

School Themes

<http://www.schoolthemes.org>
email <admin@schoolthemes.org>

Dear *Educator*:

Congratulations, and thank you for making the decision to purchase a winning School Theme production. We know you will find it one of the most valuable tools available for your staff, students and school community.

Introducing:

- School Wide Themes Purpose
- Theme Benefits
- Theme Creation Strategies
- Rewards
- Theme Timing
- Theme Kick-Off
- Community Involvement

You can participate in the personal and professional growth of all students. The theme process encourages school spirit and with each theme session, staff members will learn new strategies. See more details on our website

<http://www.schoolthemes.org/school-theme.html>

Build School Spirit

After all.... It's all about the kids

Thanks again and we hope you enjoy your choice of 10 Theme selections !

-TWIST- -USA- -FIESTA- -SEAS- -SHOES- -HATS- -RODEO- -HAPPY- -CHAMPIONS- -STARS-

P.S. Your Theme Team selection criteria can really boost results.

<http://www.schoolthemes.org/theme-team.html>

*P.P.S. We've also included an extra **FREE** theme called POWER- this school theme idea shares how an improved time management initiative can be designed to meet individual student needs plus promote academic successes.*

Introduction

- What theme idea did you use last?
- Was it good?
- Who will pick your new theme and be responsible for promoting it?
- Is this more trouble than it's worth?
- What are the benefits of using a school-theme?
- You've got to figure out theme timing, theme shirts, community involvement, decorating ideas, staff incentives, academic relevance...
- How's your budget - what can you afford?
- **WOW**, you've got a lot to do... better get started !
- A School-Theme is an "idea in motion." Think about that for a moment...
- Each theme has a name or title but... it's the energy, creativity and thought behind the name and behind the scene that will determine its success.
- Your school has its unique culture, style, character and needs as does every other school. When you choose your theme, you will implement it *a little differently* than any other school.

That's what makes your school special

School Themes

Purpose

The need for school wide themes !

What themes do for the staff and the leader of a building?

School wide themes provide the principal with “*the glue that holds a staff together.*” Themes help evolve staff members into an education family; a family that works together to educate and recognize individual *student and staff* successes.

It’s all about attitude. Themes help keep the entire staff motivated and positive throughout the school year. A highly motivated staff maintains a positive attitude and students are inspired. The learning environment is super charged and great accomplishments prevail.

Themes let great things happen for everyone in the learning community !

Theme Benefits

- Generate and set the stage for the upcoming year
- Create a positive environment
- Provide opportunities for individual recognition
- Develop winning attitudes
- Develop and foster relationships among people
- Develop a sense of togetherness (education family)
- Keep staffs motivated throughout the year
- Celebrate successes
- Reward positive behavior
- Build character among students and staff
- Generate excitement in the community
- Provide direction to the learning community
- Enable the administrator to support morale building events throughout the year

Theme Selection

Three Theme Creation Strategies

Method One: Principal

The school principal creates or selects the theme. The selection process is often based on an assessment of school needs.

Example: The principal might determine that a theme supporting manners, teamwork, academics or community relations best serves the current school climate.

The principal may receive input from the education community (staff, students, parents, and patrons) however; the final decision rests with the principal. This “beginners method” is directive in nature and satisfies the principal’s immediate school needs assessment.

Specific theme support days can be established and theme shirts with logo’s may be worn.

Method Two: Community

The principal solicits ideas for next year's theme from the staff, students, and community.

Popular methods:

- School newsletter to parents
- District publications
- School website
- Staff bulletins
- Staff meetings
- Classroom student meetings

The publications and meetings describe the criteria for the theme and establish a deadline for submissions.

Example: The theme must be presented in acronym form and support a positive learning environment. A word like HAPPY might be chosen and convert to - -

H.A.P.P.Y --- “Have A Positive Productive Year.”

Once the deadline has passed and all eligible entries are received, the selection process begins.

- All eligible entries are compiled into a ballot form
- The ballot is made available to the learning community, students, parents, staff, patrons, etc. Completed ballots may be received via mail or in person.
- If more than five different acronym theme entries are received, the first vote can narrow the theme selection to the top three. Then a re-vote may be conducted to select the winning theme for the following year.
- If the initial submissions reveal less than five separate acronym entries, then the most votes wins.

Once the winning theme is selected:

- The theme is publicized in all school and district publications
- The staff and students submit ideas for the theme logo that will be used for a wall mural and the theme shirts
- The staff and students choose the colors that will be used for the theme shirt
- The principal selects the theme logo from the input provided

Method Three: Staff

This is a powerful method that focuses on staff unity and their buy in for the entire theme process. Your staff creates the theme for the next school year.

Staff requirements:

- Staff members may choose to work alone, in teams, or small groups
- Staff members submit as many different theme ideas as they can envision.

- All theme ideas are submitted to a selected office administrator by an established deadline.
- A ballot containing all submissions is created.
- A staff meeting is scheduled and staff members will present their theme ideas to fellow staff members. The presentation must include; ideas for decorating rooms, treats or ideas for theme related incentives, how the theme can be integrated in the educational program, theme logo and colors for the theme shirts, and anything else that provides support for their submission.
- Upon completion of all presentations the staff members receive the ballot and vote for the theme of their choice.
- The first vote usually narrows the choices to the top three theme ideas. A second vote may be required to break a tie and the winning theme is supported by the most votes. Save all material – these are competitive presentations made by your staff members and will prove invaluable for future theme selection processes.

Rewards

- Provides teamwork for staff members
- Encourages school spirit
- Supports staff buy in for school wide theme ideas
- Entertaining way to select themes and provides healthy competition
- Personalizes staff members ideas on how to implement the theme in their classrooms
- Generates laughter and creativity during staff presentations
- Provides positive staff morale

The winning entry can be rewarded:

- If the winning presentation is conducted by two staff members or less, a dinner for two might be offered.
- If a team of teachers present the winning theme they may enjoy lunch together.

Suggestion: Video the theme contest. The video becomes priceless at teacher retirements or staff functions.

Theme Selection Timing

When do I begin the theme selection process?

This timeline is based upon on a school year that commences in the middle of August and ends in May.

- In early April the principal advertises it is time to come up with a theme idea for the following school year and a deadline is set for new theme submissions
- Middle of April - theme ballots are created and if using method three a date is set for the theme contest
- Last week in April the final vote is tallied and the theme is announced
- First of May - the theme shirt logo and colors are presented to the principal
- End of May - in conjunction with staff departure for the summer - they submit orders for their theme shirts
- First of June - theme shirt orders are placed with the T-shirt vendor.
- Staff reports in August - theme shirts are ready on the first day
- The theme begins for the new school year

Theme Kick Off for the Staff

What is a theme kick off?

A theme kick off is held at the beginning of each school year. This kick off is for the staff and their families. A cook out is held - new staff members and their families are introduced. This is also a great opportunity to thank families for their support to children and the entire education process.

Following the cookout the staff stays to decorate their rooms together. It provides a fun evening and great teamwork as the rooms are prepared for the students. During the evening, drawings and contests are held for staff members.

Prizes related to the school theme are given throughout the night's events. These might include decorations for bulletin boards; stickers, note pads, or larger gifts donated by local businesses.

It is a memorable evening and a fun way to start the school year.

Students, Parents and Community Members

When do they get theme shirts?

Theme shirt orders for students and parents are taken during student enrollment. Order forms for patrons are always available in the school office. All orders must be placed not later than the second week of September.

This concludes the introduction... however, as you embark upon implementing the selected theme... it's likely you'll want to introduce it to students, staff and select community members. Therefore, we've included some of the introductory material in the theme process too !

Let's introduce your selected theme... and ... it's most important functions.



