**Finding & Writing a Theme Sentence**

A theme is a message about life or human nature that is developed in a story.

In most stories, the theme is not stated directly, but must be inferred by readers.

In order to infer & understand the themes in a story, focus on the main characters:

What do they learn about themselves, or about life, or about how humans behave? That’s the theme!

Themes apply to all humans, in all times, in all places. So theme statements do not contain the names of any characters or settings or events from a particular story.

CREATE A SAMPLE THEME WORD LIST

Step 1. This story is about…

Step 2. Cross out words that are not about human experiences.

Step 3. Generalize words that are specific to this story so that they fit all human experiences.

Step 4. Notice the list words that show how the characters change or what they learn – use them to write theme sentences.

SAMPLE THEME SENTENCES  for “All Summer in a Day”

a. Bullying is wrong and dangerous because we can’t know the consequences for the victim.

b. Something that starts out as a little prank can end up in a tragedy.

c. Jealousy can cause people to bully those who have something they want.

d. Groups of people can do unethical acts that most of the individuals wouldn’t do if they were acting alone.

Step 5. Make sure you can apply the theme sentences to real life incidents:

a. Bullying is wrong and dangerous because we can’t know the consequences for the victim.

- In October 2012, a Canadian teenager committed suicide after she was teased repeatedly by other students.

b. Something that starts out as a little prank can end up in a tragedy.

- In 2010, a New Jersey college student committed suicide after his roommate used a webcam to spy on him.

c. Jealousy can cause people to bully those who have something they want.

- In my own family, I used to call my brother stupid when I felt jealous of his athletic ability.

d. Groups of people can do unethical acts that most of the individuals wouldn’t do if they were acting alone.

- Today at lunch, many students acted disrespectfully toward some adults, even though most students are respectful to adults most of the time at home and in school.