

Follow, Follow, Follow: Conforming to Society

Task 4: Evaluating the Importance of Institutions

Activity 2: Evaluating the Importance of Institutions Through Themes in Texts

Directions:

Reread both the poem and the short story from Activity 1. You will need to identify and analyze themes in these texts to complete this activity. After reading, complete all parts of the activity.

1. In 1-2 complete sentences, state the theme of Kipling's poem "If".

Answers will vary.

Ex: The poem provides the qualities and traits in order to grow into a good man. Thus, the theme is what it takes to be considered a good man.

2. In 1-2 complete sentences, state the theme of Tan's short story "The Rules of the Game"

Answers will vary.

Ex: The themes include appreciating one's culture and traditions, learning how to navigate cultural differences, and power between parent and child.

3. Considering each theme, compare and contrast what each author is saying about the conflict between individuals and institutions. Are their messages similar or different? Use one example from the poem and one example from the short story.

Answers will vary.

Ex: In Kipling's poem, the conflict is the different characteristics to be a good individual in society. In Tan's story, culture is the source of the conflict. In Asian culture, families and communities are valued over the individual, while in American culture the opposite is true. They are similar as they consider the role of an individual in his or her society and what traits are most valuable. (Individual text-based examples will vary but must include one from each text.)