“As you know, it's all about the kids. Whether it's kindergarten, pre-school, grade school, elementary school, middle school, junior high school or high school... If we unite the staff and students, promote a positive environment and encourage school spirit... the students will respond. They are inspired and better things happen.”

“T.W.I.S.T.”

Teamwork Will Inspire Students and Teachers

Each of our themes is introduced in acronym form. Additional discussions may be found at our web site <http://www.schoolthemes.org/acronyms.html> This “play on words” can provide additional sessions for staff fun and creativity.

The name (acronym) selected for your school theme represents your first attempt at creativity. Whether you choose one of our “named” themes or create your own... the fun really begins here.

The name is not what’s important.

It’s your imagination and the methods you use to promote your School’s Spirit.

The word or words chosen may become your school’s slogan for perhaps a full year. Although you’ve selected our theme - **TWIST**, - you might chose to change the name to fit your school’s character or special needs.

Once you’ve seen our examples of theme implementation, you’ll know it’s ok to make changes to suit your style. In fact it’s encouraged. You’ll want to support lasting school spirit so be creative, inventive and have some fun with new concepts.

Once again, it’s likely your theme (**TWIST**) will be displayed on school correspondence, wall murals, lockers, etc. So have fun with step number one.

The bonding, staff unity, student participation and excitement commences now.

Next – we assume total staff participation and support. Without the commitment of the entire staff, themes are just *whispers in the wind*.

Like all good ideas – there is a “kick-off” session and each unique theme contains ideas related to that particular acronym. In your case – the theme **TWIST** has been selected and we’ve incorporated related ideas or “theme” content concepts.

Remember – *a key concept* - themes must contribute to a students’ learning success.

If not - why use them ?

Your day is already filled with may other demanding tasks...

However, when you have staff buy in... school themes... become the catalysts that ignite the inspiration fuse. Excitement is contagious... effective school wide themes inspire, motivate, and excite staff and students.

Twist Theme:

The theme **TWIST** promotes teamwork. It supports a fun atmosphere for learning by bringing back some of the things worn in the 50’s as well as the tunes that were popular then.

THEME KICK Off: What is it ?

A theme kick off is held at the beginning of each school year. This kick off is a cookout... for the staff and their families. Often new staff members and their families are introduced at the same time the next years’ THEME is introduced. It is also a great time to thank the families for their continuing support.

Following the cookout... the staff remains to begin decorating their classrooms. This is an evening demonstrating staff teamwork. Drawings and contests are held for the staff members and prizes related to the school theme are awarded. They might include decorations for bulletin boards; stickers, note pads, or even larger gifts that may be donated by local businesses.

This can be a memorable evening.

Theme Shirt :

- Each staff member receives a theme shirt at the beginning of the school year. The kick off – cook out is often a good time to present the shirts.
- How do you provide shirts for your staff ? You may choose fund raisers, a business sponsor, parent/teacher organizations or individual staff members as a means to purchase shirts. Our web site provides links to top of the line vendors if you haven't selected a local resource for shirts.
<http://www.schoolthemes.org/school-spirit-shirt.html>. The theme shirt is usually a short sleeve T-shirt however, long sleeve T-shirts, polo shirts, denim shirts or sweatshirts have also been selected.
- **TWIST** theme shirt: a short sleeve T-shirt. On the left front – the logo is a record and the title on the record is your school's name. The back of the shirt presents the letters **T.W.I.S.T**. Other shirt options: long sleeve T-shirt, denim shirt, sweatshirt, or polo shirt.
- Theme shirts are typically worn on the first day of school, during monthly theme celebrations, staff dinners, district meetings, field trips and staff recognition days.
- Shirts are available for students, parents, and patrons to purchase during student enrollment. They provide symbols of staff unity and school teamwork for your education family.

Decorating Ideas

- A **TWIST** mural is painted on the wall where student success awards are displayed. The mural theme matches the shirt logo. , Suggestions: the same picture that is selected for the theme shirt, jukebox, couple doing the **TWIST**, or any other theme related picture.
- Curtains for the office and individual classrooms can be purchased or made to display theme related items such as dancers, jukeboxes, or records.
- Pictures of juke boxes, hula hoops, couples in bobby sox and pony tails or flat tops, 50's cars, soda jerks, Chubby Checker, pink and black, turquoise and black, etc. utilized on bulletin boards.
- All communications documents such as parent newsletters, staff bulletins, the school web site, school stationary, student and staff handbooks, etc., display the **TWIST** theme.

Staff Incentives

- First school year staff meeting: staff receives an old vinyl record that has been heated and formed into a bowl. The bowl is filled with supplies such as a bag of pretzel twists, a pen with the theme printed on it, a pack of **TWIST** up crayons, etc. Also include a “sub stub” for one hour of free substituting by the principal so teachers can observe others’ teaching skills.
- First day of school: Provide a bowl of Rold Gold Classic style **TWIST** pretzels and **TWIST** and Shout chocolate sandwich cookies (can be purchased at Wal-Mart). Place a **TWIST** theme banner in the lounge.

----- Sidebar -----

Many schools have become more aware of the advantages and disadvantages of eating in certain ways. People are much more aware of the relationship between what they eat and how they feel. Along with a push to decrease junk and increase nutritional content in school lunch, many school districts also are placing limits on pre-packaged food and drink that have become a mainstay for some middle-and high-school-aged students.

It's all part of encouraging healthy lifestyle choices. Concentration and ability to learn can be affected by nutrition.

And what's in the food we eat ?

Here's a link to the Agriculture Department's food search tool. If reading this document offline, Copy the link URL, then paste in your browser window.

[http://199.133.10.140/codesearchwebapp/\(5rdrkvyej0ukns5rpgmu15k55\)/codesearch.aspx](http://199.133.10.140/codesearchwebapp/(5rdrkvyej0ukns5rpgmu15k55)/codesearch.aspx)

Alternatively, here's a link to additional food survey information.

<http://www.ars.usda.gov/Services/docs.htm?docid=7673> (click on food search tool)

-----Sidebar end -----

- Birthday Celebrations: Once a month we celebrate staff birthdays in conjunction with a **T.W.I.S.T.** Day theme. Staff members wear theme shirts and provide treats for the birthday celebrants.

- Mailbox Treats: On [T.W.I.S.T.](#) Days the principal puts items in staff mailboxes to go along with the theme... such as:
 - ✓ Black record cutout with 50 cents attached. “I ‘Soda’ thought you might be thirsty.”
 - ✓ [TWIST](#) pencils
 - ✓ [TWIST](#) related stickers
 - ✓ Notepads with “T.W.I.S.T.” Imprinted on them.

- Music: On “[T.W.I.S.T.](#) Day” play a recording of LET’S TWIST AGAIN by Chubby Checker, over the intercom.

- Paycheck Ideas:
 - Coupon from Mc Donald’s for a [TWIST](#) Ice Cream Cone with “[TWIST](#) on into Mc Donald’s for a treat.”
 - Tootsie Roll with, “Rock and ‘Roll’ on down to the bank with your paycheck.”
 - A [TWIST](#) and Glow pop candy with, “I’ve heard nothing but ‘glowing’ reports about you.”
 - A bag of mini pretzel [TWISTS](#) with, “[TWIST](#) and shout all the way to the bank.”
 - A bottle of Pepsi Lemon [TWIST](#) with, “Satisfy that thirst with a [TWIST](#) from me.”

- Recognition: Principal sends “Rock and Roll” notes to teachers after observing good teaching skills.

- Staff socials: go to a 50’s restaurant, a soda shop, or have a staff party with the 50’s theme.

- Competition: Support a bubble-blowing, hula-hoop, or dance contest. These events can be performed at staff meetings or a staff social.

- Staff Development: The staff reads and discusses the book Gung Ho by Ken Blanchard. This book focuses on teamwork.

