

Themes Worksheet

Directions: Read each short story and answer the questions:

I-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 went home. On the bus the girls were startled by how upset the other looked. They 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 agreed to help one another. So after school for the next few weeks, Suzie tutored June in reading and then June tutored Suzie in math. By the time report cards were distributed, Suzie and June were passing all their classes. The girls were delighted, but their mother was happiest of all. Not just because her daughters had passed their classes, but because they learned to be good sisters.

1. What is the theme of this story?

- Possible themes:**
1. Two heads are better than one
 2. It is better to work together
 3. Our differences help us learn from each other.

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

Justification: Despite having different characters and personalities, June and Suzie help one another by learning to work together.

II-All Victor ever wanted to do with his life was be a singer. He didn't pay attention in school, and he spent all his time at home listening to music 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." There was one major problem with Victor's plan: he wasn't any good at singing. Victor enjoyed singing so much that he didn't notice the pained look on the faces of those who endured his singing. Some lied to him and said they liked his singing. Other people told him to find something else to do with his life. Victor accused those people of being "jealous haters" and ignored their advice. Soon Victor dropped out of high school to focus on his music career. The years passed and the doors never opened.

1. What is the theme of this story?

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

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III-Katie Clean invited Messy Missy to her house to work on their biology project, but Katie Clean had no idea what a visit from Messy Missy entailed. First of all, it was raining and Messy Missy neither bothered to take her boots off nor thoroughly wiped them on the doormat. Then Messy Missy ate a bag of hot chips on Katie Clean's white bedspread without

asking, and Messy Missy is a sloppy eater, so hot chip powder got all over the bedspread. Katie Clean tried to be polite and ignore Messy Missy's sloppy behavior, but then Messy Missy threw her chip wrapper on the floor. Offended, Katie Clean pretended that she was sick and asked Messy Missy to leave. The next day Katie Clean asked the teacher if she could work by herself. After explaining her situation, the teacher allowed Katie to work alone. Messy Missy would have finished the assignment by herself, but she spilled grape soda all over her assignment.

1. What is the theme of this story?

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

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Conflict Worksheet

Direction: Read the description of the story then describe the type of conflict and justify your answer:

- 1- After breaking his mother's favorite vase, Casey struggles to decide whether he should tell his mother the truth and face the consequences, or whether he should attempt to hide his mistake and blame the family dog.

Answer:

Internal conflict: (Person vs. himself) – (Casey vs. himself) – (Casey experiences a conflict on whether to admit the truth to his mom or not; hence the conflict is internal).

- 2- Brian has the best dog in the world. In fact, he has one of the only dogs in the world. That's because dogs are not allowed in Brian's world, where people believe that dogs spread diseases. Brian's dog will be executed if he is caught. Soon Brian learns of a mysterious underground dog owners club and joins the fight to legalize dogs. Can Brian and his new friends prove to the world that dogs are safe and friendly?

Answer:

External conflict: (Person vs. society) - (Brian vs. society) - (Brian struggles against a prevailing social value that goes against raising dogs) .

***Discuss the remaining examples with your teacher in class.**

- 3- Kirstin was once teased for being heavy, but then she lost a lot of weight. Now Kirstin is very skinny, but there is just one problem: she still sees an overweight girl when she looks in the mirror. Her friends and family try to convince her of how beautiful she is, but she doesn't believe them. Worst still, she is continuing to diet. Will Kirstin be able to align her body image with reality or will she destroy herself?

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- 4- Jack Juniper is the best fighter pilot in the Air Force. He can take down an enemy jet while doing a barrel roll. One day while Jack is escorting some friendly pilots to a military base, something that Jack has never seen before attacks the convoy... aliens! Can Jack outmaneuver the highly skilled alien pilots or is the mission doomed to failure?

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- 5- Janie is on a whitewater-rafting trip along a choppy river when their guide suddenly has a heart attack. Now she and the other passengers must learn to work together to survive the treacherous rapids. As if things weren't bad enough, some of the passengers spotted a bear following the confused rafters along the shore. Will Janie make it home safely?

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Character Types Worksheet

Directions: Read the short story. Pay close attention to the characters. Respond to the questions that follow.

