

Bachelor of Education (Elementary) & Bachelor of Education (Secondary) STEM Lesson Plan

Lesson Title: Identifying Theme In Short Stories Lesson # 2 Date: November 14th, 2025

Name: Breckin Erichuk Subject: ELA Grade(s): 6/7

Rationale:

This lesson is designed to help students deepen their comprehension and critical thinking skills by identifying themes in texts as well as creating their own theme statements based on the story “Those Shoes” by Maribeth Boelts. Understanding the theme allows students to connect literature to universal human experiences.

Core Competencies:

Communication	Thinking	Personal & Social
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I can explain how texts reveal values, beliefs, and traditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I can think critically, creatively, and reflectively to explore ideas within texts ● I can identify key ideas and supporting details in texts 	

Big Ideas (Understand)

Exploring stories helps us understand ourselves and connect to others and the world.

Texts are socially, culturally, and historically constructed.

Language and story can influence, entertain, and teach us.

Learning Standards

(DO)	(KNOW)
<p>Learning Standards - Curricular Competencies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Using oral, written, and visual texts, Students are expected to work individually and collaboratively to be able to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Comprehend and connect how to recognize and identify themes, perspectives, and messages in texts. 2. Create and communicate using writing and other forms of expression to develop ideas and communicate clearly. 	<p>Learning Standards - Content</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students are expected to understand: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Story and text elements like the structure of the story, theme, point of view, and Inference 2. Strategies for analyzing and making connections to text 3. Understand how stories and texts reflect personal experiences, cultural traditions, and worldviews.

Instructional Objectives & Assessment

Instructional Objectives (students will be able to...)	Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students will be able to identify the key ideas, events, and details in a short story or passage. ● Determine the theme (central message or lesson) of a short text and explain how it is developed. ● Collaborate and reflect on how understanding themes and creating theme statements helps deepen comprehension of literature and connect stories to personal or real-world experiences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Conversation/Observation: Students will be observed and assessed on participation in discussions. Additionally, the teacher will both engage in conversation and observe students while walking around the room during individual work time. ● Product: Once the lesson is over, the teacher will assess the students by each student's ability to identify and write their ideas, the theme and the theme statement on their graphic organizer worksheet. The teacher will review student work and provide them with suggestions on how to improve. The teacher will also have students write their own one-sentence theme statement at the bottom as an exit ticket for the lesson.

Prerequisite Concepts and Skills:

Students must be able to read and understand short texts or stories at their grade level, identifying main ideas and key details.
 Students must be able to know basic narrative components such as characters, setting, problem, and resolution.
 Students must be able to participate in pair or group discussions, listen actively, and express their thoughts about what they read.

Indigenous Connections/ First Peoples Principles of Learning:

Based on the First Peoples of learning,
 Learning is embedded in memory, history, and story.
 Learning requires exploration of one's identity and relationships.
 Learning involves recognizing the consequences of one's actions.
 As well, the reading of an Indigenous story.

Universal Design for Learning (UDL):

This lesson will engage visual learners by having visual aids on the board and from the provided passage.
 This lesson will engage auditory learners by having the teacher read them a short story.
 This lesson will engage all learners through the use of collaboration to identify themes of the story read.

Differentiate Instruction (DI):

- For exit tickets, students may write one sentence about the theme statement they think will be important after the lesson.
- Bella will have an audio version of the book with Korean Subtitles to watch and listen to as the teacher will read to the class. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TcMSz1Okob8>
- Bella will have a translated version of the graphic organizers to take notes as she listens to the audiobook.
- Some students may not be able to get a lot done with the notes. Be sure to check on certain students after the reading to ensure their understanding of the task. (Noah and Athena).

Materials and Resources

Book -Those Shoes by Maribeth Boelts

Graphic Organizers (25)

Overhead Camera

Pencils

An overhead projector to show 5 or 6 short slides that aid in instruction for students

Chromebook for translating purposes (Bella)

Lesson Activities:

Teacher Activities	Student Activities	Time
<p>Introduction (anticipatory set – “HOOK”):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Go over classroom expectations to establish how the teacher would like students to behave and work. Ask questions like “What do you do when others are talking?” and “How do you think our work time should look and sound like?” ● Hook: Show an image of trendy shoes and ask, “Why do people want certain brands? How does it feel to fit in—or not fit in?” ● Discuss wants vs needs with the class briefly: “What else could be something that is a want vs a need?” <p>Introduce/Review what a theme is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Theme = the big idea or message about life. ● Example: In <i>Finding Nemo</i>, the theme might be: parents must learn to let go or friendship and loyalty. <p>Introduce that I will be reading the class a story called <i>Those Shoes</i> by Maribeth Boelts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students listen to the expectations given by the teacher. ● Students engage in a discussion about wants and needs ● Encouraged to raise their hand and contribute to the conversation. ● Students listen to the teacher talk about the theme in the story and provide an example. ● Listening quietly, and if they have a question, they will raise their hand. ● 	<p>10 Mins</p>
<p>Body: Building Understanding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Go over what I want them to do on their Graphic Organizers and expectations for students. ● Allow students to write down notes while the teacher reads. <p>Students use a graphic organizer with columns for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● An event in the story ● What the character learns ● Possible theme idea ● Right before Reading: I will have the book in my hand, and I will have a picture on a slide of the cover. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students will listen to the teacher go over how the graphic organizer will work and how they will take notes while the teacher reads ● Students will be given a graphic organizer. ● Students will not collaborate just yet and are expected to listen quietly and encouraged to raise their hand if they have a question. ● Students will raise their hands and offer predictions. 	<p>10 Mins</p>