Student incentives

- Play LET'S **TWIST** AGAIN over the intercom, at the beginning of the day, on **T.W.I.S.T.** Day.
- Stick a **TWIST**-related sticker, such as a pink Cadillac, on a student when you “catch them being good”
- Present a coupon for a **TWIST** ice cream cone from Mc Donalds to the students whose names are on the “positive efforts” reward wall.
- Give “**TWIST**” pencils to students on their birthdays.
- Place the theme logo on award certificates for students on the honor roll. Conduct a Sock Hop with rock and roll music with the principal for those students on the honor roll.
- Give peppermint **TWISTs** to “positive helper’s with a substitute,” and/or lunchroom helpers.
- Encourage students to purchase a theme shirt to wear on “**T.W.I.S.T. DAYS**” Conduct a contest between classrooms for the highest percentage of students wearing theme shirts. The winner will be awarded a soda pop party.
- Students learn **ROCK AND ROLL** songs in music class and learn to do the **TWIST** in music and/or P.E. class.
- Have a “French **TWIST**” hair contest for the girls/guys
- Play the **TWIST**er game in P.E.
- Read 50’s and 60’s trivia over the intercom on **TWIST** Day.

Building-Wide Academic Achievement Program

Building-wide academic achievement programs can be focused around the **TWIST** theme. Examples include timed math tests, spelling, reading skills, keyboarding skills, or any area in which students master a skill level and move forward to the next.

Example of a Building-Wide Time Math Test: “Rock and Roll Hall of Fame” or “Traveling down “Route 66”

There are seven different levels of test given to the students. The test is administered weekly on basic facts in addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division and is intended to help students improve these skills.

Each student is given a pink Cadillac with their name on it to move along Route 66 or down the road to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. This road is displayed on a hallway wall with seven stops representing each level of the test. As students pass each of the levels the car is moved down the road indicating which tests have been successfully completed.

A classroom chart is created and each student’s name is displayed with a sticker to measure their progress.

Upon successfully completing each level students receive a certificate and a prize from the principal. The awards and prizes are presented to the student weekly. Information on the awards includes student name, date, level tested and the principal’s signature.

Classroom teacher aides help with grading the tests, keeping progress records, moving the cars, and preparing tests for the next week.

After completing all seven levels the student’s name is announced over the intercom system.

Example of prizes

Level 1- Tootsie roll- Congratulations on “rolling” on by level one.

Level 2- **TWIST** Licorice-Congratulations on “**TWIST**ing” around level two.

Level 3- Piece of super bubble gum-Congratulations you are doing a “Super” job

Level 4- A blow pop-Congratulations on blowing right through level four.

Level 5- Hard Rock Café Sticker or Rock candy-Congratulations you “Rock”

Level 6- Rocky Road candy bar-It was a “Rocky Road” but you passed level six.

Level 7- Limo Ride to the Soda Shop- Congratulations you earned a special ride to the soda shop.

Helping the teacher create a common vision or common goal has shown **tremendous** success. Staff members and students all respond to an enthusiastic school wide - **theme presentation**.

Presentation is the key... educators want school spirit to be high... they desire inspired learning and they know it helps to generate classroom excitement.

Students and their education family benefit from good, fun, creative and results oriented endeavors that support their school, their classmates and community.

We hope you have enjoyed the creative prospects we’ve shared as part of the **TWIST** theme and would enjoy hearing from you. As you recognize by now there is room for additional creativity in both the presentation and execution of our themes. We have a lot of fun creating theme concepts and welcome your feedback about any improvements or new theme ideas you may wish to share.

Wishing you the best in education successes,

<http://www.schoolthemes.org>

 schoolthemes.org 

U.S.A.

Upstanding Students All-Around

Each of our themes is introduced in acronym form. Additional discussions may be found at our web site <http://www.schoolthemes.org/acronyms.html> This “play on words” can provide additional sessions for staff fun and creativity.

The name (acronym) selected for your school theme represents your first attempt at creativity. Whether you choose one of our “named” themes or create your own... the fun really begins here.

The name is not what’s important.

It’s your imagination and the methods you use to promote your School’s Spirit.

The word or words chosen may become your school’s slogan for perhaps a full year. Although you’ve selected our theme - **USA**, - you might chose to change the name to fit your school’s character or special needs.

Once you’ve seen our examples of theme implementation, you’ll know it’s ok to make changes to suit your style. In fact it’s encouraged. You’ll want to support lasting school spirit so be creative, inventive and have some fun with new concepts.

Once again, it’s likely your theme (**USA**) will be displayed on school correspondence, wall murals, lockers, etc. So have fun with step number one.

The bonding, staff unity, student participation and excitement commences now.

Theme Kick Off: What is it?

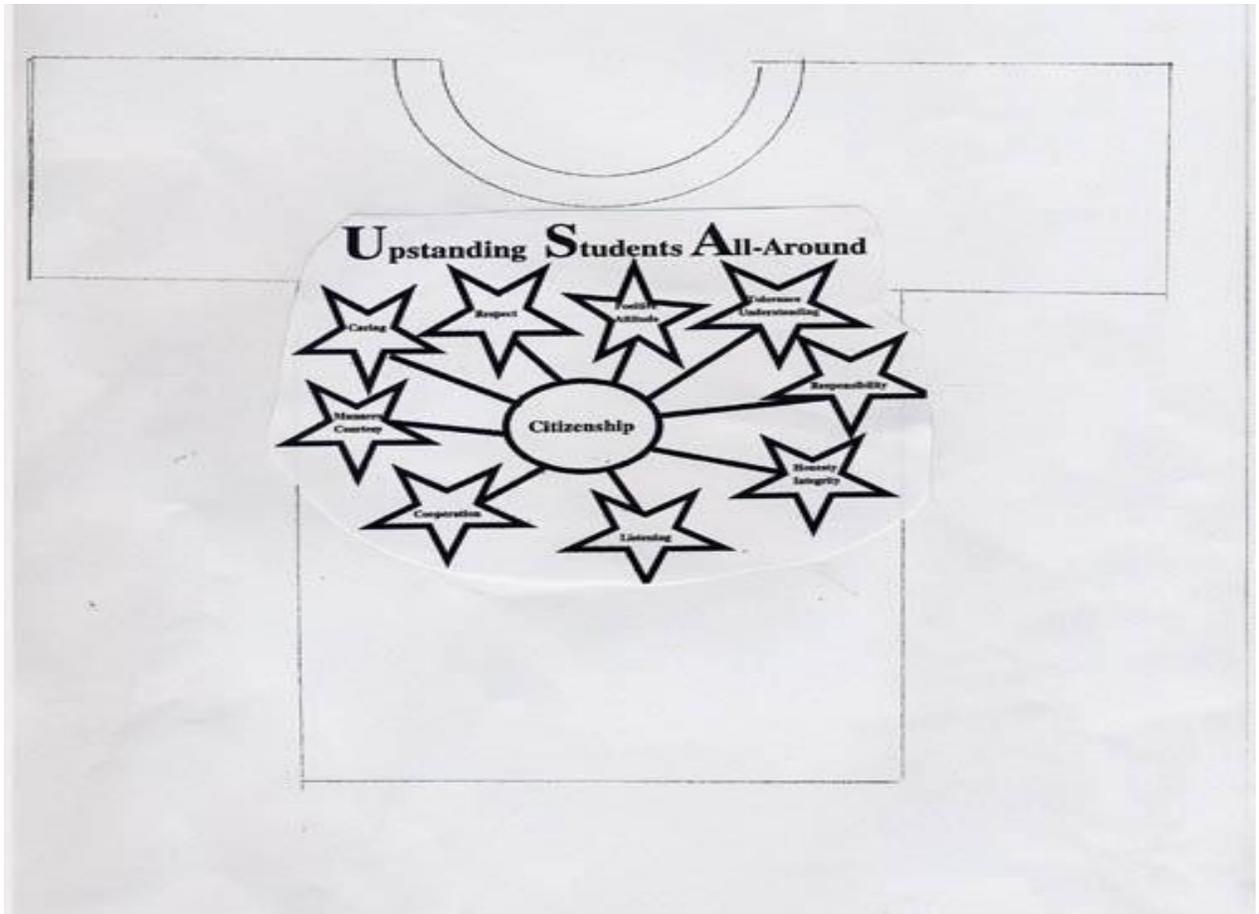
A theme kick off is held at the beginning of each school year. This kick off is a cookout... for the staff and their families. Often new staff members and their families are introduced at the same time the next years' THEME is introduced. It is also a great time to thank the families for their continuing support.

