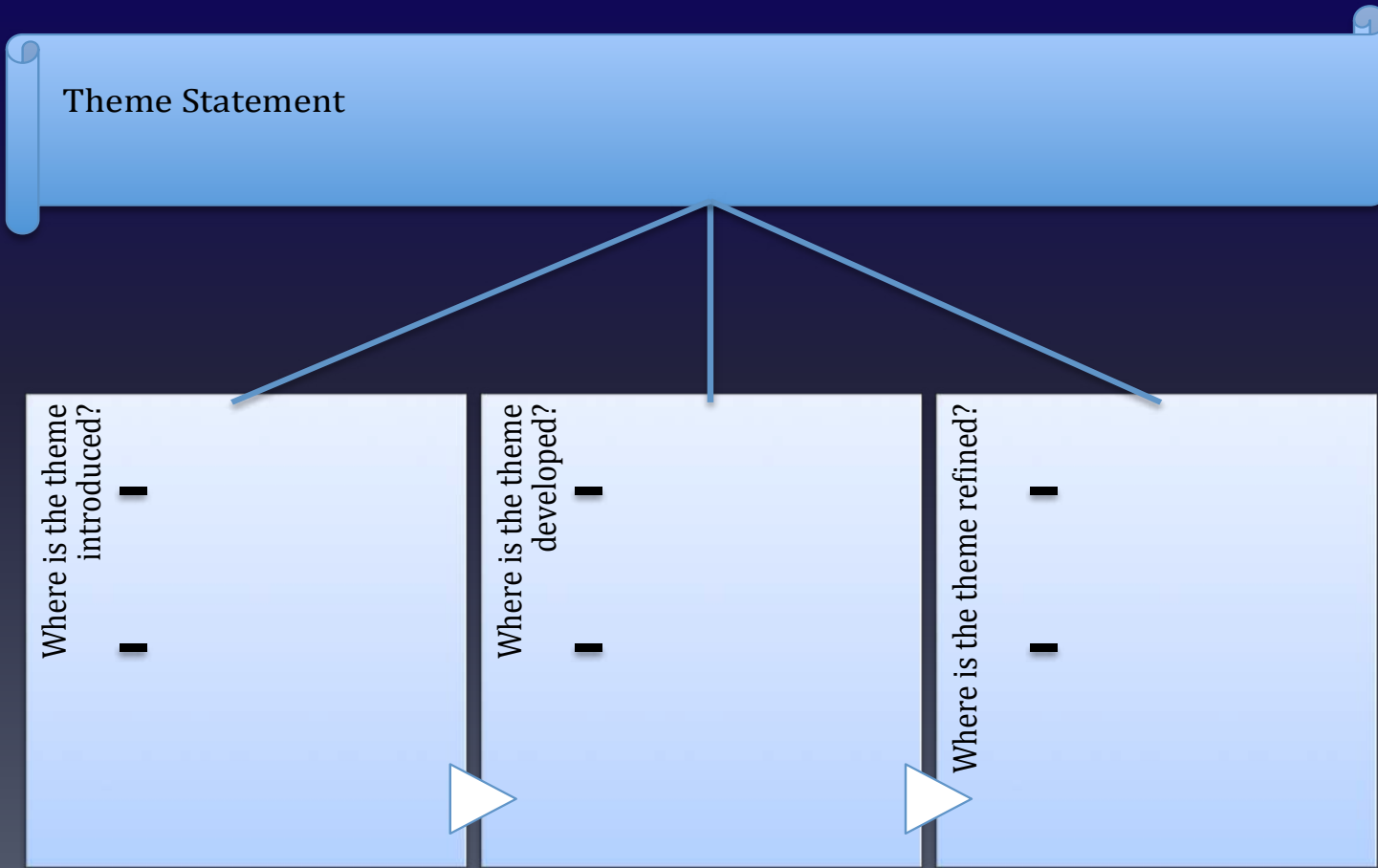
■

■

Where is the theme refined?

■

■





# Example:

## Theme Statement

Introduced

1 Concrete Detail  
(CD)  
Quote with Page #

2 Commentary  
(CM)  
Explanation of how  
the CD introduces  
the theme

Developed

1 Concrete Detail  
(CD)  
Quote with Page #

2 Commentary  
(CM)  
Explanation of how  
the CD develops  
the theme

Refined

1 Concrete Detail  
(CD)  
Quote with Page #

2 Commentary  
(CM)  
Explanation of how  
the CD refines the  
theme

# “The Necklace” Theme Paragraph

- Instructions: Use your theme statement and analyze its development over the course of the short story using the information from your graphic organizer.

