

How does the relationship between the narrator and the character in “The Wind’s Visit” develop the theme?

In this lesson you will learn to identify the theme of a poem by analyzing how character relationships change over time.

Let's Review

The Wind's Visit

The wind tapped like a tired man,
And like a host, "Come in,"
I boldly answered; entered then
My residence within
A rapid, footless guest,
To offer whom a chair
Were as impossible as hand
A sofa to the air.
No bone had he to bind him,
His speech was like the push
Of numerous humming-birds at once
From a superior bush.

"The Wind's Visit" by Emily Dickinson

- Brief poem
- Describes meeting between the narrator and "the wind"
- Many types of figurative language

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Theme

- Not presented directly at all
- Reader needs to "extract" or infer it from characters, action, setting
- Details and particulars of text may have greater meaning

Core Lesson

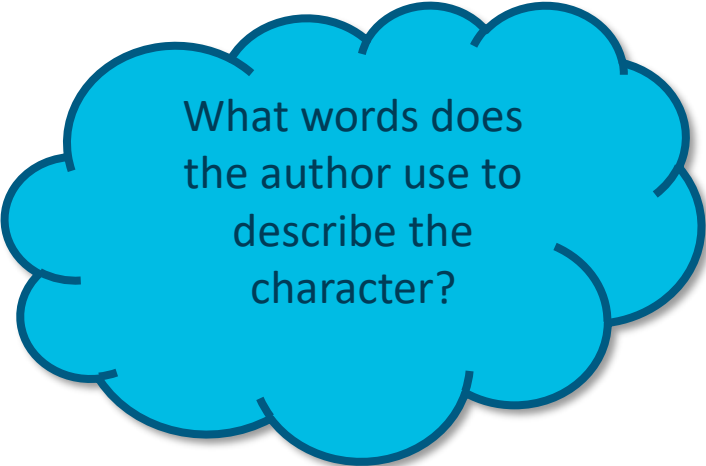
- 1 Reread to identify words that the narrator uses to describe the character throughout the text.
- 2 Analyze this word choice by asking, “What do these words suggest about the narrator’s feelings towards the character?”
- 3 Ask, “How do the narrator’s feelings change throughout the text?” Add these up to determine the theme.

Core Lesson

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The Wind's Visit

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And like a host, "Come in,"
I boldly answered; **entered then**
My residence within
A **rapid, footless guest,**
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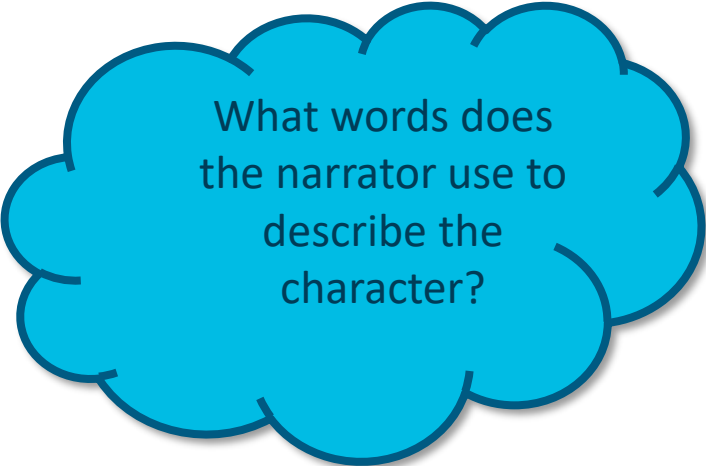
What words does
the author use to
describe the
character?

Core Lesson

Reread to identify words that the narrator uses to describe the character throughout the text.

His countenance a billow,
His fingers, if he pass,
Let go a music, as of tunes
Blown tremulous in glass.
He visited, still flitting;
Then, like a timid man,
Again he tapped — 't was flurriedly—
And I became alone.

Emily Dickinson



What words does the narrator use to describe the character?

Core Lesson

Analyze this word choice by asking, “What do these words suggest about the narrator’s feelings towards the character?”

The Wind’s Visit

The wind tapped like a tired man,
And like a host, “Come in,”
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My residence within
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From a superior bush.

Knocks-does she not know him well?
Enters only after welcomed in - a guest
Rapid guest; visit is short
Footless, as though his feet do not
touch the ground
His speech is so soft...barely audible
He speaks from a “superior” position

Core Lesson

Ask, “How do the narrator’s feelings change throughout the text?” Add these up to determine the theme.

Billow-a wave; was there and left quickly
“Wavering” music-does she feel this way
about the wind?

Music is usually pleasant, but hollow
sounding here

Flitting-constant motion

Enters “tired”, leaves “timid”; is this the
effect she has on him?

Flurriedly-agitated?

Visit ends with her feeling alone-is this
the effect he has on her?

His countenance a billow,

His fingers, if he pass,

Let go a music, as of tunes

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Disappointment

Core Lesson

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Disappointment
which leads to
loneliness

Core Lesson

How does the relationship between the narrator and the character develop a theme?

Emily Dickinson builds a feeling of disappointment and ultimately, a theme of loneliness in “The Wind’s Visit”. The narrator is initially hopeful for a relationship with the wind. However, the visit is disappointing from the beginning; the wind will not stop to face her, nor even to speak directly to her. They are not on the same level or speaking the same language. Even the sound he emits is hollow sounding. She is left feeling very alone. Neither is fulfilled by having had the visit.

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