

Reading Comprehension Worksheet: Theme

Read the short story and answer each question.



The Lost Sketchbook

Jules never left home without her sketchbook. Inside its worn pages were dragons curled around castles, comic strips starring her dog, and drawings of the people she saw in cafés or on subways. Her sketchbook wasn't just for art—it was her way of understanding the world.

One afternoon, while walking home from the park, Jules realized the strap on her backpack had come unzipped. The sketchbook was gone.

She ran back along the path she'd taken—through the fountain plaza, past the row of food carts, up to the bench where she'd sat—but it was nowhere.

At home, she sat on her bed, trying to remember every page she'd lost. Her fingers itched to draw, but she couldn't even open her pencil case.

Later that evening, her brother poked his head into her room. "You still have those hands," he said, pointing. "And that brain. You can make more."

Jules didn't answer. Not then. But the next morning, she took out a new sketchbook, turned to the first page, and drew a single line. Then another. Then a dragon, smaller than before, but rising from smoke.



Name: _____

The Lost Sketchbook

1. What is the main theme of the story?

- A. Creativity and resilience help us start over, even after a loss.
- B. Always carry your bag tightly zipped.
- C. It's important to draw every day.
- D. Dragons are symbols of fear.

2. Why does Jules decide to start drawing again?

- A. She realizes that her creativity and skills are still with her.
- B. Her brother forces her to.
- C. She finds a different sketchbook.
- D. She wants to draw for a contest.

3. Fill in the blank:

Jules felt like she had lost more than her sketchbook—she had lost her _____.

4. How do Jules' thoughts and actions help you understand the story's theme?

5. What message does the story give about how we respond to losing something meaningful?



Parent and Teacher Guide

Guide Reading Level: Q

Lexile Level: 735L-885L

Grade Level: 4th Grade, Beginning of the Year

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Introducing the Text

"In this story, a young artist faces the loss of something important. As we read, we'll think about what lesson or theme the story teaches. We'll also pay attention to how the main character grows and changes by the end."

Vocabulary: sketchbook, plaza, unzipped, resilience, meaningful

Before Reading Discussion Questions

1. Have you ever lost something that mattered to you?
 2. What kinds of stories show how people bounce back after a problem?
 3. Why might a sketchbook be important to someone who loves art?
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During Reading Discussion Questions

1. What does Jules' reaction tell you about how important the sketchbook was to her?
 2. What clues show that she's struggling to start again?
 3. What role does her brother play in helping her?
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After Reading Discussion Questions

1. What is the theme or message of this story?
 2. What do Jules' actions at the end show about her growth?
 3. How could someone apply the message of this story to their own life?
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Activity Idea

Ask students to create a "Theme Poster" based on the story. They should draw one symbol (like Jules' new dragon) and write a short paragraph explaining how that symbol represents the story's theme about starting over after a setback.