"Let me get your brownie," Jawanna barked at Maria as she towered over her in the lunchroom. Maria did not want to give Jawanna her brownie. She wanted to eat it for herself, but Jawanna was the biggest girl in the grade and also the meanest, and Maria was one of the smallest. Sliding the tray toward Jawanna, Maria replied, "Sure, Jawanna. I wasn't going to eat it anyway."

After Jawanna left, Maria's friend Jessica turned toward her, "Why didn't you tell her to go somewhere?" Maria sighed, felt sick to her stomach, and replied, "Yeah right, and get pounded? No thanks." Jessica put her arm around her friend's shoulder, "Look, Maria, if you don't stick up for yourself, Jawanna is going to be eating off of you for a long time." Maria considered Jessica's advice for a moment and then responded, "Well, brownies are fattening anyway. Maybe if I give her enough dessert, she'll clog her arteries and have a heart attack." The girls chuckled at this but Maria still felt sick to her stomach.

The next day at school, Jawanna was walking to the pencil sharpener when she noticed that Maria was using a mechanical pencil. "Hey Maria, let me hold that pencil." Maria looked down at her mechanical pencil. It had kitties and stars on it and she liked it very much. She replied, "I can't, Jawanna. It's my last one." Jawanna put one hand on her hip, sneered at Maria, and said, "Well, you've gotten to use it quite a bit. I haven't gotten to use it at all. Can't you see that's unfair?" Maria gulped, "Um, yeah, I guess I can see that. Here, you can use it for now, but maybe I can get it back at the end of the day," replied Maria as she handed Jawanna her pencil. Jawanna used the mechanical pencil with the kitties and the stars on it until the end of the day while Maria used a cheap wooden pencil. When the bell rang, Jawanna brought over Maria's pencil in several pieces and dropped it on her desk. "Here's your pencil. It's not working," Jawanna said, holding back her giggles as she left.

After their teacher, Ms. McMillan, dismissed the students, she said, "Maria, can I see you for a minute?" Maria's stomach sank as she approached the stern woman. Ms. McMillan was tough and the last thing that Maria wanted was to get into more trouble. Sensing Maria's feelings, Ms. McMillan put a hand on her shoulder, "It's OK, Maria. You're not in trouble. I just wanted to share something with you." Maria exhaled as Ms. McMillan continued. "When I was your age, I was relentlessly bullied by a girl named Carrie Carter." Maria looked at her with surprise. "You were?" She asked. Maria couldn't imagine that a person as strong as Ms. McMillan had been bullied. "I was," Ms. McMillan replied. "Carrie bullied me every day. I gave her my lunch money, I did her homework for her, and I even let her call me cruel nicknames." Maria could not believe what she was hearing. Ms. McMillan continued, "This went on for years until my mother got sick. That was a pivotal moment in my life. When I saw my mom in that condition, I learned that I had to be strong in life. I stopped giving Carrie the lunch money that my mother worked so hard to give me. I stopped doing her homework for her and used the extra time to help my mom. Carrie still called me names though. She called me worse names, but that was because she needed me to be weak, and I had grown strong." Maria looked down. Ms. McMillan continued, "True strength comes from inside of you, Maria. Think about that tonight."

Maria considered Ms. McMillan's words as she walked home. She thought about it as she ate dinner, while she did her homework, and before she went to sleep. The next morning on the school playground, Jawanna ran up to her. "Look, Maria, I didn't do my homework last night, and we all know that you did yours, because you're a nerd, so I need you to do mine too. O.K.? Thanks." Maria got off the bench she was sitting on next to Jessica. She put one hand on her hip and replied, "Actually, Jawanna, I don't really have time for that now. In fact, I don't have time for that ever again." Maria stared Jawanna in the face and a split second before Jawanna put on her sneer Maria caught a glimpse of her fear.

Jawanna pushed Maria into the wood chips. Jessica stood up from her seat on the bench right when Ms. McMillan appeared from behind. "Jawanna, you bring your butt on down to the office," she said while throwing her thumb in the direction of the school building. As Jawanna walked off with her head hung low, Ms. McMillan helped Maria up off the ground and said, "I'm proud of you, girl." Maria smiled. Her tailbone was a little sore, but her stomach felt fine.

1. Which character is best described as the **protagonist**? _____

Explain your answer.

2. Which character is best described as the **antagonist**? _____

Explain your answer.

3. Is Jessica a **static** or **dynamic** character? _____

Explain your answer.