A theme in "The Necklace" by Guy de Maupassant is

\_\_\_\_\_. For example, the author introduces the theme by writing, "\_\_\_\_\_" (de Maupassant #). CM: \_\_\_\_\_

CM \_\_\_\_\_.

The author also develops the theme by stating, "\_\_\_\_\_" (de Maupassant #).

CM \_\_\_\_\_ CM \_\_\_\_\_.

The author also refines the theme by writing, "\_\_\_\_\_" (de Maupassant #).

CM \_\_\_\_\_ CM \_\_\_\_\_.

CS \_\_\_\_\_.

CD = Concrete Detail (Direct quotes from text)

CM = Commentary (How the CD shows the theme)

Sentence starter for CM: This shows... or This is evidence of...

CS = Concluding Sentence

# # 9 “The Scarlet Ibis” Summary and Theme

3<sup>rd</sup> section of notebook

# As you read...

- Think about what the topic or theme might be.
  - What can we learn from the story?
  - What can we infer from the actions of the characters and the plot?
  - How can what we learned from this story apply to the BIG world?

# After you read...

- Write:
  - One paragraph objective SUMMARY
  - A THEME Statement (not a topic!)

# #9 “The Scarlet Ibis” Summary and Theme

- Write:
  - One paragraph objective SUMMARY
    - Make sure you explain the following:
      - Setting
      - Character and Point of View
      - Conflict and Resolution
  - A THEME Statement (not a topic!)

# “The Scarlet Ibis” Graphic Organizer

- In groups of 2-3, create a graphic organizer that depicts the development a theme from “The Scarlet Ibis” (introduced, developed, refined).
- Be creative when designing your graphic organizer and when depicting the development of theme. Feel free to incorporate visuals, graphics, etc.
- Your graphic organizer must answer the following questions and include quotes (concrete details/CD) and analysis of such details (commentary/CM):
  - Where is the theme introduced? 1 Quote/concrete detail + 2 CM
  - Where is the theme developed? 1Quote/ concrete detail + 2CM
  - Where is the theme refined? 1 Quote/concrete detail + 2CM
- Be prepared to share!!



# “The Scarlet Ibis” Theme Paragraph

- Instructions: Use your theme statement and analyze its development over the course of the short story using the information from your graphic organizer.

A theme in "The Scarlet Ibis" by James Hurst is \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_. For example, the author introduces  
the theme by writing, " \_\_\_\_\_" (Hurst #).

CM: \_\_\_\_\_ CM \_\_\_\_\_.

The author also develops the theme by stating, " \_\_\_\_\_" (Hurst #).

CM \_\_\_\_\_ CM \_\_\_\_\_.

The author also refines the theme by writing, " \_\_\_\_\_" (Hurst #).

CM \_\_\_\_\_ CM \_\_\_\_\_.

CS \_\_\_\_\_.

CD = Concrete Detail (Direct quotes from text)

CM = Commentary (How the CD shows the theme)

Sentence starter for CM: This shows... or This is evidence of...

CS = Concluding Sentence

- In groups of 3-4, you will pick one of the following short stories:
  - “If I Forget Thee, Oh Earth” p. 486
  - “The Gift of the Magi” p. 524
  - “Old Man of the Temple” p. 203
  - “Uncle Marcos” p. 577
  - “Rules of the Game” (EC) p. 262
  - “The Golden Kite, the Silver Wind” p. 178
  - “The Interlopers” p. 304
  - “Checkouts” p. 282
  - “The Casque of Amontillado” (EC) p. 6

# #11 “\_\_\_\_\_” Summary and Theme

- In groups of 3-4, read your group’s short story
- Write:
  - One paragraph objective SUMMARY
    - Make sure you explain the following:
      - Setting
      - Character and Point of View
      - Conflict and Resolution
  - A THEME Statement (not a topic!)

# “ \_\_\_\_\_ ” Graphic Organizer

- In your group, create or use one of the graphic organizers you have used previously
- Your graphic organizer must answer the following questions and include quotes (concrete details) and analysis of such details (commentary):
  - Where is the theme introduced? 1 concrete detail + 2 CM
  - Where is the theme developed? 1 concrete detail + 2CM
  - Where is the theme refined? 1 concrete detail + 2CM

# “\_\_\_\_\_” Theme Paragraph

- Instructions: Use your theme statement and analyze its development over the course of your short story using the information from your graphic organizer.

# Real World Research

- Research your theme statement from your short story and how it exists in other parts of the world: news stories, art, songs, television shows, movies, and/or poetry.
- HW: On Tuesday, bring 2 artifacts from different mediums
  - Ex. Song lyrics, news article, movie synopsis, poem, picture of art work, synopsis of TV show
  - Don't forget to keep track of the source/website you retrieved your artifact!

