

Literary Themes

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What is a theme?

Themes can be found everywhere:
literature, popular books, art,
movies, décor...



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What is a theme?

The theme of a fable is its moral.



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What is a theme?

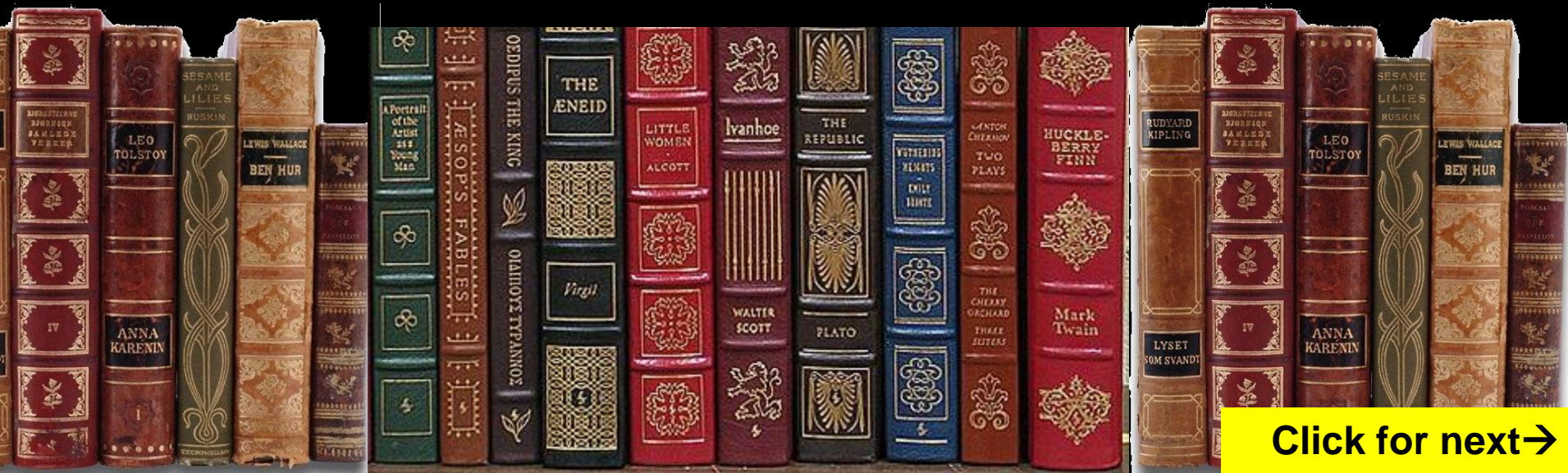
The theme of a parable is its teaching.



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What is a theme?

The theme of a piece of literature is its view about life and how people behave.



Click for next →

Theme is the...

- underlying meaning of the story,
- a universal truth



Click for next→

Theme is a...

...significant statement about
**society, human nature, or the
human condition**



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Theme = idea



The theme of a literary work is its **underlying central idea** or the generalization it communicates about life.

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Theme...the meaning of life?

The theme may express...

