



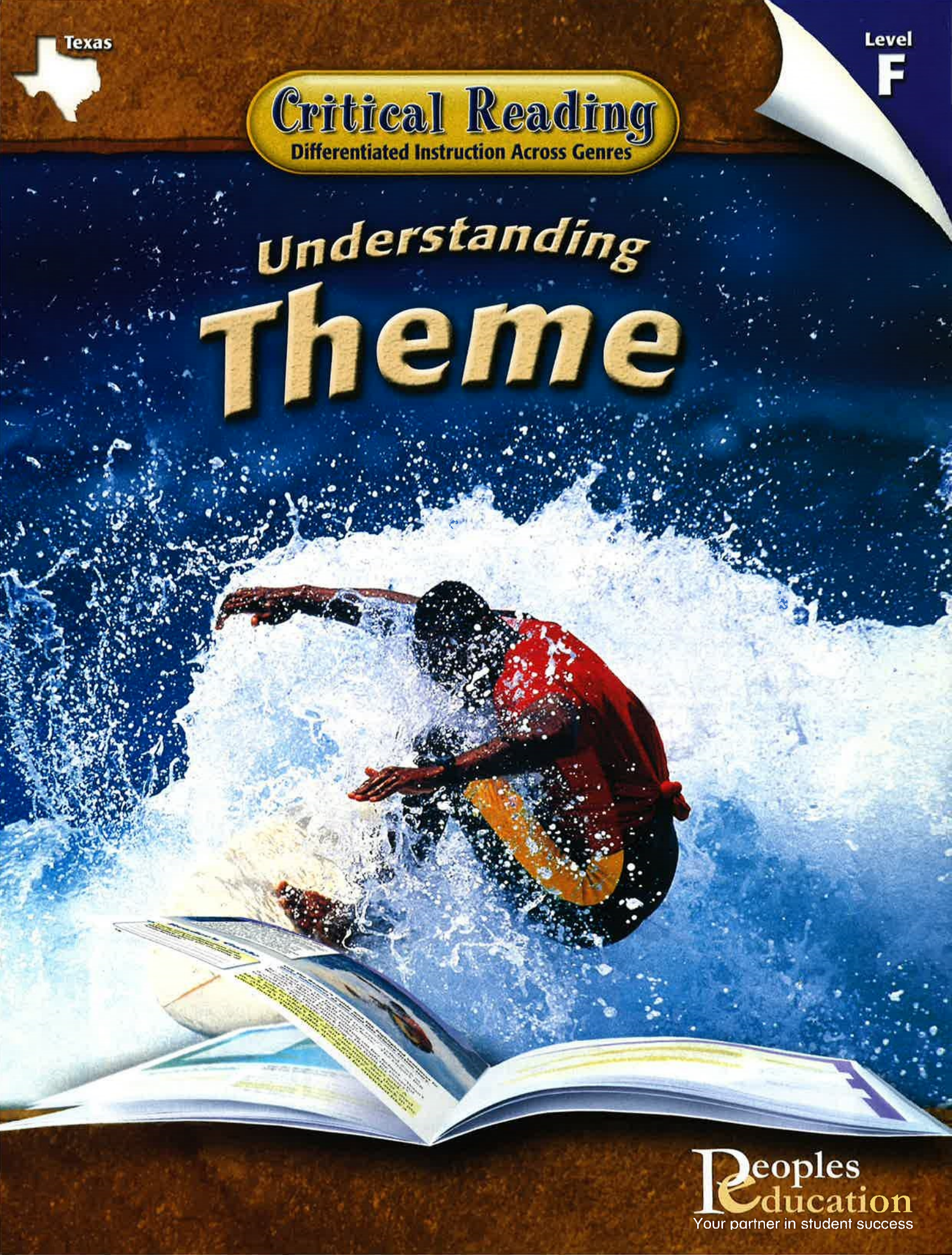
Texas

Level

F

**Critical Reading**  
Differentiated Instruction Across Genres

*Understanding*  
**Theme**



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ELAR 10F, 10I, 11C, 11D, 12B, 12E,  
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# Use Strategies to Understand What You Read

Sometimes you read to enjoy a good story. At other times you read to learn something new. No matter why you read, you need to **understand what you read**.

Using **reading strategies** will deepen your understanding of what you read. Use the strategies below to understand the reading selections in this book.

## Before You Read

- ◆ Think about **why** you will read the selection.
- ◆ **Preview** the selection.
- ◆ Think about how the selection is **organized**.
- ◆ Think about what you **already know**.
- ◆ For fiction, **predict** what the story is about and what will happen. For nonfiction, **predict** what the selection is about and what information you will find.
- ◆ **Plan** how you will read the selection.

## While You Read

- ◆ Make sure you **understand** what you are reading. If you don't, make **some** changes.
- ◆ **Ask yourself questions** about what you are reading.
- ◆ For fiction, think about how the plot is **organized**. For nonfiction, think about how the information is **organized**.
- ◆ **Make connections** between stated ideas and what you already know.
- ◆ Pay attention to **different kinds of type**, such as bold type. Think about why they are different.
- ◆ Study any **pictures, photos, captions, charts, or graphs**.
- ◆ Create a **mental picture** of important details in the selection.

