**Universal Themes**

**Common Theme Ideas Drawn from Myths, Traditional Stories, and Religious Works**

* Good and evil
* Master and servant
* Rich and poor
* Wise and foolish
* Old and young
* Beautiful and ugly
	+ Beautiful is better.
	+ The quest for beauty is the cause of much suffering.
* Mean and generous
* Just and unjust
* A quest or search
	+ To find something and be rewarded, but usually a metaphor for another kind of search, including the search for truth or self
* A journey
	+ Often a symbol of self-discovery
* Trials and forfeits
	+ To test individuals’ skills and strength, or their human characteristics such as intelligence, patience and endurance
* The origins of the Earth, its people, and animals
* The relationship between people and the seen or unseen world around them
	+ The importance of family and community connections
* Reward for goodness and punishment for evil
* Dominance of fate
	+ No human can escape fate
* War:
	+ War is an inescapable part of existence
	+ Bloodshed leads to bloodshed
	+ The greatest warriors are proud and/or arrogant.
	+ It is an honor to die in battle.
* Sacrifice:
	+ The surrender or destruction of something prized or desirable for the sake of something considered as having a higher importance
* Love
	+ Love is often unrequited.
	+ Love often leads to tragedy.
	+ Lovers are often abandoned by those they love.
	+ Selfish love ends in suffering.