Following the cookout... the staff remains to begin decorating their classrooms. This is an evening demonstrating staff teamwork. Drawings and contests are held for the staff members and prizes related to the school theme are awarded. They might include decorations for bulletin boards, stickers, note pads, or even larger gifts that may be donated by local businesses.

This can be a memorable evening.

Theme shirts

- Each staff member receives a theme shirt at the beginning of the school year. The kick off – cook out is often a good time to present the shirts.
- How do you provide shirts for your staff ? You may choose fund raisers, a business sponsor, parent/teacher organizations or individual staff members as a means to purchase shirts.
- Our web site provides links to top of the line vendors if you haven't selected a local resource for shirts.
<http://www.schoolthemes.org/school-spirit-shirt.html>. The theme shirt is usually a short sleeve T-shirt however, long sleeve T-shirts, polo shirts, denim shirts or sweatshirts have also been selected.
- **USA** shirt: Royal Blue with USA in white letters and remaining letters in red. On the back of the shirt the word citizenship is centered in white letters. From the word citizenship, lines are drawn to a star at the end of each line.



- Inside the star, character building focus words are chosen. For example, white letters inside each red star, words such as caring, respect, positive attitude, tolerance, responsibility, honesty, listening, cooperation, and manners can be selected. The front of the shirt displays a patriotic symbol with school initials. The staff designs the shirts and selects the character words and activities for the year.
- Theme shirts are typically worn on the first day of school, during monthly theme celebrations, staff dinners, district meetings, field trips and staff recognition days.

- Shirts are available for students, parents, and patrons to purchase during student enrollment. They provide symbols of staff unity and school teamwork for your education family.

Decorating Ideas

- U.S.A. is displayed throughout the building and can be accompanied by a character education word such as Respect.
- U.S.A. theme mural is painted on the wall where student success awards are displayed. The theme mural matches the back of the theme shirts.
- Red, White, and Blue curtains are placed in the office and classrooms.
- Patriotic symbols and character building activities are placed throughout the building.
- All communication documents such as parent newsletters, staff bulletins, front covers of student and staff handbooks, the school website, and school stationary, display the **USA** theme. Ideal names for the school newsletter include - The Patriotic Press or The Citizens' Sentinel.

Staff Incentives

- First school year staff meeting: The staff receives teacher supplies such as pens and pencils that contain patriotic representations. Also include a “substitution stub” for a designated amount of time during which the principal covers for the staff member. This allows time for teachers to observe other teachers, provide planning time for integrated units, a break from duties, or just an opportunity for the principal to work in other’s shoes.
- First Day of School: Theme related treats and a banner stating the theme is placed in the lounge for the first day of school. Ideas for treats: Red, White, Blue Star Shaped Sugar Cookies, Red, White, Blue M&M’s, etc.

----- Sidebar -----

Many schools have become more aware of the advantages and disadvantages of eating in certain ways. People are much more aware of the relationship between what they eat and how they feel. Along with a push to decrease junk and increase nutritional content in school lunch, many school districts also are placing limits on pre-packaged food and drink that have become a mainstay for some middle-and high-school-aged students.

It’s all part of encouraging healthy lifestyle choices. Concentration and ability to learn can be affected by nutrition.

And what’s in the food we eat ?

Here’s a link to the Agriculture Department’s food search tool. If reading this document offline, Copy the link URL, then paste in your browser window.

[http://199.133.10.140/codesearchwebapp/\(5rldkvyej0ukns5rpgmu15k55\)/codesearch.aspx](http://199.133.10.140/codesearchwebapp/(5rldkvyej0ukns5rpgmu15k55)/codesearch.aspx)

Alternatively, here's a link to additional food survey information.

<http://www.ars.usda.gov/Services/docs.htm?docid=7673> (click on food search tool)

-----Sidebar end -----

- Birthday Celebrations: Once a month we celebrate staff birthdays in conjunction with a **USA** Day theme. Staff members wear theme shirts and provide treats for the birthday celebrants. Staff members sign up at the beginning of the year choosing the month they choose to be responsible for organizing the celebration and providing treats.
- Mailbox Treats:
 - ✓ Patriotic flag pins
 - ✓ Star-shaped bubbles
 - ✓ Star shaped glasses
 - ✓ **USA** flag magnets
 - ✓ Patriotic key chains
 - ✓ Uncle Sam notepads
- Music: Theme day music is played over the intercom to get the day started. Music ideas: Born in the **USA** by Bruce Springstein or any other patriotic song.
- Staff Recognition: Principal places in teacher mailboxes an Uncle Sam note that recognizes great teaching strategies that have been observed. The note is written to acknowledge quality teaching or an activity that is going on in the classroom. This could also be a way to recognize test standards being taught or any part of a building improvement plan that is being implemented.

- Paychecks: Theme related gifts can be attached to paychecks, such as:
 - Big Red Gum
 - Star balloon stating that the teachers rise above the rest ”
 - **USA** erasers stating that the staff erases all the learning problems for students with great teaching
 - Midget Tootsie Roll wrapped in **USA** Flag
 - Flag magnet stating that the staff is very magnetic
 - Stars and Stripes Visor stating the staff out shines the rest

Staff Development Ideas: Staff reads and discusses the book **How Full Is Your Bucket** by Donald Clifton & Tom Rath. It provides an opportunity for all teachers to take a computerized test to discover their five personal strengths.

Student Incentives

- Read a positive statement over the intercom each morning. A good source for these statements can be found at www.pops.com click on “daily deposit.”
- Stick Star sticker on a student when they are displaying good citizenship or implementing the character trait your school is working on for the year.
- Give patriotic pencils to students on their birthdays and announce the student’s name over the intercom.

- Have **U.S.A.** award certificates for students passing levels of academic achievements test.
- Give red, white, and blue suckers, gum, or erasers to positive helpers. Students that help with a substitute, display good manners, help in the lunchroom or any behavior that the school might like to recognize.
- Display academic achievement awards on the **USA** Award Wall or a designated area in your school building.

Building-Wide Academic Achievement Program

Building-wide academic achievement programs can be focused around the theme. Examples include timed math tests, spelling, reading skills, keyboarding skills, or any area in which students master a skill level and move forward to the next. This method can be adapted to meet your own building needs.

Example of a Building-Wide Timed Math Test: “Traveling through the [USA](#) Regions”

This test is administered weekly on basic facts in addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division and is intended to help students improve these skills.

Each student is given a car cut out and puts their name on it. As the student passes the timed test at each level their automobile moves through the **USA**. The United States is displayed on a wall in which students can view their successes. As the student passes each level of the timed math test the car moves to the United States region matching the fact test. The goal is to pass all seven levels. A chart is created and placed in each classroom displaying the student successes.

Upon successfully completing each level students receive a certificate and a prize from the principal. Each certificate is printed to reflect the theme in use and includes student name, date, level tested and the principal's signature.

Classroom teacher aides help with grading the tests, keeping progress records, moving the cars, and preparing tests for the next week.

