Character and Theme

- Characters are the people or animals who take part in the events of a story.
- You can understand the **characters** by examining their words and actions and the way other characters act toward them.
- The **theme** is the main idea or central meaning that the author wants you to learn. The theme may be stated directly in the text, but usually the reader has to figure it out. The theme may be thought of as a broad one- or two-word concept, or as a complete one-sentence statement.

Directions Read the following passage. Then fill in the chart below with elements of the story's characters and theme.

Margie dreamed of playing for the Olympic softball team someday. Her brother hid when she called him because she always wanted him to play catch with her. If no one was around to play with her, she would throw the ball up and catch it or

hit it by herself. Margie's dad pitched to her whenever he had time. As she cooked dinner every night, her mom looked through the kitchen window and watched Margie play ball in the backyard.

Margie	Brief story summary	Theme
 What word describes Margie? 	4.	5.
2. What is Margie's goal?		
3. How does Margie try to reach her goal?		



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Home Activity Your child read a passage and identified the theme and details about the main character. Describe the personality of someone you both know and ask your child to identify this person.

Writing • Thank-You Letter

Key Features of a Thank-You Letter

- begins with a greeting
- expresses thanks
- includes personal details
- ends with a closing

Dear Uncle Jack,

I want to thank you for your birthday gift of tennis lessons. My game has gotten so much better and I enjoyed spending time with you those four Saturday afternoons.

You are a natural teacher. Your calm manner helped me get over my initial nervousness. Your endless patience allowed me to take as much time as I needed to learn to hit the ball. And your sense of humor helped me remember not to take things too seriously. You reminded me that tennis is a game and that I should be having fun.

And did I learn the value of hard work! You encouraged me to practice hitting tennis balls a few times a week on my own. When I did that, it definitely paid off. My friends Leslie and Becca often practiced with me. They benefited from my lessons because I shared your tips with them. They thank you, too!

This was one of the best birthday gifts I've ever received. I hope that you can still make time to play tennis with me. You always say that I'd get better by playing with better players. And you're the best!

Your grateful niece, Abby

- 1. Who is writing this letter to Uncle Jack?
- 2. What is Uncle Jack being thanked for?

Vocabulary

Directions Choose the word from the box that best matches each definition. Write the word on the line shown to the left.

 1. to continue to exist; remain alive	Check the Words
 2. things put in place to stay	You Know
3. to give your consent or	apparently fixtures
 approval; agree	flimsy
 4. easily torn or broken	incident subscribe
 5. something that happens	survive

Directions Choose the word from the box that best completes each sentence. Write the word on the line shown to the left.

6. His _____ hat fell apart the first time he wore it.

- 7. Maddie reported the _____ to the principal.
- 8. After my brother finished the sixth grade, he told me I would ______ it too.
- **9.** The bathroom's <u>____</u> needed to be cleaned.
- **10.** The janitor had ______ fixed the window in the classroom because the room was now warm.

Write a Scene from a Play

On a separate sheet of paper write a scene from a play about a police officer. Your scene may involve your main character talking with members of the community or with other officers. Use as many vocabulary words from this week as you can.



Home Activity Your child identified and used vocabulary words from *Mother Fletcher's Gift.* Write a story with your child including as many of the vocabulary words as possible.

Subjects and Predicates

A sentence must have both a subject and a predicate. The **subject** is the part of the sentence that tells whom or what the sentence is about. All the words in the subject are the **complete subject**. The most important word in the complete subject is the **simple subject**. A simple subject can be more than one word, such as *Officer Wagner*.

Many police officers are working hard to protect our city. The simple subject is officers.

The **predicate** is the part of a sentence that tells what the subject is or does. All the words in the predicate are the **complete predicate**. The most important word in the predicate is the **simple predicate**, or verb. A simple predicate can be more than one word, such as *has worked*.

Many hard-working police officers protect our city. The simple predicate is *protect*.

A **fragment** is a group of words that lacks a subject or a predicate.

The police station in our neighborhood. This fragment lacks a predicate.

A **run-on** is two or more complete sentences run together.

The police station is on Green Street it is next to the library. Officers sometimes patrol the area on foot, we feel safe.

Directions Draw a line between the complete subject and the complete predicate in each sentence.

- 1. Everyone in our neighborhood knows Officer Wagner.
- 2. Mr. Clement complained about damage to his grocery store.
- 3. Officer Wagner caught the vandals in one day!
- 4. A lost kitten was found by the thoughtful police officer.

Directions Underline the simple subject and circle the simple predicate.

- 5. Many people will visit one another on holidays.
- 6. Grandpa Johnson is cooking a giant turkey for the whole family.
- 7. Holidays are a special time for our family.
- 8. Mrs. Sanders gives food to the needy.

Directions Write *F* after fragments. Write *R* after run-ons. Write *S* after sentences.

- 9. Helping others.
- 10. Many ways to do that.
- 11. Mr. Smith cleans up garbage in the park.
- 12. You can clean up garbage around the neighborhood you can recycle too.



Home Activity Your child learned about subjects and predicates. Have your child write several sentences describing your neighborhood. Ask your child to circle the complete subject and the complete predicate in each sentence.

Short Vowels

		Spelling W	/ords	
damage	gentle	injury	palace	cottage
honesty	mustard	legend	clumsy	message
modify	ruffle	glimpse	strict	dungeon
fender	fantastic	dignity	property	cannon

Synonyms Write the list word that means almost the same as each word or phrase below.

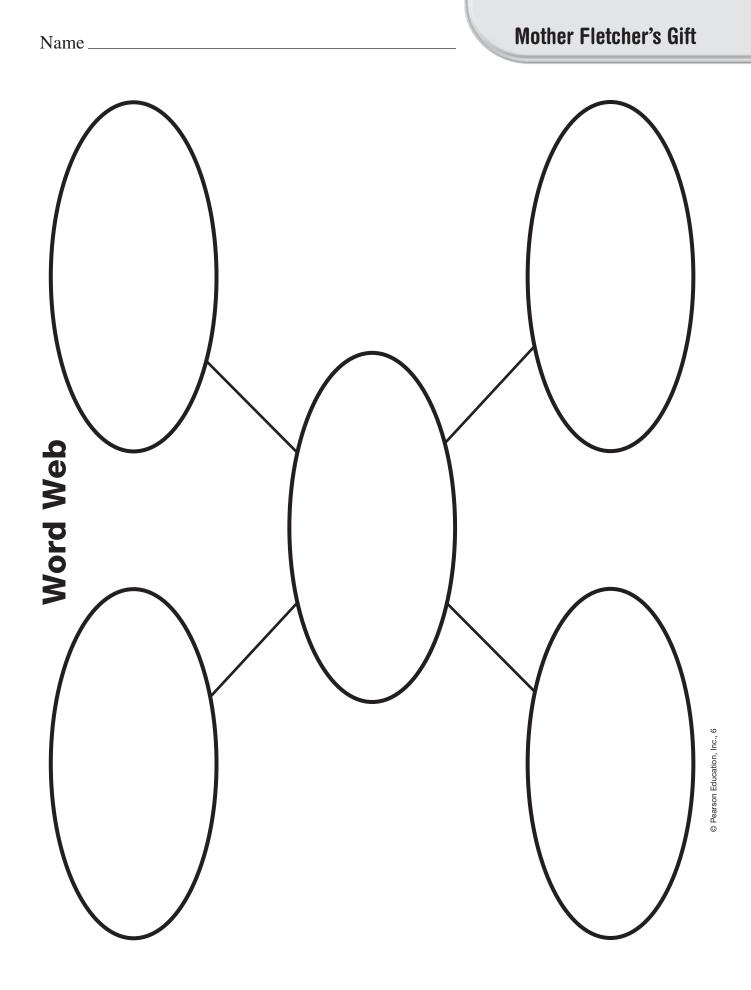
1.	big gun	1	
2.	belongings	2.	
3.	honor	3	
4.	jail	4.	
5.	see	5	
6.	change	6.	
7.	awkward	7	
8.	communication	8.	
9.	myth	9	
10.	integrity	10.	
11.	cabin	11	
12.	castle	12	
13.	wound	13	
14.	kind	14	
15.	harm	15	

Context Clues Write the list word that completes each sentence.

