



THEME



Theme is
The Message

WHAT IS A THEME IS LITERATURE?

A theme is a universal idea, lesson, or message explored throughout a work of literature. One key characteristic of literary themes is their universality, which means themes are ideas that not only apply to the specific characters and events of a book, but also express broader truths about the human experience that readers can apply to their own lives.

All works of literature have themes. The same work can have multiple themes, and many different works explore the same or similar themes.

Themes are almost never stated explicitly. Often, you can identify a work's themes by thinking about the author's use of symbols, character development, the conflicts faced by characters and elements of the settings.

QUESTIONS & TOPICS TO THINK ABOUT: IDENTIFYING THEMES IN THE GIVER

- What makes a **family**?
- What is the **role of government**?
- What is the **value of privacy**?
- Who gets to decide **which lives have value**?
- What is the difference between secrecy and privacy?
- Is it better to have **freedom**, even if you make mistakes or have decisions made for you so you take fewer **risks** and thus, make fewer mistakes?
- What is the cost of **conformity**?
- Is there such a thing as a **perfect world**?
- What is worth fighting and even dying for?
- Is there ever a reason to abandon **hope**?
- Is there truth to the adage: no pain; no gain?
- How do our **memories** shape us?
- Where do we find the **courage** to face our deepest fears?
- What do we gain and what do we lose when we elevate group **identity** over individual identity or vice versa?
- Is it better to **challenge "the system"** for the greater good or "toe the line" and protect yourself?



Theme questions can be
shortened to theme
topics. The bold face
words are theme topics.