After the completion of all seven levels the student's name is announced over the intercom.

Examples of prizes and certificates

Level 1- New England Region—Student receives a prize that relates to this region of the United States

Level 2- Mid-Atlantic Region---Students receives a prize that relates to this region of the United States

Level 3- The South Region---Students receive a prize that relates to this region of the United States

Level 4- The Midwest Region---Students receive a prize that relates to this region of the United States

Level 5- The Southwest Region---Students receive a prize that relates to this region of the United States

Level 6- The West Region---Students receive a prize that relates to this region of the United States

Level 7- Alaska and Hawaii--- Students choose from a prize box of several items that relate to these two states

Note: This is an example of how a building-wide timed test was implemented. Other strategies may be adopted and we'd be happy to hear from you about how your school used the **USA** theme. Please e-mail your stories to <admin@schoolthemes.org>

Helping the teacher create a common vision or common goal has shown **tremendous** success. Staff members and students all respond to an enthusiastic school wide - **theme presentation**.

Presentation is the key... educators want school spirit to be high... they desire inspired learning and they know it helps to generate classroom excitement.

Students and their education family benefit from good, fun, creative and results oriented endeavors that support their school, their classmates and community.

We hope you have enjoyed the creative prospects we've shared as part of the **USA** theme and would enjoy hearing from you. As you recognize by now there is room for additional creativity in both the presentation and execution of our themes.

Wishing you the best in education successes,

<http://www.schoolthemes.org>

 schoolthemes.org 

F.I.E.S.T.A.

Focusing on Important Educational Standards That All students can meet

Each of our themes is introduced in acronym form. Additional discussions may be found at our web site <http://www.schoolthemes.org/acronyms.html> This “play on words” can provide additional sessions for staff fun and creativity.

The name (acronym) selected for your school theme represents your first attempt at creativity. Whether you choose one of our “named” themes or create your own... the fun really begins here.

The name is not what’s important.

It’s your imagination and the methods you use to promote your School’s Spirit.

The word or words chosen may become your school’s slogan for perhaps a full year. Although you’ve selected our theme - **FIESTA**, - you might chose to change the name to fit your school’s character or special needs.

Once you’ve seen our examples of theme implementation, you’ll know it’s ok to make changes to suit your style. In fact it’s encouraged. You’ll want to support lasting school spirit so be creative, inventive and have some fun with new concepts.

Once again, it’s likely your theme (**FIESTA**) will be displayed on school correspondence, wall murals, lockers, etc. So have fun with step number one.

The bonding, staff unity, student participation and excitement commences now.

Next – we assume total staff participation and support. Without the commitment of the entire staff, themes are just *whispers in the wind*.

Like all good ideas – there is a “kick-off” session and each unique theme contains ideas related to that particular acronym. In your case – the theme **FIESTA** has been selected and we’ve incorporated related ideas or “theme” content concepts.

Remember – *a key concept* - themes must contribute to a students’ learning success.

If not - why use them ?

Your day is already filled with may other demanding tasks...

However, when you have staff buy in... school themes... become the catalysts that ignite the inspiration fuse. Excitement is contagious... effective school wide themes inspire, motivate, and excite staff and students.

Fiesta:

Fiesta brings color to your school. Imagine the school filled with bright colors and piñatas hanging in the classroom. This theme sets the learning environment to explore different cultures and languages. In addition to stimulating the interest of exploring a different culture it can also be a creative way for the staff and students to focus on the district, state, and federal standards.

Theme Kick Off: What is it?

A theme kick off is held at the beginning of each school year. This kick off is a cookout... for the staff and their families. Often new staff members and their families are introduced at the same time the next years’ THEME is introduced. It is also a great time to thank the families for their continuing support.

Following the cookout... the staff remains to begin decorating their classrooms. This is an evening demonstrating staff teamwork. Drawings and contests are held for the staff members and prizes related to the school theme are awarded. They might include decorations for bulletin boards; stickers, note pads, or even larger gifts that may be donated by local businesses.

This can be a memorable evening.

Theme Shirt :

- Each staff member receives a theme shirt at the beginning of the school year. The kick off – cook out is often a good time to present the shirts.
- How do you provide shirts for your staff ? You may choose fund raisers, a business sponsor, parent/teacher organizations or individual staff members as a means to purchase shirts. Our web site provides links to top of the line vendors if you haven't selected a local resource for shirts.
<http://www.schoolthemes.org/school-spirit-shirt.html> . The theme shirt is usually a short sleeve T-shirt however, long sleeve T-shirts, polo shirts, denim shirts or sweatshirts have also been selected.
- **FIESTA** theme shirt: parent/teacher organization or staff members may purchase the shirts. The theme shirt is a bright colored short sleeve T-shirt with an emblem on the front to represent the theme. Some suggestions of theme emblems: piñata, the character Speedy Gonzales, maracas or any symbol that represents **FIESTA**. Include your school's initials once the symbol is selected. On the back place the word **F.I.E.S.T.A.** The staff normally helps determine desired shirt colors.
- Theme shirts are typically worn on the first day of school, during monthly theme celebrations, staff dinners, district meetings, field trips and staff recognition days.

- Shirts are available for students, parents and patrons to purchase during student enrollment. They provide symbols of staff unity and school teamwork for your education family.

Decorating Ideas

- **F.I.E.S.T.A.** theme is presented throughout the building.
- A **FIESTA** mural is painted on the wall where student success awards are displayed. The mural theme matches the selected shirt logo.
- Curtains for the office and individual classrooms can be purchased or made from brightly colored materials with **FIESTA** theme content.
- Bulletin boards can be decorated with pictures of sombreros, cactus, hot peppers, Mexican food, guitars, donkeys, parrots, Mexican blankets, ponchos, piñatas, Mexican pottery, etc.
- All communication documents such as parent newsletters, staff bulletins, the school web site, school stationary, student and staff handbooks, etc., display the **FIESTA** theme.

Staff Incentives

- First school year staff meeting: Staff members receive a sombrero. The sombrero is filled with supplies such as a cactus key chain, a pen with the theme printed on it, bright colored notepads, cactus shaped pens, etc.
- First day of school: Display a theme banner and provide Tex-Mex Dip and chips for treats in the staff lounge.

----- Sidebar -----

Many schools have become more aware of the advantages and disadvantages of eating in certain ways. People are much more aware of the relationship between what they eat and how they feel. Along with a push to decrease junk and increase nutritional content in school lunch, many school districts also are placing limits on pre-packaged food and drink that have become a mainstay for some middle-and high-school-aged students.

It's all part of encouraging healthy lifestyle choices. Concentration and ability to learn can be affected by nutrition.

And what's in the food we eat ?

Here's a link to the Agriculture Department's food search tool. If reading this document offline, Copy the link URL, then paste in your browser window.

[http://199.133.10.140/codesearchwebapp/\(5rdkvyej0ukns5rpgmu15k55\)/codesearch.aspx](http://199.133.10.140/codesearchwebapp/(5rdkvyej0ukns5rpgmu15k55)/codesearch.aspx)

Alternatively, here's a link to additional food survey information.

<http://www.ars.usda.gov/Services/docs.htm?docid=7673> (click on food search tool)

-----Sidebar end -----

- Birthday Celebrations: Once a month we celebrate staff birthdays in conjunction with a **FIESTA** Day theme. Staff members wear theme shirts and provide treats for the birthday celebrants.

- Mailbox Treats: On **F.I.E.S.T.A.** Days the principal may put items in staff mailboxes to go along with the theme... such as:
 - ✓ Sombrero cutout with 50 cents attached. “Have a pop on me.”
 - ✓ **FIESTA** pencils
 - ✓ **FIESTA** related stickers
 - ✓ Sombrero-shaped cookies
 - ✓ Notepads with “**F.I.E.S.T.A.**” imprinted on the notepad
 - ✓ Sub-Stub – the principal provides a substitution stub for all staff members. They may use this sub stub which obligates the principal to relieve them of their duty for a designated period of time. This also provides the means for the principal to demonstrate staff support.

