

Name: _____

Identifying Theme 2

Directions: read each short story and determine the theme or message in the story. Remember that a good answer will focus on big world lessons, not small world details of the story.

Even though they were sisters, Suzie and June were nothing alike. If Suzie wanted to jump rope, June wanted to play hopscotch. If June wanted to watch soap operas, Suzie wanted to watch talk shows. Tensions rose to the point that the girls could no longer stand one another's company. It seemed that they had nothing in common, until the day that progress reports came out. While riding the bus home from school, the girls—startled by how upset the other looked—realized that they were both failing a subject. Suzie was failing math and June was failing reading. Since both girls wanted to pass their classes, they got to talking and agreed to help one another. So everyday after school for the next few weeks, Suzie tutored June in reading and then June tutored Suzie in math. By the time report cards came were distributed, Suzie and June were passing all of their classes. The girls were delighted, but their mother was happiest of all. Not just because her daughters passed their classes, but because they had learned to be good sisters.

1. What is the theme of this story? _____

2. What happens in the story that leads you to believe this? _____

All Victor ever wanted to do with his life was be a singer. He didn't pay attention in school and he spent all of his time at home watching music videos online and impersonating his idols. His mother tried to teach him the value of getting an education and having a backup plan, but Victor would respond the same way every time, "Mom, I won't need to know any of that boring old stuff when I'm famous. You'll see." But there was one major problem with Victor's plan: he wasn't any good at singing. Victor wanted to be a singer so badly, that he didn't notice the pained look on the faces of those who endured his singing. Because he wanted to be a singer so badly, when honest people told him to find something else to do with his life, he accused them of being "jealous haters" and ignored their advice. After Victor dropped out of high school to focus on his music career, the years passed and the doors never opened.

3. What is the theme of this story? _____

4. What happens in the story that leads you to believe this? _____

Kyle liked Lucy more than any other girl in the school, but he had an odd way of showing it. When she walked ahead of him in line, he kicked at her shoe. When she passed him on the school yard, he called her “lame Lucy.” He even wrote a mean word on her homework during the bus ride to school. But what puzzled Lucy the most was receiving an invitation to Kyle’s birthday party. Figuring that he was just planning a mean trick on her, Lucy decided not to go, and while Kyle eagerly awaited Lucy’s arrival, Lucy talked on the phone to Jacob. When Kyle finally realized that Lucy was not coming to his party, he was crushed.

5. What is the theme of this story? _____

6. What happens in the story that leads you to believe this? _____

The little grey mouse that lived in my wall prospered for many days on nibbles of my lunch. I’d pack a meal before bed and, while I slept, he would take small bites of my lunch, which I left on the counter. He’d take a cracker crumble here, and a bread crumb there, but he wouldn’t take too much and he’d always clean up after himself. Things were going quite well for him and I didn’t even know he existed, until he got sloppy. One night while I slept, he ate all of my chips and left behind a big mess. When I awoke to this sight, I knew what had happened to my chips. So the next night when he returned for another snack, he found a nice, delicious piece of cheese... lightly balanced on a mouse trap. Now I don’t have to share my chips anymore.

7. What is the theme of this story? _____

8. What happens in the story that leads you to believe this? _____

Ulysses spent all of his free time reading books and felt that he was very intelligent. One day a nice student from his class asked him if he wanted to go sledding and Ulysses responded, “I’ve read about sledding in books, and it sounds miserable. No, thank you.” On another day, a different friendly student asked Ulysses if he wanted to go out for hotdogs after school. Ulysses responded, “I’ve read that hotdogs are filled with rat parts and pig bellies. No, thank you.” Nobody asked Ulysses to hang out again, but he did read about friends in his books.

9. What is the theme of this story? _____

10. What happens in the story that leads you to believe this? _____
