

Shake, Shake, Shake!

A **theme** is the main lesson or message that we can learn from a story. Identifying the **theme** helps us understand the purpose of the story and what the author wants us to understand or think about.

In the story, *My name is Celia: The Life of Celia Cruz*, Celia loves to sing to friends and family! Even though she faces challenges from others, she never lets them silence her voice. What important lesson can you learn from her life?

Theme (lesson):

How do you know?

Can you think of another book with a similar **theme**?

Check for Understanding

- Celia knows she wants to be a singer at a very young age. What do you want to be when you grow up?
- What is another book you have read or movie you have watched about the life of a real person?
- What are two to three facts about yourself that you would like written in a biography about your life?

Get ready to sing, clap, shake, and dance along as Celia Cruz tells about her life in this colorfully illustrated story filled with the sounds and rhythms of her tropical homeland, Cuba. Celia recounts her childhood in Havana and her rise to becoming the “Queen of Salsa,” all with the “sugar” that reminds her of the love, warmth, and kisses of the home she left behind.

? Before reading, you could ask ...

This book is a biography, meaning it tells facts and events of a real person’s life. What types of facts do you think you learn in a biography about a real person?

Celia Cruz was a famous singer. What does it mean to be famous?

Celia Cruz sang a type of music called salsa. What is your favorite kind of music to listen to? Why?

October Family Reading Tip of the Month: Create a Home Library

Did you know that children who have easy access to books are more likely to read? Keep books in various areas of your house, and take some with you so a book is always available.

You can:

- Borrow books from the public library often.
- Swap books with friends and family.
- Collect books from second-hand stores, garage sales, and bookstores.

Easy access to books will help your child develop a love of reading!



Beat of the Drum!

A **simile** is a type of *figurative language* used to compare two things using the words *like* or *as*.

For example:

“Her smile is as bright as the sun.”
“He runs like a cheetah.”

In these examples, the first **simile** compares a smile to the brightness of the sun, while the second **simile** compares someone’s running speed to that of a cheetah.

Figurative language makes writing exciting by using words in a creative way. It adds fun and meaning!

Read the following sentences. Circle the conga drum if the sentence contains a **simile**.

My voice feels like feet skipping on cool, wet sand.

My costumes are as colorful as my music.

I like to walk and run outside.

I thought as much!

My voice feels like running under a waterfall.

Answer Key:
1. My voice feels like feet skipping on cool, wet sand.
2. My costumes are as colorful as my music.
3. My voice feels like running under a waterfall.

Bonus Activity

Now that you have completed the story, can you find more similes in your book? There are examples on pages 24 and 27!

New and Interesting Words

Unknown words can be a little scary at first, but don’t worry! With practice, you can become a vocabulary expert!

rhythm
(p. 7)

When something happens in a **rhythm**, there is a repeating series of sounds or actions. When Celia dances, she moves to the **rhythm** of her heart and to the beat of the drum.

melody
(p. 10)

A **melody** is a tune or song. Celia’s neighbors love to hear her sing her **melodies**.

cultures
(p. 19)

When someone talks about **culture**, they are talking about the language, food, music, and customs of people from a country. People from all over the world move to New York, making it a blend of many **cultures**.

honored
(p. 24)

If you **honor** someone, you give them special praise or attention. Many people love Celia’s music and **honor** her by calling her the “Queen of Salsa.”

Directions: Can you think of other words or phrases that are similar to these? List them below. One example for each word has been done for you!

| Rhythm | Melody | Culture | Honor |
|----------|----------|------------|----------|
| 1. Flow | 1. Tune | 1. Customs | 1. Value |
| 2. _____ | 2. _____ | 2. _____ | 2. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 3. _____ | 3. _____ | 3. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 4. _____ | 4. _____ | 4. _____ |