## After You Read

- ◆ Think about **your predictions**. Were your predictions right?
- ◆ **Talk** with other students about what you read.
- ◆ **Answer questions** about what you read.
- ◆ **Organize** important parts or details from the selection.
- ◆ **Summarize** the selection.

# A Journey Around the World

## Theme and Folktales

When a story's **theme** is unstated, it's especially important that readers pay attention to story details. The author may explain the theme in a section of the story. Readers can also look for the place where the author explains the theme.

A **folktale** is a story that was first told aloud long ago. To **understand** a folktale, you can look for the author's explanation of its theme and pay attention to story details to figure it out.



## Reader's Guide

What is each son thinking about?

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Use the Reader's Guide and the highlighted sentences to understand the **theme** of this folktale.

One afternoon in an Indian village, Ganesh and his older brother Muru rushed to greet their parents, who were returning from a trip to Delhi. Muru reached them first. Not bothering with a greeting, he announced, "I won another chariot race while you were away! I grow stronger and faster every day!"

"Welcome home, Mother and Father," said Ganesh. "Are you well? How was your trip?"

"It was much too long," said their father, Siva. "It's good to be home with our sons again."

“We thought of you boys often,” added their mother, Ramita, “and we’ve brought a gift to thank you for being such good sons. We have three coins of the finest silver for you—two coins for our **worthier** son, and one for the other. Which of you deserves two coins and which only one?”

“I should have *two* coins,” Muru exclaimed, “because I’m strong and fast with my chariot.”

*I am not as strong as Muru, thought Ganesh in silence, and my elephant is no match for his chariot. I’m just glad my parents have returned safely.*

“To decide who will get two coins and who will get only one, your mother and I propose a contest,” announced Siva. “The first to complete a journey around the whole world will receive two silver coins. Ready? Begin!” shouted Siva.

Muru’s chest swelled with pride and anticipation, for he could drive a chariot faster than anyone else in the village. He expected to be two or even three villages away before Ganesh had climbed onto his elephant. Confident he’d earn the two silver coins, Muru leapt into his swift chariot and thundered away. After a few seconds, he was out of sight.

Meanwhile, Ganesh **contemplated** the challenge. A journey around the *whole world*. The “*whole world*”—*what does that really mean? My parents, my home, and my village are the whole world to me.* Ganesh climbed slowly onto his elephant and guided it toward where his parents stood.

Siva and Ramita watched as the elephant circled carefully around them then moved toward the family home and circled that too. A few moments later, Ganesh led the elephant out of the village. Ramita and Siva stood watching the road for a moment, and then decided to go into their house. As they were about to step through the doorway, they saw Ganesh returning.

**worthier** more deserving

What is most important to each son?

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How do Muru and Ganesh begin the race?

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**contemplated** thought about deeply



● Ganesh made his way to where his parents stood at the door to the family's house, climbed off the elephant's back and asked quietly, "May I have the two silver coins now?"

"Son, you were supposed to journey around the whole world," said Siva, "but you didn't go anywhere."

"Didn't you understand the contest, my son?" asked Ramita.

"I did understand, Mother," replied Ganesh. "I understood perfectly. You asked us to complete a journey around the whole world, and I have just ridden around the whole world—you, our home, and our village are indeed the whole world to me," he explained.

Ramita and Siva beamed with pride. "What a clever son we have!" said Siva, handing two silver coins to Ganesh. "Instead of acting quickly, you thought carefully about what to do. While Muru leapt into action, you considered our words and made a decision that won you the prize. Your cleverness will help you in life; it will be of more use than speed or strength." ●

● How does Ganesh win the contest?

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● Underline the section of the story where the author explains the theme.

● **Read Fluently** ● Reread the fluency section aloud with a partner. Read in a way that would help listeners identify the theme of the story.

## Check Your Understanding

Circle the letter for the best answer to each question.

1. Muru believes he will win the contest because he—
  - A acts quickly.
  - B is fast and strong.
  - C wins chariot races.
  - D is older than Ganesh.
2. Why does Ganesh win the contest?
  - A He thinks about the task instead of racing ahead.
  - B He asks about his parents' trip before leaving.
  - C He talks about what to do instead of doing it.
  - D He rides his elephant instead of a chariot.
3. Which of these is the unstated **theme** of this folktale?
  - A It is wrong to compete against your brother.
  - B Being clever is better than being strong or fast.
  - C People who have help from animals will succeed.
  - D It is impossible to travel all the way around the world.

## Deepen Your Understanding

Write your answers on the lines.

4. How would Muru explain that he should win the contest?

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5. How does Ganesh's thinking about the "whole world" help him win the contest?

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# Get Organized

Readers use story details to figure out a story's **theme**. Complete the organizer below with story details you use to figure out the theme of "A Journey Around the World."

**What Ganesh Is Like**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**What Muru Is Like**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**What Happens in the Contest**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Theme**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

FOR REVIEW ONLY



# From Reading to Writing

On separate paper, write a paragraph about why Ganesh wins the contest and Muru does not. Use story details about what the boys are like to support your explanation.

**Plan Your Writing** Complete the chart below to get ready to write.

	Ganesh	Muru
What He Does to Win		
What He Is Like		
What He Thinks About		

## Why Ganesh Wins the Contest

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### For the Best Score

- I tell what each boy is like.
- I use story details to support what I say.
- I explain why Ganesh wins the contest and Muru does not.
- I write in paragraph form.