

## ANSWERS

### WHAT IS A THEME ?

It's the important moral belief or life experience woven throughout a story.

It's the meaning or emotional foundation of the character's life.

(Do you believe there is any significance or emotional cornerstone to your life ?)

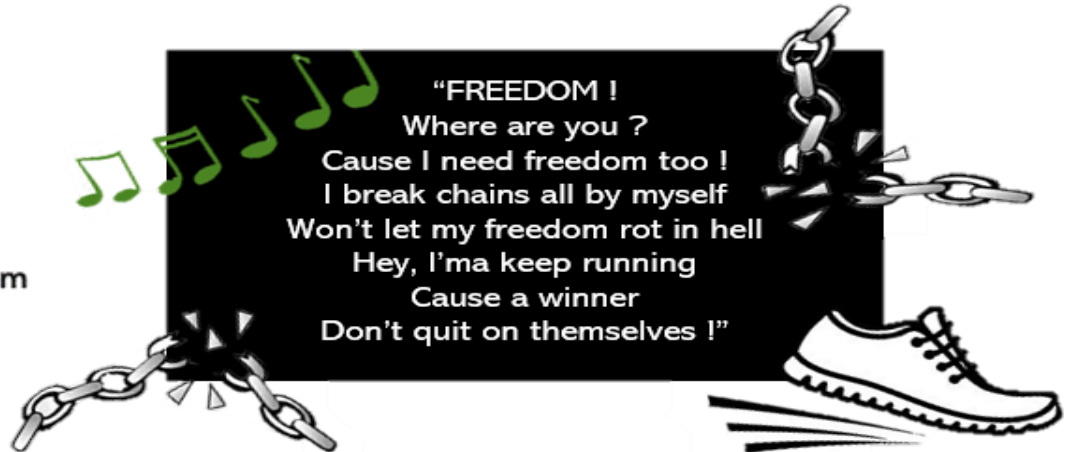
#### BEYONCE

As Storyteller

from the song

'Freedom'

LEMONADE Album



We might not think about it, but often we seek out stories because of their themes and how they touch on things that we have dealt with ourselves. Think about the last film you saw or book you read – or argument you had – what was the theme ?

Why is it helpful to think about themes ? Because it can help you identify patterns --- not only in the stories that entertain you, but also in the situations and people you are drawn to (or tripped up by) in life.

Once you realize there is a theme that carries a lot of force in your life you can focus more on understanding the theme itself, rather than how it plays out in your life. Only then will you realize that it is in your power to reshape the message you want this theme to communicate in your life (or in the stories that you shape).

#### COMMON THEMES

love  
war  
revenge  
growing up  
bullying  
friendship  
marriage  
motherhood  
money  
loss  
loneliness  
community  
abuse  
justice  
rich vs poor  
man vs nature  
faith vs doubt  
self-discovery  
**FREEDOM**

#### 'FREEDOM'

Often we are attracted to films, books, or songs where the main character has or gets what we don't have --- from money to a loving relationship to freedom. Rather than consuming for escape with a beer, sit up and look closely for lessons you might learn.

BEYONCE takes on 'FREEDOM' in her song of the same name. Freedom means one thing to the wealthy white man running a Fortune 500 company. Something quite different to the Black man walking his own neighborhood concerned about police playing cowboys. As a Black woman artist, what do you think Beyonce communicates about freedom in her song ? Go line by line. There are multiple messages.

**CHECK OUT MY INTERPRETATIONS OF HER MESSAGES ON THE NEXT PAGE**

## ANSWERS

### WHAT IS A THEME ? (cont.)

### INTERPRETATIONS OF FREEDOM

**"Cause I need freedom too !"**

If you are in a relationship or part of a community you can't let your support for your partner or community minimize your own need for freedom.

**"Won't let my freedom rot in hell !"**

What kind of hell does she mean ? Her album was dedicated to her journey after discovering her husband had been unfaithful. Could hell be feeling like a mouse stuck spinning on a wheel ?

#### FREEDOM

"Freedom  
Where are you ?  
Cause I need freedom too !  
I break chains all by myself  
Won't let my freedom rot in hell  
Hey, I'ma keep running  
Cause a winner  
Don't quit on themselves !"

BEYONCE  
From LEMONADE Album

**"I break chains by myself"**

Do you imagine giant muscle: pumping as Beyonce tugs on lengths of chain ? NO.

I 'see' her pds --- passion, determination, and smarts !  
She finds her own hidden powers.

**"Hey, I'ma keep running"**

You break one set of chains but there's no stopping. Life is process. There will always be new situations to challenge, upset and entrap us. Be aware.



**"Cause a winner don't quit on themselves !"**

Turn the concept of winning into the act of honoring and believing in yourself.

### EXERCISE: PICK A THEME CLOSE TO HEART

LIST (5) DIFFERENT MESSAGES THAT YOU CAN  
COMMUNICATE ABOUT THE THEME

**EXAMPLE: 'LOVE'**

Love makes you stronger.

Love gives a sense of purpose

Love continues after the Loved one is gone.

Love can connect people from different worlds

Love makes you willing to risk things you value

You won't find Love looking in the wrong places.

Love makes it possible to get through life's hardships

Love can transform those who are jaded and hopeless

You have to Love yourself to Love others

**What Other Messages Can You Add To The Theme 'Love' ?**



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freedom