the author's opinion

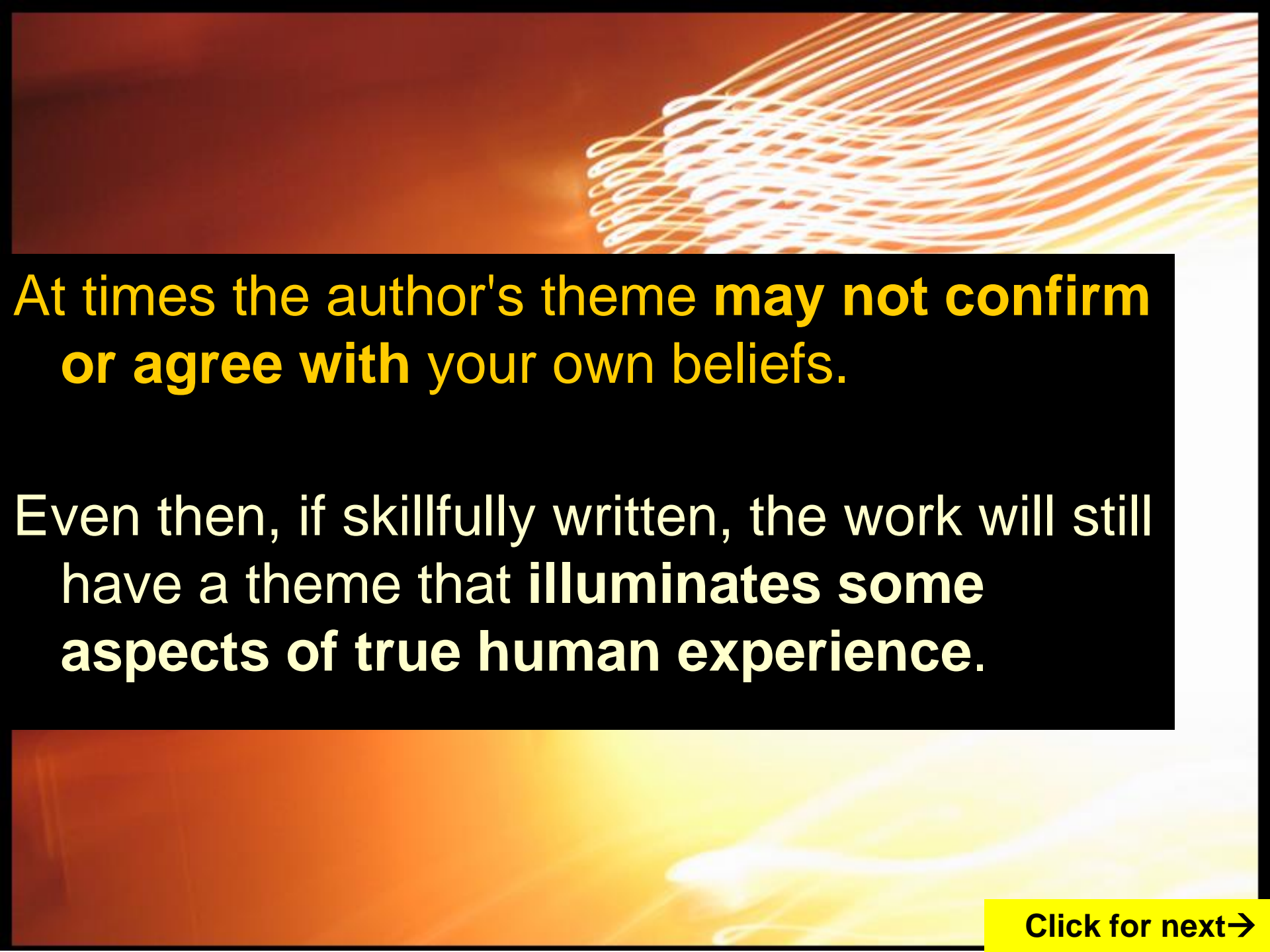
a question about human nature

the meaning of human experience



"Don't patronize me. Nobody cares what I think anymore. Go ask Dr. Phil."

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At times the author's theme **may not confirm or agree with** your own beliefs.

Even then, if skillfully written, the work will still have a theme that **illuminates some aspects of true human experience.**

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An
understanding
of theme is
dependent
upon one's
previous
experience of
life and
literature.



At the same
time, **theme**
in literature
can enlarge
one's
understanding
of life.

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The background of the slide is a close-up photograph of a stone wall. The stones are of various sizes and shapes, ranging from light grey to dark grey, and are heavily covered in bright green moss. The texture is rough and uneven.

Be aware that the theme never completely explains the story.

It is simply one of the elements that make up the whole. Some short stories have secondary themes as well.

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The background of the slide is a composite image. The top half shows a dark blue night sky filled with numerous white stars of varying brightness. The bottom half shows a dark, silhouetted landscape. In the foreground, there are dark shapes that look like trees or bushes. In the middle ground, there's a body of water reflecting the light from the sky. In the background, there are dark, jagged mountain ranges under the starry sky.

Common Literary Themes

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The quest for immortality



“Stranger, stop and cast an eye.
As you are now, so once was I.
As I am now, so you shall be,
Prepare for death and follow me.”

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One's relationship with & obligation to society.

Sometimes called “man vs. society”



Click for next→

The inward journey to **understand oneself**.



Sometimes called “man vs. self”

Click for next→

The individual's relationship with and obligation to the **natural world**.



Sometimes called

“man

vs.

nature”

Click for next→

How **justice** and **injustice** are decided



Click for next →

What it means to be a **hero** or **anti-hero**.