# Real World Graphic Organizers

- Track the development of the theme in each of your examples using the graphic organizer you used for the short stories (include where the theme is introduced, developed, and refined)
- You will have 2 Graphic Organizers
- Try and use quotes for concrete details (CD)...but if that is not an option, use facts or examples from your source



# Real World Paragraphs

- Instructions: Use your theme statement and analyze its development over the course of both of your Real World examples using the information from your graphic organizer.
- You will have 2 paragraphs

# Writing Prompt

- Explain how your theme statement transcends literature.
- Using the theme statements and textual evidence you gathered about your short story, and the research you gathered from the real world, write an informative/explanatory 5-paragraph essay explaining how a theme is developed in each medium. You should explain your analysis and how the theme is introduced, shaped, and refined for each medium with well-chosen facts and details.

# Add to your Table of Contents

#17 – MLA PPT

#18 – Plagiarism PPT

# Essay Writing

1. Introduction
  1. Hook
  2. Title, author, genre - short story (link story/theme to hook)
  3. Context/Story background
  4. Thesis – Introduce the theme and explain that it transcends literature, introducing your 3 main points
2. Theme in “Short Story”
  1. Topic Sentence: Introduce main idea (Theme)
  2. 1 Concrete Detail: 1<sup>st</sup> fact, example, or quote from the story that introduces the theme
  3. 2 Commentary: Your analysis and interpretation of your concrete detail and how it introduces the theme
  4. 1 Concrete Detail: 2<sup>nd</sup> CD from the story that develops the theme
  5. 2 Commentary: Your analysis and interpretation of your concrete detail and how it develops the theme
  6. 1 Concrete Detail: 3<sup>rd</sup> CD from the story that refines the theme
  7. 2 Commentary: Your analysis and interpretation of your concrete detail and how it refines the theme
  8. Concluding Sentence: Summary of the main idea (Theme)
3. Theme in “Real World” #1 (Proper Paragraph Form)
4. Theme in “Real World” #2 (Proper Paragraph Form)
5. Conclusion
  1. Restate your purpose/thesis in different words
  2. Analyze the big picture and comment on how Theme transcends literature
  3. Don't use quotes here, rely on your own commentary

- ❑ Introduction
  - ❑ Does the Introduction start with a HOOK? (No questions!)
  - ❑ Do they introduce the title, author, genre & link the story to the hook?
  - ❑ Do they explain the context/story background so we know what the story is about?
  - ❑ Do they have a THESIS that introduces the Theme and main pointse?
- ❑ 3 Paragraphs in Proper Paragraph Form (1 from story and 2 from "Real World")
  - ❑ Does each Topic Sentence introduce the theme in a new and exciting way?
  - ❑ Is the 1<sup>st</sup> Concrete Detail a fact, example, or quote that introduces the theme?
  - ❑ Are there 2 sentences of Commentary that analyze how the CD supports the theme?
  - ❑ Is the 2<sup>nd</sup> Concrete Detail a fact, example, or quote that develops the theme?
  - ❑ Are there 2 sentences of Commentary that analyze how the CD supports the theme?
  - ❑ Is the 3<sup>rd</sup> Concrete Detail a fact, example, or quote that refines the theme?
  - ❑ Are there 2 sentences of Commentary that analyze how the CD supports the theme?
  - ❑ Does each Concluding Sentence summarize how the theme is shown?
- ❑ Conclusion
  - ❑ Do they restate the thesis in different words?
  - ❑ Do they comment on how Theme transcends literature?
  - ❑ Double check that there are no quotations and that the conclusion is mostly commentary.
- ❑ ALSO DOUBLE CHECK:
  - ❑ All of their quotes are introduced and make sense in context. No sentences should start with a quote.
  - ❑ Their in-text citation formatting: "load [the] herd; move fast, and put the ship's head toward the breakers" (Homer 425-26).
  - ❑ They use transitions like "however" and "therefore"
  - ❑ They don't do not use contractions.
  - ❑ They do not have any dead words...SAID is DEAD
  - ❑ They do not use first/second personal pronouns (Ex. I, you, we, us, etc.)
  - ❑ Short stories, articles, or songs are in quotations; Books, newspapers, or movies are in italics
  - ❑ Their MLA formatting
  - ❑ In-text citations should be a signal word to the first word in their Works Cited entry

# Peer Editing

(Every paper you Peer Edit, write your name)

1<sup>st</sup> read: Read your own paper entirely and give a rubric score

Pass paper

2<sup>nd</sup> read: Read with pen in hand to edit for grammar and mechanics

3<sup>rd</sup> read: Highlight BODY PARAGRAPHS - TS and CS, CD, CM

Pass paper

4<sup>th</sup> read: Read while going through checklist

# Culminating Learning Experience

GOAL: Demonstrate how your theme statement transcends literature.