- Music: “**F.I.E.S.T.A.** Day” play a recording of Spanish music over the intercom.

- Competition: during a staff meeting, have the staff wear bright colored clothing. The teacher that is dressed the most festive will receive a dinner for two at a Mexican restaurant.

- Paycheck Ideas:
 - ✓ Hot Tamales Candy with a note: “You probably have a “burning” desire to get this to the bank”
 - ✓ Free Taco certificates from a Mexican restaurant with a note stating: “You spice up education”
 - ✓ Bag of Doritos with a note: “Keep “chipping” away with your great teaching”
 - ✓ A package of chili seasoning with the note: “Hope you don’t get “chili” on the way to the bank”
 - ✓ A coupon for a “Siesta Time” in which the principal would cover his or her class for an hour.
 - ✓ A pack of bright colored sticky notes with a note: “You provide color to this staff”

- Recognition: Principal provides a theme-related note after observing. The note might be in a hot tamale shape with a note stating "You did a real hot job today" It is a good way to recognize outstanding teaching techniques.
- Staff Socials: Bring in a fiesta dinner, a staff celebration at a Mexican restaurant, a chili luncheon, or a piñata breaking celebration.
- Staff Development: Read and discuss the book The Present by Spencer Johnson.

Student incentives

- Stick a **FIESTA** sticker on a student when you “catch them being good” or contributing toward any character building skill that your school is focusing on and wanting to recognize.
- Have a Breakfast Burrito Party with the principal for the students whose names are on the “positive efforts” reward wall. Positive efforts may simply be helping the substitute teacher, custodian, in the lunchroom, or just being good citizens.
- Give **FIESTA** pencils to students on their birthday and read the student's name over the intercom.
- Recognize students that have reached their goal on the building-wide academic achievement test. Have a piñata party with the principal for those students passing all levels.
- Give boxes of Hot Tamales candy to “positive helper’s with a certificate of accomplishment. Post this certificate in a designated area in your school.
- Have **F.I.E.S.T.A.**, or your theme symbol displayed on the honor roll certificates. The students are recognized during an academic award assembly.

- Encourage students to purchase a theme shirt to wear on “**F.I.E.S.T.A. DAYS**” When students wear the theme shirt they are recognized and given a piece of gum for additional incentive. Classroom contests award the class with the highest percentage of students wearing theme T-shirts.
- Adjust music and PE classes to enable students to learn different activities and songs from different cultures. These activities could include such things as the Mexican Hat Dance.
- Basic Spanish can be taught to elementary students by high school Spanish students.
- Have trivia on facts about Mexico read over the intercom in the morning. The classes can send the answer to the office and then the principal can read which classes answered the question correctly during afternoon announcements.
- Positive comments on student’s papers might be: Red Hot Work!, Bravo!, Fantastico!, Magnifico!, Hot Tamales!, Muy Bueno!
- Have Spanish-speaking community members visit the school and teach the students about their culture.

Building-Wide Academic Achievement Program

Building-wide academic achievement programs can be focused around the theme. Examples include timed math tests, spelling, reading skills, keyboarding skills, or any area in which students master a skill level and move forward to the next.

Example of an Academic Program: "Traveling down the Santa Fe Trail"

This is a series of seven tests given weekly on basic facts in addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. The purpose of these tests is for the students to improve on their basic math facts.

Each student is given a donkey cut out with their name on it to travel down the trail. The Santa Fe Trail is displayed on a hallway wall so that all students can monitor their successes. As they pass each level their donkey moves along the trail. An individual classroom chart is also created to display individual student successes.

Upon successfully completing each level students receive a certificate and a prize from the principal. Each certificate is printed to reflect the theme in use and includes student name, date, level tested and the principal's signature.

Classroom teacher aides help with grading the tests, keeping progress records, moving the donkeys, and preparing tests for the next week.

After completing all seven levels the student's name is announced over the intercom system.

Examples of prizes and certificates

Level 1- Jawbreaker- Congratulations for "breaking" through level one

Level 2- Stick of gum-Congratulations on "sticking" to the task

Level 3- Snack size bag of Doritos- Congratulations on "chipping" away through the trail

Level 4- Snack size of hot tamales-Congratulations on being red hot.

Level 5- Noisemaker-Celebrate your success for passing level five

Level 6- Breakfast burrito certificate from Mc Donald's-Congratulations and you deserve a burrito for your effort.

Level 7- Piñata Breaking-Congratulations and celebrate your success for completing the Santa Fe Trail with a Piñata Breaking get together with the principal.

Helping the teacher create a common vision or common goal has shown **tremendous** success. Staff members and students all respond to an enthusiastic school wide - **theme presentation**.

Presentation is the key... educators want school spirit to be high... they desire inspired learning and they know it helps to generate classroom excitement.

Students and their education family benefit from good, fun, creative and results oriented endeavors that support their school, their classmates and community.

We hope you have enjoyed the creative prospects we've shared as part of the **FIESTA** theme and would enjoy hearing from you. As you recognize by now there is room for additional creativity in both the presentation and execution of our themes.

Wishing you the best in education successes,

<http://www.schoolthemes.org>

 schoolthemes.org 



“As you know, it's all about the kids. Whether it's kindergarten, pre-school, grade school, elementary school, middle school, junior high school or high school... If we unite the staff and students, promote a positive environment and encourage school spirit... the students will respond. They are inspired and better things happen.”

S.E.A.S.

Successfully Educating All Students

Each theme is introduced in acronym form. Additional discussions may be found at our web site <http://www.schoolthemes.org/acronyms.html>. This “play on words” can provide additional sessions for staff fun and creativity.

Each of our themes is introduced in acronym form. Additional discussions may be found at our web site <http://www.schoolthemes.org/acronyms.html> This “play on words” can provide additional sessions for staff fun and creativity.

The name (acronym) selected for your school theme represents your first attempt at creativity. Whether you choose one of our “named” themes or create your own... the fun really begins here.

The name is not what’s important.

It’s your imagination and the methods you use to promote your School’s Spirit.

The word or words chosen may become your school’s slogan for perhaps a full year. Although you’ve selected our theme - **SEAS**, - you might chose to change the name to fit your school’s character or special needs.

Once you’ve seen our examples of theme implementation, you’ll know it’s ok to make changes to suit your style. In fact it’s encouraged. You’ll want to support lasting school spirit so be creative, inventive and have some fun with new concepts.

Once again, it’s likely your theme (**SEAS**) will be displayed on school correspondence, wall murals, lockers, etc. So have fun with step number one.

The bonding, staff unity, student participation and excitement commences now.

Next – we assume total staff participation and support. Without the commitment of the entire staff, themes are just *whispers in the wind*.

Like all good ideas – there is a “kick-off” session and each unique theme contains ideas related to that particular acronym. In your case – the theme **SEAS** has been selected and we’ve incorporated related ideas or “theme” content concepts.

Remember – *a key concept* - themes must contribute to a students' learning success.

If not - why use them ?

Your day is already filled with may other demanding tasks...

However, when you have staff buy in... school themes... become the catalysts that ignite the inspiration fuse. Excitement is contagious... effective school wide themes inspire, motivate, and excite staff and students.

Theme Seas:

Seas is a theme that supports No Child Left Behind, to educate all students. The theme places a focus on finding teaching strategies that work to educate all students.

Theme Kick Off: What is it?

A theme kick off is held at the beginning of each school year. This kick off is a cookout... for the staff and their families. Often new staff members and their families are introduced at the same time the next years' THEME is introduced. It is also a great time to thank the families for their continuing support.

