

Theme and Summary in a Short Story

Grade: 5 **Subject:** Reading / Language Arts **Time:** ~45 min core + ~15 min extension **Work mode:** On your own · pencil only RLA

Start Here

Today you will **read a short story** and answer some questions with a pencil. You do **not** need a computer. Work by yourself and do your best. Every answer is **in the story**, so you can look back as many times as you want. You may read the story **out loud, quietly, to yourself**. If a question is hard, skip it and come back later.

G05_RLA_ThemeSummary_01 — Theme and Summary in a Short Story Student Packet

Start Notice & Predict 5 min

Look only at the title before you read the story.

1The story is called "**The Seed Jar**." From the title, write **one thing you notice** and **one thing you predict** the story is about.

2A **theme** is the **big idea or lesson** of a story — not just what happens. Name one lesson you have learned from a book, show, or real life (for example, "sharing feels good").

Build Read the Story 10 min

Words to know (from the story)

patient

calm and willing to wait.

sprout

a tiny new plant just starting to grow.

gloomy

sad or without hope.

proud

happy about something you did well.

"The Seed Jar" — an original short story

[1] Rosa did not like waiting. When Grandpa handed her a jar of bean seeds and a small pot, she frowned. "How long until it grows?" she asked. "Be *patient*," Grandpa said with a smile. But patient was not a word Rosa liked.

[2] Rosa planted one bean, watered it, and set the pot on the windowsill. The next morning she ran to look. Nothing. Just dark dirt. She felt *gloomy*. "It's broken," she said, and she almost dumped the pot in the trash.

[3] "Growing things takes time you can't see," Grandpa said. "The seed is working under the dirt, even when you think nothing is happening." Rosa was not sure she believed him. She wanted the plant to hurry. But she kept

watering the pot every morning before school and every night before bed. Some days she wanted to quit and do something more fun. Still, she did not throw the pot away.

[4] On the sixth day, a tiny green *sprout* pushed up through the dirt. Rosa gasped and leaned close. It was small and bent, but it was alive. She had almost given up on it, and here it was, reaching for the light. She watered it very gently and told Grandpa the good news.

[5] By the end of the month, the bean plant was tall enough to lean on a stick. Rosa showed it to Grandpa and felt *proud*. "You were right," she said. "The best part was waiting," Grandpa answered. Rosa did not fully agree — but now she knew that good things could grow slowly, and she could wait for them.

3In paragraph [1], how does Rosa feel about waiting? Use a detail from the story.

Apply Read Closely 15 min

Every answer is in the story. Look back before you write.

4Beginning, middle, end. Write what happens in each part of the story. Keep it short.

Beginning

Middle

End

5Feelings change. Rosa's feelings change from the beginning to the end. Fill in the boxes with a detail and the paragraph number.

How Rosa feels at the BEGINNING

Feeling + detail (paragraph #):

How Rosa feels at the END

Feeling + detail (paragraph #):

6Theme. What **lesson** does Rosa learn by the end of the story? Write it as a full sentence.

7Which detail shows the theme best? Fill in the circle for ONE choice.

- "Rosa did not like waiting."
- "She kept watering the pot every day. Some days she wanted to quit."
- "Just dark dirt."
- "Grandpa handed her a jar of bean seeds and a small pot."

7b. In one sentence, tell why that detail shows the lesson.

Explain Write Your Theme & Summary 10 min

Question 8. Write the **theme** in **one sentence**. Then write a **3 to 4 sentence summary** of the story using details. A summary tells the **most important** parts — you do **not** need every little thing.

You may start your sentences with: "The theme is..." · "First,..." · "Then,..." · "At the end,..." · "This shows the theme because..."

Theme (one sentence)

Details (summary: 3–4 sentences)

How they connect

How do your details show the theme?

Close ACE Wrap-Up 5 min

Answer

Say the **lesson** of "The Seed Jar" in your **own words**, in one sentence.

Cite

Name **one paragraph** where you can see that lesson happening.

Extend

Tell about a time **you** had to wait or keep trying for something.

Continue Early Finisher optional • ~15 min

If you finish early (no new materials needed):

Draw your favorite moment from the story on the back of this page. Then write a **one-sentence caption** under your drawing that tells what is happening and why you like it.

Turn in: Hand in this whole packet with your name, class, and date filled in. Make sure questions 1–8 and the ACE box are done. The drawing is optional — turn it in too if you did it.

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