

Name: _____ Date: _____

Analyzing Theme Development in “An Hour with Abuelo”



Objective

In this lesson, you will

- summarize a text.
- analyze how an author develops theme through characterization.

Summarizing Fiction

First, read to get the **gist** _____ of text and then **summarize** _____ the key ideas. Remember, a **summary** is a **brief** _____, **objective** _____ restating of the main points or key ideas in a text.

Summarizing helps a reader capture the most important **events** _____ and **characters** _____ in a text. This, in turn, allows the reader to notice aspects of the text that **reveal** _____ a theme.

When summarizing fiction, think of the following questions to capture the key ideas of the text:

- What is the **setting** _____?
- What is the **conflict** _____?
- Who are the main **characters** _____ involved in the conflict?
- How was the **conflict resolved** _____?
- How did this **resolution** _____ impact the main characters?
- What did they **learn** _____?

Analyzing Theme



Theme is an **underlying** _____ message or **universal** _____ idea in a story.

It is important to note that theme

- is developed **throughout** _____ the entire text.
- is developed through **events** _____, details, and **characters** _____.
- can be applied to all **readers** _____ and similar **life** _____ **situations** _____.

There can be **multiple** _____ **themes** in a text.

? Question

Which **two** details from paragraph 6 supports the idea that Arturo takes issue his family's view about life and ambition? (Highlight the boxes with the correct details).

(6) His name is Arturo too. I was named after him. I don't really know my grandfather.

His children, including my mother, came to New York and New Jersey (where I was born) and he stayed on the Island [Puerto Rico] until my grandmother died.

Then he got sick, and since nobody could leave their jobs to go take care of him,

they brought him to this nursing home in Brooklyn. I see him a couple of times a year, but he's always surrounded by his sons and daughters. My mother tells me that Don Arturo had once been a teacher back in Puerto Rico, but had lost his job after the war [WW II]. Then he became a farmer. She's always saying in a sad

voice, "Ay, *bandito!* What a waste of a fine mind." Then she usually

shrugs her shoulders and says, "*Asi es la vida.*" That's the way life is. It sometimes makes me mad that the adults I know just accept whatever is thrown at them because "that's the way things are." Not for me. I go after what I want.

EXPLANATION

At the start of the story, you learn that Arturo sees spending time with his Abuelo as an inconvenience. He resents his mother for making him visit him and, as such, agrees to spend only one hour. Apart from that **conflict** with his mother, here you learn that this **problem** extends to something more significant—Arturo **vs.** his family. Arturo believes that his Abuelo and his family members are too accepting of defeat and do not passionately pursue their goals. When his mother says, *Asi es la vida*—that is the way life is, Arturo sees this as them being okay with allowing their circumstances to dictate their futures. He vows to be different in going after what he wants. This difference in thinking creates **tension** between him and his mother and between him and his grandfather.

 Question

Which of these details from paragraphs 21–28 **most directly** reveals a theme in the story? (Place an **X** next to the correct answer.)

- Arturo jokes to himself that the woman in the jogging outfit is “the world’s oldest marathoner.”
- Arturo looks at his watch and realizes he has been with his abuelo for exactly one hour.
- Abuelo concludes his story by whispering that his story’s title is *Asi es la vida*.
- Abuelo asks Arturo to get a wheelchair from the closet.

EXPLANATION

Asi es la vida is Spanish for “That’s the way life is.” **Throughout** _____ the story, it is used to comment on the dreams that Abuelo did not achieve. The fact that Abuelo uses it as the title of his autobiography, which recounts the successes and failures in his life, points to its importance to the theme. When he whispers the saying, he is not only telling Arturo what his book is called, he is reminding himself of a **life** _____ **lesson** _____ he himself has learned (and one that the author wants to **teach** _____ the **reader** _____).