<p>The teacher will ask, “ By looking at this cover, can you make predictions about what this story might be about?”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure they know I will pause at certain points to discuss key moments - When Jeremy sees his friends’ shoes (ask: “What might he be feeling or what might you infer about the reading”). - When he buys the too-small shoes (ask: “Why does he do that?”) - When he gives the shoes to Antonio (ask: “What does that tell us about him?”) <p>Read: “Those Shoes”</p> <p>After Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In pairs, students share their organizer notes and discuss: <p>The teacher will put a slide with these questions to help guide students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What lesson does Jeremy learn? ● What message does this story send to us? <p>As a class, brainstorm possible themes (kindness, generosity, wants vs. needs, friendship, empathy).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Discuss what a theme statement is with students <p>Model how to turn a theme into a theme statement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Theme: kindness. Theme statement: True happiness comes from kindness, not from having what others have. - 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● While the teacher is reading, students will be silent and only write notes if they apply to the graphic organizers ● Students will be encouraged to raise their hands and participate in the conversation when the teacher stops reading to talk about a certain point in the story. ● Students will be instructed to share their findings with their partners ● Students will do so quietly, respectfully and allow their partner to explain their ideas and vice versa. ● Students can use the visual aids on the board to help in their conversation. ● Students will be asked to brainstorm possible theme ideas they came up with together with the teacher ● Students will listen as their classmates discuss possible themes with the teacher ● Students will raise their hands if they have an idea ● Students will listen and observe the teacher as the teacher is explaining and modelling what a theme statement is. 	<p>15 Mins</p>
<p>Closure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● After modelling a theme statement from the story. ● Students write their own theme statement and support it with evidence from the story 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students write their own theme statement and support it with evidence from the story (one example or quotes) at the bottom of their graphic organizer as an Exit ticket. 	<p>10 Mins</p>

<p>(one example or quotes) at the bottom of their graphic organizer as an Exit ticket.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Remind students that spelling doesn't matter, but proper grammar is necessary ● After giving students time to write a statement, collect graphic organizers when students raise their hands and complete a theme statement from the story. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students will have time to write their theme statement at the bottom of the graphic organizer. ● Once completed, students will raise their hands, and the teacher will collect the graphic organizers. 	
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Organizational Strategies:

Predetermined student helpers will pass out graphic organizers to each student before the lesson begins. Students will be asked to complete their sentences/paragraphs quietly at their desks. Students will be asked to share and reflect with the teacher and peers once completed their sentences/paragraphs

Proactive, Positive Classroom Learning Environment Strategies:

Teacher will clearly explain classroom expectations throughout the lesson during various activities. The bell will be rung to capture students' attention. Teacher will move around the room during individual work time to ensure students are on task and grasping the material. Teacher will provide minimal feedback during the lesson to allow students to think individually. Teacher will verbally acknowledge and thank students who are on task. Teacher will walk around the class, and if students are not on task, they will be given the opportunity to change their behaviour before taking steps to alleviate.

Extensions:

Personal Reflection Writing

- Personal Reflection Activity:
Students write a short journal entry or paragraph responding to: "Write about a time when you wanted something but realized something else mattered more."
Purpose: Connects the story's theme to students' personal experiences, strengthening empathy and self-awareness.
- Art & Theme Visualization
 - Students create a visual representation of the story's theme (e.g., a poster, digital collage, comic strip, or sketchnote).
 - Or create their own shoes for lower shoes that represent their own theme ideas

Reflections (if necessary, continue on separate sheet):

Several themes could be explored in this story (Those Shoes), but the main theme I wanted students to consider was the distinction between wants and needs. We had a great discussion to begin the lesson about certain brands of shoes that we buy, and whether they were more based on wants or needs. This seemed to catch their attention really well, and it seemed like most students were interested in the story. Before giving them their graphic organizers to take notes while I read, I wanted to help them understand what a theme was and how it could be used for their writing

identification skills. I used an example from Finding Nemo, which they were able to relate to last week's characterization lesson. I went over how I wanted the students to take notes and gave them some ideas of what I was looking for. Based on our prior discussions, I got the students to take a look at the book title and make predictions about what the story and theme could be about. I thought this was a great way for them to start thinking about a theme for their exit tickets, where they would come up with their own theme statements at the end. Throughout the reading, I would ask them questions about what was going on in the story to help them come up with ideas to fill their graphic organizers. That seemed to work well, as most students had some great ideas that could contribute to their theme statements. Once we were done reading, I had the class come up with some theme ideas that I wrote on the board to help them with their statements. After that, we talked about what a theme statement is and how to write them using my own example, and I let them know they could use our ideas that we came up with on the board. The students seemed to understand it well after reading their theme statements after the lesson. Overall, they seemed to have a good grasp of the concepts and seemed to enjoy the lesson.