

## “Flowers for Algernon”

### What is theme?

Theme is an observation about life that the author shares with the reader. A theme should not be confused with the subject of the story, which is what the story is about. The theme is usually more important and usually harder to figure out. It is the central message of the story and the main point the author is trying to make. For example, in Edgar Allan Poe’s story “The Tell-Tale Heart”, the subject of the story is murder, but the theme is that you can never escape your crimes.

**Directions:** Think for a moment about what the most important word in “Flowers for Algernon” might be. Brainstorm a list in the box below. After you have made your list, circle the word you think is the most important of all.

**Directions:** Now that you have chosen the most important word, go back through the story and look for what the author and narrator (Charlie) have to say about that word. These passages will give you clues to what the author’s message, or theme, is. You should find at least FIVE good quotes from the story.

PAGE #	QUOTE OR PASSAGE

Directions: Now, based on the information you have gathered, decide what you think the author is saying about the word you circled on at the beginning of this lesson. THIS IS YOUR THEME! Write it below.

Directions: Use the information you have gathered above to fill in the following paragraph frame to answer the following question. Be sure to use the quotes you wrote down from the story.

*In your opinion, what is the major theme in Daniel Keyes's story, "Flowers for Algernon"?*

I think the theme of Daniel Keyes's story "Flowers for Algernon" is \_\_\_\_\_

I believe this is the theme because \_\_\_\_\_

The theme is present in the story when \_\_\_\_\_

I think the author's message was \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_