

Universal Themes in Literature

1. Alienation - creating emotional isolation
2. Betrayal - fading bonds of love
3. Birth - life after loss, life sustains tragedy
4. Coming of age - boy becomes a man
5. Conformity - industrialization and the conformity of man
6. Death - death as mystery, death as a new beginning
7. Deception - appearance versus reality
8. Discovery - conquering unknown, discovering strength
9. Duty - the ethics of killing for duty
10. Escape - escape from family pressures, escaping social constraints
11. Family - destruction of family
12. Fortune - a fall from grace and fortune
13. Generation gap - experience versus youthful strength
14. God and spirituality - inner struggle of faith
15. Good and evil - the coexistence of good and evil on earth
16. Heroism - false heroism, heroism and conflicting values
17. Home - security of a homestead
18. Hope - hope rebounds
19. Hopelessness - finding hope after tragedy
20. Individualism - choosing between security and individualism
21. Isolation - the isolation of a soul
22. Journey - most journeys lead back to home
23. Judgment - balance between justice and judgment
24. Loss - loss of innocence, loss of individualism
25. Love - love sustains/fades with a challenge
26. Patriotism - inner conflicts stemming from patriotism
27. Peace and war - war is tragic, peace is fleeting
28. Power - Lust for power
29. Race relations - learned racism
30. Sense of self - finding strength from within
31. Suffering - suffering as a natural part of human experience
32. Survival - man against nature