Thematic Topics, Theme, Thesis

[Theme](http://literarydevices.net/tag/theme/) is defined as a main idea or an underlying meaning of a literary work that may be stated directly or indirectly.

Often, people have reduced themes down to one word or phrase. For example, in “Romeo and Juliet,” some thematic topics have been claimed as “the individual vs society,” “the inevitability of fate,” or “young love.”

Or, in *To Kill a Mockingbird,* some themes that are often discussed are “the coexistence of good and evil,” “moral education,” “social inequity,” “youth,” and “race.”

However, these are actually thematic topics; ideas that are central to the text, but wide ranging and vague. A real theme of a text is what the text is suggesting ABOUT those topics, requiring at least a sentence.

Think about it this way: you would want to have an idea of thematic topics for a discussion or a seminar—the broad strokes that you can discuss with many people. But, you would want a THEME as an argument. It would be the specific angle on that topic that you personally believe and want to argue.

* **This theme would be incorporated into your thesis.**

Consider “The Garden Party”:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Thematic topics | Theme |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |