

# The Case of the Missing Theme

Objective: Students use textual clues to find a story's theme.

- Time for Lesson → **45 minutes**  
Standard → **Language Arts - Infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic**  
Art integration → **Theatre Arts – Dramatize literary selections using pantomime**  
Supplies → **Worksheet, Pencil**  
Video → [www.takethestage.tv](http://www.takethestage.tv)



→ Entire activity can be done from a seated position.

Pantomime: A performance using gestures and body movements without words.



## PREPARATION:

- Preview video. (*video is 12 minutes*)
- Test playback of video on smartboard or monitor before lesson.
- Print and pass out worksheet for each student from [www.takethestage.tv](http://www.takethestage.tv).
- Make sure there is enough room for each student to stand up and move next to their desks or in an open space in the classroom.

## INTRODUCTION:

- 1) You, the teacher, are now the “Teacher Detective”. Introduce to students, “Everyone in this classroom is now a detective and it is your mission to solve the Mystery of the Missing Theme. But, in order to solve the mystery, you must act out the clues using pantomime.”
- 2) Introduce pantomime as “acting without talking, using only your body to tell a story”. Demonstrate pantomime by picking up an imaginary bowling ball, peeling an imaginary banana, opening a door, etc.
- 3) Practice doing pantomime with class.
- 4) Pass out the worksheet (The Detective Notes) and have students take out a pencil.

## ACTIVITY:

- 1) Once each student has the worksheet, a pencil, and is seated at their desk, **PRESS PLAY**.
- 2) When video instructs, have students find a place where they can pantomime next to their desk or from their desks if needed.
- 3) When video says **PRESS PAUSE**, pause video and students **take a seat to complete the worksheet**.
- 4) Once all the students have completed the worksheet, allow them to share their theme with the class. (*It is important to mention that there can be more than one correct theme for the same story*)
- 5) Once students have had a chance to share their answers, **UNPAUSE** and complete watching the video which reveals one possible correct answer.

## REVIEW:

- 1) Ask students to define topic and theme in their own words.
- 2) Ask students to verbalize the steps they took to find the missing theme in the activity.
- 3) Ask students to provide examples about how they use pantomime to communicate with others in their everyday life.