Find a Theme: Short Practice

A Quiet Change

The garden club was about to paint its new sign. Mina had drawn a bright row of birds across the bottom. She had spent most of lunch on their wings. Jonah stepped back from the sign and said he could not read the garden hours from the sidewalk.

Mina frowned. The birds were the best part. She carried the sign to the sidewalk and looked back at it from where the path turned. Jonah was right. She could see the birds, but she could not make out the hours.

Mina measured a wider space across the middle. She painted the hours in large dark letters and moved one bird to each corner. When the paint dried, she asked Jonah to walk the path again. This time he read the hours back to her. Mina took a photo of the sign from the sidewalk, not from the table where she painted it.

1. Name one topic the story develops.

2. Write a theme that could apply beyond the garden sign.

3. Give one detail from before Mina changes the sign and one detail from after. Explain what they show together.

4. A student writes, “Mina painted a sign with birds.” Is this a topic, a theme, or a plot detail? Explain.

Write, type, or explain your answers aloud. If you quote a detail, short phrases are enough. You can also describe it in your own words.