4. Is Jessica a **round** or **flat** character? _____

Explain your answer.

5. Is Maria a **static** or **dynamic** character? _____

Explain your answer.

6. Is Maria a **round** or **flat** character? _____

Explain your answer.

7. Is Jawanna a **static** or **dynamic** character? _____

Explain your answer.

8. Is Jawanna a **round** or **flat** character? _____

Explain your answer.

9. Is Ms. McMillanan **antagonist**? _____

Explain your answer.

10. Is Carrie Carter a **dynamic** character? _____ + _____

Explain your answer.

Point of View Worksheet :

Directions: Read the following passages and determine the narrative perspective, then **explain** how you were able to **identify** the point of view.

1- Cool Breeze on a Hot Day (by Amy Scott):

"Ice cream! Ice cream!" **I** heard the street vendor shouting as he pushed his cart down the block. Ice cream sounded really tasty on a day like this. **I** plunged my hands into my pockets and examined the contents: one pair of house keys, a pack of gum that was almost empty, and a few coins. **I** pulled the coins from **my** pockets and counted them. It didn't take long. 46 cents. **I** saw a line of children from the neighborhood in front of the street vendor. Each walked away happier than the former. **My** mouth tasted like hot ashes.

Narrator's Point of View: First Person Narrative Perspective.

Explain your Answer: - The narrator is a participating figure in the story. (it is his own story).

- The narrator uses the first person pronoun "I" to tell the story. (Ex: I heard the street.../ I pulled the coins...)
- The narrator is a major character .

2- A Cut Too Deep by (Angela Marshall):

Greg looked up at the bright lights in the operating room until **they** burned a white spot in **his** field of vision. He looked at the face of the **surgeon** and saw only a white blur. When **he** looked away, **he** could see the **surgeon's** masked face from his peripheries. **He** could hear **him** readying an array of metal instruments, many of which looked as though **they** might belong to a dentist. I hope he's not going to use those on me! **Greg** thought to himself with terror. The **surgeon** picked up one that looked like a bent up question mark.

Narrator's Point of View: Limited-Omniscient narrative perspective.

Explain your Answer: - The narrative voice (narrator) that tells us about Greg's story is an outsider (anonymous) i.e. he is not a character inside the text.

- The narrator uses the third person pronoun to narrate the story.
- The narrative voice reveals (gives us) only the thoughts and feelings of one character (Greg)

3-The Great Divide and Other Freshman Tales (by P. W. Dunhill):

"Wow, look at his costume," said Annie. "He's dressed up like an electric jellyfish." She observed the flashing lights with genuine admiration. Adrianna looked at the costume and scoffed. Secretly, she envied the detail and craftsmanship that went into the jellyfish costume, but she would never let on to Annie. "What kind of loser goes walking around like a Christmas tree?" Adrianna said. Annie did not agree, but did not want to be disagreeable. "Yeah... what kind?" The ladies walked by another house. Annie did not like this. It seemed like Adrianna more interested in criticizing others than in trick-or-treating. Annie adjusted the headband to her costume. Adrianna was not wearing a costume.

Narrator's Point of View:

Explain your Answer :

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4- For the Stars and Heavens (by Bradley Fox):

Odin brushed the snowflakes off of his sword and replied, "I will never accept a peace treaty from the Hamburgs. They are our sworn enemies and so long as I can hold a sword, I will point it at Hamburgs." Epée looked at him and wrinkled her face. A long moment passed in silence. Snow continued to fall from the sky. Finally, Epée responded, "But, Odin, think about what peace might mean for the children." Odin sneered and said, "Humph," but made no further comment. Epée drew her weapon.

Narrator's Point of View:

Explain your Answer :

5- Disaster Area: The Story of Andy Reynolds (by Chris A. Bowman):

Andy looked around his room. It was completely trashed. His floors were layered with clothing. Underneath the clothing were random toys. His lamp had a pair of boxer shorts on top of it. Some of his drawers were pulled out completely from his dresser and lying on the floor, others were hanging from the dresser. As Andy walked toward the bed carrying a blanket, he jumped up in the air and exclaimed, "Ahhh! My foot! I hurt my foot!" He peeled back the layers under where he just stepped and found a model plane. He threw it across the room with a crash.

Narrator's Point of View:

Explain your Answer :