

Name Mrs. Thomasen

Book Title The Island

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Author Armin Greder

## Pathways to a Theme

When you have read your chosen story, respond to the following questions:

1. What is happening in the story? Answer in point form or full sentences.

- man washes up on a beach who is different
- people are mistrustful, not sure what to do.
- by locking him away, they can avoid the problem
- once exposed, exploit him
- fear him because different, guilty
- paranoia + irrational fear spreads
- kick him out and punish the one person who brought him
- Build a wall to keep out foreigners

2. Identify and describe the conflict in the story.

- fear of the unknown (character vs. self)
- fear of foreigners (character vs. character or society)
- to help or not (character vs. character or self)
- hostility towards a foreigner. (character vs. character)
- atrocities (character vs. character)

3. Brainstorm words or phrases that connect to the class discussion on the human condition.

- fear
- acceptance
- need to belong
- intolerance of others
- racism
- xenophobia (intense or irrational fear or dislike of people from other countries)

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4. What are 2-3 themes or big ideas of the story (the REAL story) ? Create a theme statement.  
-You can create a theme statement by using the formula **topic+treatment (+/-) ⇒ result.= resolved** Eg. In Macbeth, one could say that "ambition + too much ⇒ cruel = destruction". Therefore the theme statement would be "*Too much ambition can lead to cruelty and possibly end in the destruction of one's self and position*" or "power + corruption ⇒ division = destroyed relationships" would be "*When power is corrupted, divisions occur and relationships may be destroyed*"

-A theme statement has no absolutes, no cliches and no conversational language. Eg. "I think its to never judge a book by its cover" is NOT a good theme statement.

Topic Fear + treatment(+/-) excessive irrational ⇒ result Xenophobia = resolved atrocities

Theme Statement

Xenophobia, or the excessive fear of foreigners may lead to human atrocities.

Topic Traditional Society + treatment(+/-) maintain it ⇒ result paranoia = resolved death, isolation

Theme Statement

In an effort to maintain a traditional society, the residents may fear and abuse foreigners and become isolationists.

5. Change the theme statements into a deep questions. Eg. What can be the result of too much ambition? OR How does one balance ambition with empathy? Or How does the quest for power affect relationships?

What is the result of an irrational fear of foreigners?  
Why do cultures fear foreigners?

6. How can you challenge the theme of the story or extend your thinking? Do you disagree? Or see the other side of the story? Are there questions that need to be clarified or asked to extend your thinking?

Perhaps isolating your country from other cultures would strengthen it?  
How can Western countries accept immigrants but also keep our cultural identity?  
What are the benefits of immigrants?