Following the cookout... the staff remains to begin decorating their classrooms. This is an evening demonstrating staff teamwork. Drawings and contests are held for the staff members and prizes related to the school theme are awarded. They might include decorations for bulletin boards; stickers, note pads, or even larger gifts that may be donated by local businesses.

This can be a memorable evening.

Theme shirts

- Each staff member receives a theme shirt at the beginning of the school year. The kick off – cook out is often a good time to present the shirts.
- How do you provide shirts for your staff ? You may choose fund raisers, a business sponsor, parent/teacher organizations or individual staff members as a means to purchase shirts. Our web site provides links to top of the line vendors if you haven't selected a local resource for shirts.
<http://www.schoolthemes.org/school-spirit-shirt.html>. The theme shirt is usually a short sleeve T-shirt however, long sleeve T-shirts, polo shirts, denim shirts or sweatshirts have also been selected.
- **SEAS** shirt: Blue or sea green T-shirt with cream lettering representing the color of sand. On the left front - the logo is a sea horse with your school initials. The back of the shirt presents ocean waves with **S.E.A.S.** printed over the waves.
- Theme shirts are typically worn on the first day of school, during monthly theme celebrations, staff dinners, district meetings, field trips and staff recognition days.
- Shirts are available for students, parents, and patrons to purchase during student enrollment. They provide symbols of staff unity and school teamwork for your education family.

Decorating Ideas

- A **SEAS** mural is painted on a wall where student success awards are displayed. The **SEAS** mural could be an ocean scene, painted by parent volunteers or the art class.

- Curtains for the office and individual classrooms can be purchased or made from ocean-related material. Items such as ships, sea creatures, or ocean colors are appropriate.
- Pictures of ships, palm trees, seagulls, ocean life, lighthouses, etc., can be utilized on bulletin boards.
- All communication documents such as parent newsletters, staff bulletins, the school web site, school stationary, student and staff handbooks, etc., display the [SEAS](#) theme.

Staff Incentives

- First school year staff meeting: Teachers receive a “treasure chest” or sailor hat that can be filled with supplies such as a whale eraser, a pen with the theme printed on it, a set of “[SEAS](#)” note cards, [SEAS](#) magnets, etc. Also include a “shore leave” for a designated amount of time during which the principal covers for the staff member. This allows time for teachers to observe other teachers, provide planning time for integrated units, a break from duties, or just an opportunity for the principal to work in other’s shoes. The staff training video “Fish” is shown about the Seattle Fish Market.
- First day of school: Provide a bowl of gold fish crackers and place a [SEAS](#) theme banner in the lounge.

----- Sidebar -----

Many schools have become more aware of the advantages and disadvantages of eating in certain ways. People are much more aware of the relationship between what they eat and how they feel. Along with a push to decrease junk and increase nutritional content in school lunch, many school districts also are placing limits on pre-packaged food and drink that have become a mainstay for some middle-and high-school-aged students.

It’s all part of encouraging healthy lifestyle choices. Concentration and ability to learn can be affected by nutrition.

And what's in the food we eat ?

Here's a link to the Agriculture Department's food search tool. If reading this document offline, Copy the link URL, then paste in your browser window.

[http://199.133.10.140/codesearchwebapp/\(5rdkvyej0ukns5rpgmu15k55\)/codesearch.aspx](http://199.133.10.140/codesearchwebapp/(5rdkvyej0ukns5rpgmu15k55)/codesearch.aspx)

Alternatively, here's a link to additional food survey information.

<http://www.ars.usda.gov/Services/docs.htm?docid=7673> (click on food search tool)

-----Sidebar end -----

- Birthday Celebrations: Once a month we celebrate staff birthdays in conjunction with a **SEAS** Day theme. Staff members wear theme shirts and provide treats for the birthday celebrants. Staff members sign up at the beginning of the year choosing the month they choose to be responsible for organizing the celebration and providing treats.
- Mail box ideas:
 - ✓ Ship cutout with 50 cents attached. "Have a pop on me."
 - ✓ **S.E.A.S.** pencils
 - ✓ **S.E.A.S.** related stickers
 - ✓ Notepads with "**S.E.A.S.**" imprinted on them or purchased locally.
- Music over the intercom: "**S.E.A.S.** Day" play a recording of soft sea sounds over the intercom.

- Paycheck ideas:
 - Box of gold fish with the first check
 - Package of BY THE [SEA](#) sachet by SCENTATIONS
 - Breath mints with, “You are as refreshing as a [Sea Breeze](#).”
 - Saltwater Taffy with, “To a team of teachers that stick together.”
 - Whale magnet with, “You are doing a whale of a job!”
 - Coupon for a submarine sandwich with, “There is no sub for a great teacher like you.”
 - Coupon from Long John Silver’s with, “You are the catch of the day.”

- Recognition: principal sends “Top Sailor” notes to teachers after observing good teaching skills. Make an effort to recognize different teaching strategies being used to meet all student needs.

- Staff socials: Might include dinner at a seafood restaurant, a boat ride, a video with treats on a theme related movie, or maybe even a fishing trip.

- Staff development ideas: Staff reads and discusses the book Fish by Ph.D. Stephen C. Lundin and Multiple Intelligence in the Classroom by Thomas Armstrong.

Student incentives

- Give “Fishing for Good Behavior” coupons to students when they are caught being good. Gather their names for an end-of-the-week drawing to receive gold fish crackers or any [SEAS](#) related treat.

- Give a CAPTAIN’S MATE award for the students whose names are on the “positive efforts” reward wall. These rewards are given to students who show good citizenship behaviors: helping others, good manners, respectful, and always being a positive person.
- Give “SEAS” pencils to students on their birthdays.
- Give whale erasers to “positive helper’s
- Academic Honor Roll: Have an Admiral’s Honor Roll for students with all A’s, and a Captain’s Honor Roll for students will all A’s and B’s. Give a coupon from a SEAfood restaurant to each honor roll student.
- Encourage students to purchase a theme shirt to wear on “S.E.A.S. DAYS.” Classroom contests award the class with the highest percentage of students wearing theme shirts.
- Have a Career Day and invite speakers with SEA related occupations to come and speak to the students.
- Show the movie, FINDING NEMO, to the student body as a “Happy Holiday Gift” from the staff.

Building-Wide Academic Achievement Program

Building-wide academic achievement programs can be focused around the theme. Examples include timed math tests, spelling, reading skills, keyboarding skills, or any area in which students master a skill level and move forward to the next.

Example of a building-wide time math test: “Sailing the Seven SEAS”

This test is administered weekly on basic facts in addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division and is intended to help students improve these skills.

Each student has a sailboat cut out and puts their name on it. As the student passes the timed test at each level the sailboat moves through the **SEAS**. The goal is to pass all seven levels. A chart is created and placed in each classroom displaying the student successes.

Upon successfully completing each level students receive a certificate and a prize from the principal. Each certificate is printed to reflect the theme in use and includes student name, date, level tested and the principal's signature.

Classroom teacher aides help with grading the tests, keeping progress records moving the sail boats, and preparing tests for the next week.

After the completion of all seven levels the student's name is announced over the intercom.

Example of prizes and certificates:

- Level 1 – Piece of gum from the principal-Dad “Gum” good work.
- Level 2 – Sailor pencil-You are looking “Sharp”
- Level 3 – Plastic visor-You are a good “Add” visor
- Level 4 – Whale magnet-You did a “Whale of a Job”
- Level 5 – Box of crackerjacks-What a “Crackerjack Job!”
- Level 6 – Coke certificate from Long John Silvers-You deserve a break!
- Level 7 – Sailor Hat with the words, “I sailed the seven **SEAS** at (name of your school)” imprinted on the hat.

