

Theme Comprehension & Analysis Activity

USING NAOMI SHIHAB NYE'S
"STAY TRUE HOTEL"



Nouvelle ELA

THEME ACTIVITY

Using Naomi Shihab Nye's "Stay True Hotel"



Comprehension & Analysis

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THEME: "Stay True Hotel"

PURPOSE	<p>"Stay True Hotel" by Naomi Shihab Nye is a fictional short story about Jane, a girl who must suddenly move from London to Berlin due to her father's job. Her mother passed at an early age, and her father often relocates them for work.</p> <p>This short story serves as a great, straightforward tool for teaching theme.</p>
MATERIAL	<p>"Stay True Hotel" – this provided link may require you to sign up for Common Lit, which is a free educational resource that I HIGHLY recommend and use frequently. You can opt to find it through another free means with a quick online search.</p>
OBJECTIVE(S)	<p>Students will determine the theme and analyze its development over the course of the short story(R.L.9-10.2).</p>
SUGGESTED LESSON	
BELL RINGER (7-10 min)	<p>Use the corresponding bell ringer prompt included in this resource (access the editable version here). This includes a mini-introduction to the literary element and a quick practice for students to apply their learning of this literary element as they read the short story.</p> <p>Optional: Have students share and discuss with a partner or in small groups.</p>
INSTRUCTION	<p>Conduct a first read of the short story. You can read this aloud as a class, listen to the audio reading aloud, have students read in pairs, groups, or independently. You know your students best.</p> <p>Distribute the worksheet* and have students work through their literary analysis. This can be completed as a guided practice, a group analysis, or independent practice.</p>

Suggested ~50-minute lesson plan outline included complete with extension ideas, standard(s), and linked materials.



Theme is the overall message or lesson a text communicates to its readers

AN EASY EQUATION TO BREAK DOWN THEME

TOPIC + MESSAGE = THEME

COMMON TOPICS EXPLORED IN LITERATURE:

- Love
- Death
- Friendship
- Power
- Courage

EXAMPLE OF THEME EQUATION:

Love + **difficult yet rewarding** =
(topic) (message)

**Although love can be difficult, it is
often rewarding.**
(theme)

Includes an editable bell ringer activity that introduces the literary element & provides students with a guided practice opportunity



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THEME: "Stay True Hotel"

Part One Instructions: Log major events that occur throughout "Stay True Hotel." Determine how Jane reacts and/or feels about each major event. Later, you will use this to determine the theme of the short story.

Beginning of the short story:

Jane's father tells her they have to move to Berlin.

How does Jane react and/or feel about this event?

Jane resents her father for making them uproot their lives yet again.

Middle of the short story:

As he checks into their hotel, Jane's dad tells her to explore Berlin.

How does Jane react and/or feel about this event?

End of the short story:

THEME: "Stay True Hotel"

↓↓ EXAMPLE ANSWERS BELOW ↓↓

Beginning of the short story:

Jane's father tells her they have to move to Berlin.

How does Jane react and/or feel about this event?

Jane resents her father for making them uproot their lives yet again.

Middle of the short story:

As he checks into their hotel, Jane's dad tells her to explore Berlin.

How does Jane react and/or feel about this event?

Jane is curious about the hotel's unique features and is interested in exploring Berlin.

End of the short story:

Jane independently explores the streets of Berlin.

How does Jane react and/or feel about this event?

Jane is thrilled to be taking in new sights and a new language.

Students read the short story, then engage in a scaffolded theme analysis activity.

Suggested answers included.



Part Three Instructions: In one complete sentence, answer the following question: what theme, or overall message, is Shihab Nye communicating to her readers? Be sure to use T.A.G. (title, author, genre) to start your response. See example of T.A.G. below.

Example of T.A.G.:

Shirley Jackson's short story "The Lottery" communicates to readers...

After analyzing Shihab Nye's development of theme, students determine the theme using T.A.G. to complete their response.



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THEME: "Stay True Hotel" →

There are many "right" answers to the following questions, so it's all about how you support your ideas. Use evidence from the short story, other texts (i.e. novels, movies, songs, etc.), and your own experiences to support your claims.

1. There is a common quote of advice, "Stay true to yourself." How does this quote relate to the name of the hotel Jane checks into?

Answers will vary. A possible answer might suggest that the hotel's name helps Jane realize that she can still be true to herself, her hopes and dreams, etc. in a new, unfamiliar place.

2. What are some excitements and concerns one might face when moving to a new country? You can create a T-chart listing the differences.

Answers will vary. This will help students make text-to-world connections, even if they've never experienced moving. If you have students who have emigrated, encourage them to make text-to-self connections if they feel comfortable doing so.

3. Share about a time you experienced a significant change in your life. How was your experience similar or different from Jane's? Consider how you initially felt about the change compared to how you feel about the change now.

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Includes optional short response questions:

- Text-to-text
- Text-to-world
- Text-to-self
- Drawing prompt