

Mr. Benton's Literary 3x3

A quick way to summarize both what happens and what it means.

The goal: Write three matching plot statements and three matching theme statements. Each line should be exactly **three words**.

1. Plot side: what literally happens!

Use **concrete nouns**: people, places, objects, or things you can picture.

Pattern: concrete noun + active verb + concrete noun

Examples: girl, wolf, woods, family, room, monster, letter, house

2. Theme side: what the story suggests . . .

Use **abstract nouns**: ideas, feelings, values, forces, or human problems.


Pattern: abstract noun + active verb + abstract noun

Examples: innocence, fear, power, guilt, identity, memory, isolation, freedom



3. Make the lines match :

Line 1 should connect to Line 1. Line 2 should connect to Line 2. Line 3 should connect to Line 3. That is the whole trick, because apparently literature needed a tiny filing cabinet.

Example: "Little Red Riding Hood" / "Little Red Cap"

 Plot	?... Theme
1. Girl enters woods .	1. Innocence faces danger .
2. Predatory wolf stalks .	2. Predatory forces dehumanize .
3. Huntsman saves girl .	3. Community protects vulnerability .

Your Literary 3x3

 Plot: concrete noun + verb + concrete noun	 Theme: abstract noun + verb + abstract noun
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.

Quick checklist before submitting . . .

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Each line has exactly three words. | <input type="checkbox"/> Each line has a strong active verb. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Plot lines use concrete nouns. | <input type="checkbox"/> Plot tells what happens. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Theme lines use abstract nouns. | <input type="checkbox"/> Theme explains what the story means. |

Avoid: adjectives pretending to be nouns, vague verbs like is/has/gets, and theme lines that just repeat the plot in fancier clothes.

- The most effective THEME 3x3s will parallel the PLOT 3x3s!
- Combine bits and pieces of your completed PLOT 3x3 and your THEME 3x3 to create a Fusion of the two summaries that uses a mix of both concrete and abstract nouns.
- Use this Fusion 3x3 as a basis for your deeper analysis of the text as a whole!

While we watch the adaptation, take notes of the beginning, middle, and end of the plot. Focus on what's most important. Avoid using character names.

Title of work: _____

	PLOT	THEME
Beginning		
Middle		
End		