



Whose theme is it anyway?

KS4 > Skills > A/AS essentials

How it works This is a really comprehensive resource which encourages students to explore texts independently and gives them access to the highest grades at GCSE level.

Try this! Give students the handouts and let them get on with it – the instructions are all there for them.

Try this! Identify the key themes, and divide the class into an appropriate number of groups. In their groups, they should then prepare a handout for the rest of the class which:

- traces the theme throughout the text
- identifies key quotations

Try this! Feeling like joining the 21st Century? Ask students to use PowerPoint for their presentation.

Try this! As a follow up activity, ask students to make connections between the various themes.

Alison Smith

Major Themes in *Your Set Text*

This activity aims to help you clarify your thinking about the most important themes in your set text, as well as to explore the dynamics of group discussion.

Your score

First, read through the list of themes by yourself, and give each one a score in column A to reflect the importance you think it has in the text you are studying, as follows:

- 0 No significance whatsoever
- 5 Theme features in a minor way
- 10 Theme features in a major way
- 15 The text's single central theme

Group score

Now, work with others to discuss the scores you have given to each theme. Agree a group score for each one and write this in column B.

Rank order

Finally, as a whole class, share your findings, draw up a long list of up to ten key themes and vote to determine their rank order. Write this in column C.

Evaluation of discussion processes

Look back at your three lists of key themes: your own, that of your group, and that of your class. Consider some of these questions:

- How similar/different is your list to the lists produced by your group/the class? Were the changes you agreed to positive? To what extent did you genuinely agree with the changes? What happened in the discussion to account for this?
- To what extent did the nature of the task contribute to the quality of the discussion and decision making? Did the giving of a group score help or hinder the discussion? What impact did vote casting have? What might you learn from this about how knowledge is created?
- What did this activity show about your performance in different types of group discussion? Are you satisfied with this? What improvements or developments might you try out next time?

Major Themes in *Your Set Text*

Theme	A Your score	B Group score	C Rank order
Age			
Alienation			
Ambition			
Beauty			
Betrayal			
Communication			
Compassion			
Confrontation			
Courage			
Crime			
Death			
Delusion			
Despair			
Destiny			
Duty			
Education			
Faith			
Family			
Fear			
Friendship			
Gender			
Guilt			
Happiness			
Hate			
Health – physical or mental			
History			
Hope			
Independence			
Justice			
Knowledge			

Major Themes in *Your Set Text*

Theme	A Your score	B Group score	C Rank order
Language			
Leadership			
Loneliness			
Love			
Loyalty			
Memory			
Moral principles			
Narrative			
Nature			
Passion			
Patriotism			
Peace			
Political ideology			
Poverty			
Punishment			
Racism			
Reconciliation			
Redemption			
Religion			
Revenge			
Sexuality			
Solitude			
Transgression			
Truth			
Unhappiness			