16. A hot dog tastes better with	16
17. The band's new song is	17
18. The accident left a dent in the car's	18
19. Most students think the teacher is but fair.	19
20. The costume designer sewed a on the skirt.	20

School Home Activity Your child wrote words with short vowels. Say a list word and ask your child to identify the short vowel in the word.

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Vocabulary · Greek and Latin Roots

- Many words in English are based on Latin and Greek words. Recognizing a word's root will help you figure out its meaning.
- For example, the word *vivid* contains the root *viv-*, from the Latin word *vivere*, meaning "to live." *Scribe* is in the Latin word *scribere*, meaning "to write." *Appear* comes from *apparere*, the Latin word meaning "to come into view."

Directions Read the following passage. Then answer the questions below. Look for root words as you read.

Kiran was reading an article in the local magazine. Apparently, some new students from other countries at a local school did not yet speak English well. A group of students at the school worked with their teachers to put together a program to help these new students survive the first few months of school. It wasn't

a flimsy program either. A lot of work was required of both groups of students. They were all pleased with the program's progress. It went forward without incident. After reading the article, Kiran hoped programs like this would become fixtures at the school. She also decided to subscribe to the magazine.

- **1.** What does *apparently* mean?
- **2.** The Latin word *subscribere* means "to write beneath," as when you sign your name to the bottom of a document. How does this help explain the meaning of the word *subscribe* in the passage?
- 3. What does *survive* mean in the passage?
- 4. What does *fixtures* mean in this passage?
- **5.** Write two other words with Latin or Greek roots. Tell what each means, and then use them in sentences.



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Home Activity Your child used context clues and root words to understand new words in a passage. Show your child some words from a newspaper or magazine that have root words. Ask your child to identify the root word and look up its definition.

Thesaurus

- A **thesaurus** is a kind of dictionary that lists **synonyms** (words with the same or similar meanings), **antonyms** (words with opposite meanings), and other related words. Because not all synonyms have exactly the same meaning, you should check their meanings in a dictionary.
- Entry words are arranged in alphabetical order. Parts of speech are listed to show how an entry word is used. If an entry word has more than one meaning, a thesaurus provides synonyms for each meaning.
- Sometimes a thesaurus includes sentences to illustrate the meanings of synonyms.
- One type of thesaurus provides an index in which you can look up the word for which you want synonyms.

Directions Read the following entry from a thesaurus. Then answer the questions below.

survive (v) 1. endure: live on, persist, continue, last, exist, remain: Some holiday customs from 100 years ago survive to this day. 2. live through: come through alive, stay alive: Because they were wearing seat belts, the passengers were able to survive the accident. (ant) perish, disappear, succumb to, die from.

1. Would the entry above appear before or after the entry for the word *subscribe*? Explain.

2. List two synonyms for the first meaning of *survive*.

3. List two synonyms for the second meaning of the word *survive*.

4. How would you describe the difference between the first group of synonyms and the second group?

5. List two antonyms for the word *survive*.

Directions Read the following thesaurus entry. Then answer the questions below.

flimsy (adj) **1. thin:** slight, frail, fragile, delicate, diaphanous, sheer, filmy, gossamer, shoddy, ill-made, jerry-built, insubstantial: *This old shirt has grown too flimsy to wear.* **2. weak:** feeble, inadequate, poor, worthless, trivial, petty, superficial, shallow: *The suspect provided only a flimsy alibi.* (ant) sturdy, strong, well-made, sound, substantial, solid.