- In your groups, you will create a trailer for your short story that demonstrates the theme. You will present your trailer to the class in the format of a movie pitch in order to show how the theme is prevalent and should be presented to the real world in a different format other than literature.



# Presentation Requirements

- Your Presentation must include:
  - Written script of your pitch
    - Introduction to the trailer/of your pitch
    - Short summary/synopsis (1-2 paragraphs); include genre
    - Convincing explanation of how the theme of the story transcends literature and should be made into a movie
    - Concluding slogan/statement
  - Trailer for your movie
    - Length: 2 minutes max.
    - Include visuals, text, and sound

View examples on <http://www.moviehatch.com/>

# What is a film pitch?

A film pitch is a basically your sales pitch for a your film. Usually a film pitch is presented to producers in order to receive funding to make the movie. Other times a pitch can be used to simply create interest in the idea.

# Introduction of Pitch

- Introduce yourselves
- Introduce your short story
- Introduce your trailer

# Introduction of Pitch

**Logline: A one-line description of your project that'll hook a prospective reader/watcher.**

- WEDDING CRASHERS – Two guys crash weddings to score chicks.
- THE PRINCESS BRIDE – An adult fairytale where a servant and one true love of the soon to be princess must prove his love and save his lady through fire swamps, the pit of despair, cliffs of insanity, Spanish swordsman, giants, a six-fingered man and of course Prince Humperdink.
- THE SIXTH SENSE – A psychiatrist must help a little boy who believes he can talk with the dead.
- JURASSIC PARK – Dinosaurs are cloned to populate a theme park, but a major security breakdown releases the dinosaurs.

# Summary/Synopsis

- Limit the written summary to 1-2 paragraphs because your classmates are not interested in listening to the whole plot.
- Include the vital parts of your story and just a bit more that make it stand out. A film pitch should include all the important story beats.
- You want the pitch to keep your listener interested, so tell your story, but don't include extraneous points in your summary.
- Your pitch might benefit from presenting the entire summary, secret endings and all, but you also might choose to leave your readers wanting more by leaving out the ending.
- **The general rule: shorter is better**

# Example Synopsis

When their kingdom becomes trapped in perpetual winter, a fearless princess joins forces with a mountaineer and his reindeer sidekick to find her sister, the Snow Queen, and break her icy spell. Although their epic journey leads them to encounters with mystical trolls, a comedic snowman, harsh conditions, and magic at every turn, the princess and her mountaineer bravely push onward in a race to save their kingdom from winter's cold grip.

# Example Synopsis

Young and shy teen is in for the night of his life when the most popular girl in high school recruits him to help her play mischievous pranks on the friends who betrayed her. The next day, however, the mysterious girl is nowhere to be found. With help from a few buddies and some cryptic clues that she left behind, he embarks on an obsessive mission to find the girl who stole his heart and made him feel truly alive.

# Example Synopsis

A freshman college student knows she does not want to be part of a clique, but that's exactly where she finds herself after arriving at her new school. Thrust in among mean gals, nice gals and just plain weird gals, she finds that the only thing they have in common is how well they sing together. She takes the women of the group out of their comfort zone of traditional arrangements and into a world of amazing harmonic combinations in a fight to the top of college music competitions.



# Convincing Explanation of Theme

- Because the theme of your story transcends literature...it should be made into a movie!
- Your goal is to explain how the theme of your short story is relevant, interesting, and applicable.
- Sell the class your theme 😊

# Concluding Slogan/Statement

- It's important to leave your audience with a final slogan/statement that encompasses your theme.
- This is the last thing your audience will hear...make it impactful and persuasive.
- Think about/watch movie trailers. Leave the last word.

# Trailer example

- Hush Hush trailer:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=->

[UsDkZ1Ej5I&index=9&list=PL5A1C3F465FBC](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-UsDkZ1Ej5I&index=9&list=PL5A1C3F465FBC)

[59B8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-UsDkZ1Ej5I&index=9&list=PL5A1C3F465FBC)

# Unit 1 Reflection

1. What did you like about the unit and would want to do again?
2. What would you have changed about this unit or how would you improve this unit if we had to do it over again?
3. What is the most memorable or interesting thing you have learned this unit?
4. What advice would you give to a freshman next year?
5. What are you looking forward to with *Lord of the Flies*