Atticus Finch



Willy Lohman

Click for next→

What it means to be a “survivor”



Click for next→

The individual's experience of **alienation** and **despair**



Click for next→

The artist's relationship with and obligation to society



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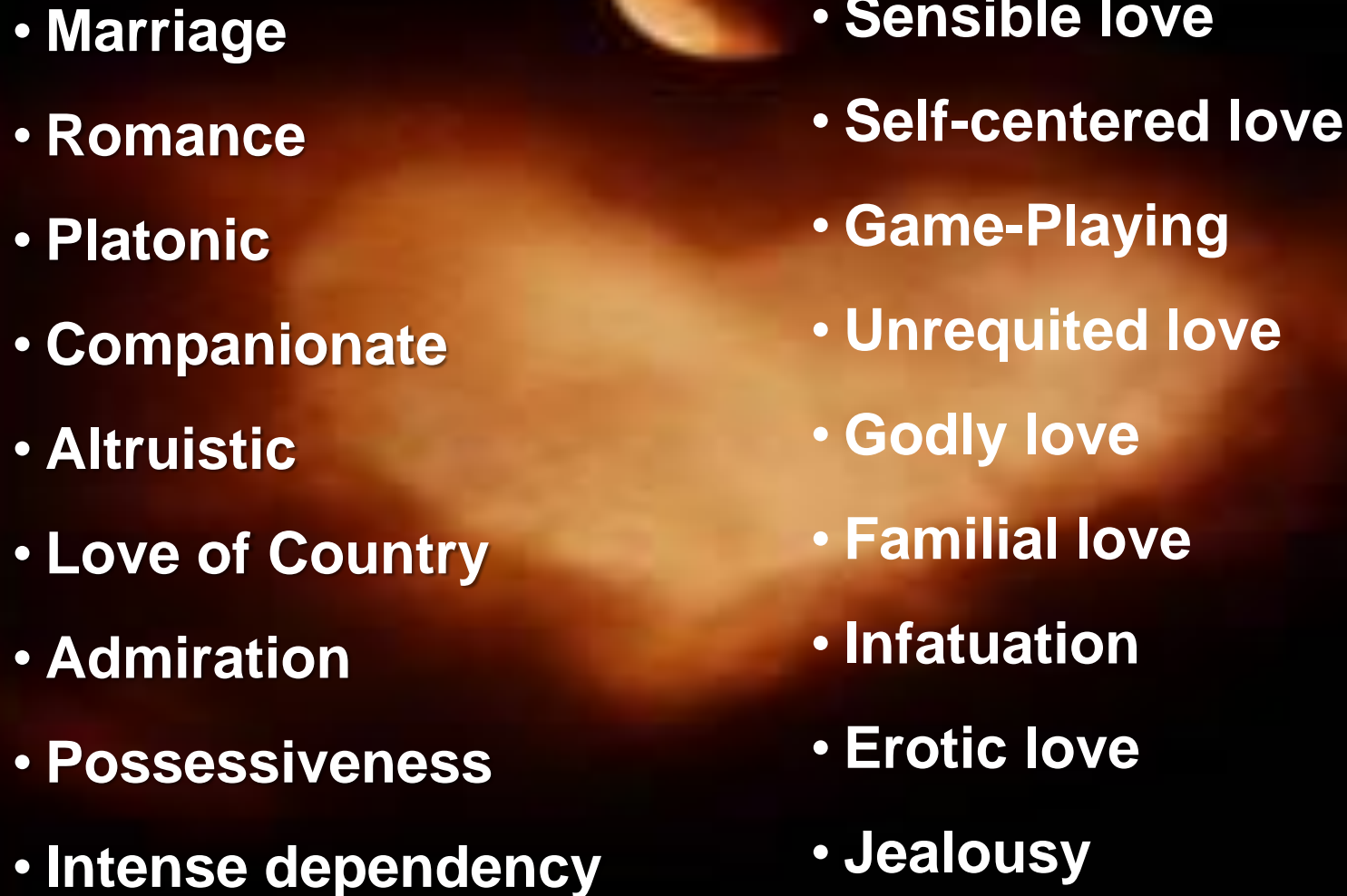
What tomorrow's world holds for us

aka: "The Future"



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Love: Topics/Effects

- 
- Marriage
 - Romance
 - Platonic
 - Companionate
 - Altruistic
 - Love of Country
 - Admiration
 - Possessiveness
 - Intense dependency
 - Sensible love
 - Self-centered love
 - Game-Playing
 - Unrequited love
 - Godly love
 - Familial love
 - Infatuation
 - Erotic love
 - Jealousy

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Role of Institutions

Sometimes called “man vs. the institution”



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What **themes** can you
identify in the stories?

Click for next→

Literary Themes

End of Presentation.