- 6. How many synonyms for *flimsy* appear on this page? What part of speech are they?
- **7.** How would you describe the difference between the first group of synonyms and the second group?

8. Which numbered list of synonyms would you use for *flimsy* as it is used in this sentence: "The girl's shoelaces had grown worn and flimsy." Why?

9. Which list would you use for *flimsy* as it is used in this sentence: "The judge ruled that the evidence was too flimsy to send the man to jail." Why?

10. Which antonyms would be good choices to use in a sentence about a shirt that was *not* flimsy? Why?



Home Activity Your child learned about using a thesaurus as a resource. Look at a thesaurus together. Ask your child to locate several entries. Then ask him or her to find a synonym for each of these words.

Spelling Words

damage gentle injury

palace

cottage

honesty

mustard

legend

clumsy

modify

glimpse

ruffle

message

Short Vowels

Name_

Proofread a Letter Circle six words in this letter that are spelled incorrectly. Write them correctly. Find a sentence with improper punctuation. Write it correctly on the line.

Dear Editor,

I'm sorry, "but" I have to disagree with your writer's review, of the recent concert. He wrote that the show wasn't worth seeing. In my honest opinion, the show was fantastack. The fake cannan explosion at the end was great, the backdrop of a huge ancient palice was beautiful, and the music was the best. At the end of the concert we expressed are appreciation with loud cheers. In all honisty, I think your writer should modafy his review.

1	2	
3	4	
5	6	
7		
7		

Proofread Words Circle the word in each group that is spelled correctly. Write the word.

8. dungin	dungun	dungeon	dungen	8
9. damage	damege	damige	dammage	9
10. mustird	mustard	musterd	moustard	10
11. message	messege	messige	messidge	11
12. gentel	jentle	gentle	gentell	12
13. dignity	dygnity	dignty	dignety	13
14. proprty	propertie	proparty	property	14
15. glympse	glimps	glimpse	glimpce	15
16. fender	finder	fendir	fendere	16

strict dungeon fender fantastic dignity property cannon Frequently Misspelled Words

> our we're



Home Activity Your child identified misspelled words with short vowels. Say a list word and ask your child to use it in a sentence.

Subjects and Predicates

Directions Read the passage. Then read each question. Circle the letter of the correct answer.

Safety First

(1) The Hillsdale Police Department provides important bicycle safety programs for students of all ages. (2) Friendly police officers give presentations to each grade in the elementary schools. (3) The youngest children learn about basic bicycle safety.
 (4) They learn to make a habit of wearing a bicycle helmet. (5) Older students study the rules of the road. (6) They learn to obey traffic signs and signals. (7) Members of the Parents' Council set up small traffic courses on the school parking lots.
 (8) Children on bikes (9) The mayor of Hillsdale gave the Police Department a major award for service to the schools.

- **1** What is the complete subject of sentence 1?
 - A Hillsdale
 - **B** bicycle safety programs
 - C Police Department
 - **D** The Hillsdale Police Department
- **2** What is the complete predicate of sentence 3?
 - A learn
 - **B** learn about
 - C learn about basic bicycle safety
 - **D** basic bicycle safety
- **3** What is the complete subject of sentence 7?
 - A Parents' Council
 - **B** Members of the Parents' Council
 - C Members
 - **D** set up small traffic courses

- 4 How can you best describe sentence 8?
 - A Run-on sentence
 - **B** Has a complete subject
 - C Has a subject and a predicate
 - **D** Sentence fragment
- 5 What is the complete predicate of sentence 9?
 - A of Hillsdale
 - **B** gave the Police Department a major award for service to the schools
 - C a major award for service to the schools
 - **D** gave



Home Activity Your child prepared for taking tests on subjects and predicates. Find five sentences in a magazine article. Ask your child to underline the complete subject and circle the complete predicate in each sentence.

Reader's and Writer's Notebook Unit 1