Helping the teacher create a common vision or common goal has shown **tremendous** success. Staff members and students all respond to an enthusiastic school wide - **theme presentation**.

Presentation is the key... educators want school spirit to be high... they desire inspired learning and they know it helps to generate classroom excitement.

Students and their education family benefit from good, fun, creative and results oriented endeavors that support their school, their classmates and community.

We hope you have enjoyed the creative prospects we've shared as part of the **SEAS** theme and would enjoy hearing from you. As you recognize by now there is room for additional creativity in both the presentation and execution of our themes.

Wishing you the best in education successes,

<http://www.schoolthemes.org>

 schoolthemes.org 

S.H.O.E.S.

Students **H**aving **O**pportunities for **E**xcellence and **S**uccess

Each of our themes is introduced in acronym form. Additional discussions may be found at our web site <http://www.schoolthemes.org/acronyms.html> This “play on words” can provide additional sessions for staff fun and creativity.

The name (acronym) selected for your school theme represents your first attempt at creativity. Whether you choose one of our “named” themes or create your own... the fun really begins here.

The name is not what’s important.

It’s your imagination and the methods you use to promote your School’s Spirit.

The word or words chosen may become your school’s slogan for perhaps a full year. Although you’ve selected our theme - **SHOES**, - you might chose to change the name to fit your school’s character or special needs.

Once you’ve seen our examples of theme implementation, you’ll know it’s ok to make changes to suit your style. In fact it’s encouraged. You’ll want to support lasting school spirit so be creative, inventive and have some fun with new concepts.

Once again, it’s likely your theme (**SHOES**) will be displayed on school correspondence, wall murals, lockers, etc. So have fun with step number one.

The bonding, staff unity, student participation and excitement commences now.

Next – we assume total staff participation and support. Without the commitment of the entire staff, themes are just *whispers in the wind*.

Like all good ideas – there is a “kick-off” session and each unique theme contains ideas related to that particular acronym. In your case – the theme **SHOES** has been selected and we’ve incorporated related ideas or “theme” content concepts.

Remember – *a key concept* - themes must contribute to a students’ learning success.

If not - why use them?

Your day is already filled with many other demanding tasks...

However, when you have staff buy in... *school themes*... become the catalysts that ignite the inspiration fuse. Excitement is contagious... effective school wide themes inspire, motivate, and excite staff and students.

Theme SHOES:

The **SHOES** theme offers a great opportunity to emphasize citizenship and it can be utilized across the curriculum. It can be used in physical education, science, mathematics, social studies, communications, art projects, and other subject areas. Examples: How **shoes** are used in each curriculum area. In science classification could be used with **shoes** or designing a pair of **shoes**.

In social studies students will walk in the **shoes** of the people in which they are studying. In mathematics they would walk through different math problems and display the steps for each of the problems. In art they could use **shoes** for still life drawings or make different **shoes** from clay. In communications they could write biographies about who they are in a picture of a favorite design or style of **shoe**. They could also learn about descriptive words when describing a pair of **shoes**. In physical education they could discuss the importance of quality **shoes** for physical activity. These are just a few possibilities and there are many more that can be utilized.

Theme Kick Off: What is it?

A theme kick off is held at the beginning of each school year. This kick off is a cookout... for the staff and their families. Often new staff members and their families are introduced at the same time the next years' THEME is introduced. It is also a great time to thank the families for their continuing support.

Following the cookout... the staff remains to begin decorating their classrooms. This is an evening demonstrating staff teamwork. Drawings and contests are held for the staff members and prizes related to the school theme are awarded. They might include decorations for bulletin boards, stickers, note pads, or even larger gifts that may be donated by local businesses.

This can be a memorable evening.

Theme shirts

- Each staff member receives a theme shirt at the beginning of the school year. The kick off – cook out is often a good time to present the shirts.
- How do you provide shirts for your staff ? You may choose fund raisers, a business sponsor, parent/teacher organizations or individual staff members as a means to purchase shirts.



- Our web site provides links to top of the line vendors if you haven't selected a local resource for shirts.
<http://www.schoolthemes.org/school-spirit-shirt.html>.
- The theme shirt is usually a short sleeve T-shirt however; long sleeve T-shirts, polo shirts, denim shirts or sweatshirts have also been selected.
- **S.H.O.E.S.** shirt: Yellow shirt with navy blue **shoe** prints walking on the shirt. The word **S.H.O.E.S.** is displayed on the back of the shirt in navy blue and under the letters is the saying "Walk a mile in my **shoes.**" On the front of the shirt is a tennis **shoe** with the school name across the toe of the **shoe**.

- Theme shirts are typically worn on the first day of school, during monthly theme celebrations, staff dinners, district meetings, field trips and staff recognition days.
- Shirts are available for students, parents, and patrons to purchase during student enrollment. They provide symbols of staff unity and school teamwork for your education family.

Decorating Ideas

- **S.H.O.E.S.** is displayed throughout the building and can be accompanied by a character education wall in which a ladder of success is displayed with Study Skills, Positive Attitude, Following Directions, Math Skills, Reading Skills, Communication Skills, and Good Manners. You could display any of the character education ideas that you are focusing on in your school.
- **S.H.O.E.S.** theme mural is painted on the wall where student success awards are displayed. The theme mural matches the back of the theme shirts.
- **Shoe** related material is used in the office and classrooms for curtains.
- **Shoes** and socks are used as symbols and character building activities are placed throughout the building.
- All communication documents such as parent newsletters, staff bulletins, front covers of student and staff handbooks, the school website, and school stationary, display the **SHOES** theme. Ideal name for the school newsletter: - Footnotes –



Staff Incentives

- First school year staff meeting: The staff receives teacher supplies such as pens and pencils that contain theme representations. Also include a “substitution stub” for a designated amount of time during which the principal covers for the staff member. This allows time for teachers to observe other teachers, provide planning time for integrated units, a break from duties, or just an opportunity for the principal to work in other’s **shoes**.
- First Day of School: Theme related treats and a banner stating the theme is placed in the lounge for the first day of school. Ideas for treats: **Shoestring** potatoes or cookies shaped like **shoes**.

----- Sidebar -----

Many schools have become more aware of the advantages and disadvantages of eating in certain ways. People are much more aware of the relationship between what they eat and how they feel. Along with a push to decrease junk and increase nutritional content in school lunch, many school districts also are placing limits on pre-packaged food and drink that have become a mainstay for some middle-and high-school-aged students.

It's all part of encouraging healthy lifestyle choices. Concentration and ability to learn can be affected by nutrition.

And what's in the food we eat ?

Here's a link to the Agriculture Department's food search tool. If reading this document offline, Copy the link URL, then paste in your browser window.

[http://199.133.10.140/codesearchwebapp/\(5rdkvyej0ukns5rpgmu15k55\)/codesearch.aspx](http://199.133.10.140/codesearchwebapp/(5rdkvyej0ukns5rpgmu15k55)/codesearch.aspx)

Alternatively, here's a link to additional food survey information.

<http://www.ars.usda.gov/Services/docs.htm?docid=7673> (click on food search tool)

-----Sidebar end -----

- Birthday Celebrations: Once a month we celebrate staff birthdays in conjunction with the **SHOES** theme. Staff members wear theme shirts and provide treats for the birthday celebrants. Staff members sign up at the beginning of the year choosing the month they choose to be responsible for organizing the celebration and providing treats.

- Mailbox Treats:
 - ✓ Flip flop key chains
 - ✓ Flip flop shape note pads
 - ✓ **Shoe** shaped erasers
 - ✓ **Shoe** shaped magnets
 - ✓ Key chains with a **shoe** on the key chain
 - ✓ Blank **shoe** prints to write a note to a staff member

- Music: Theme day music is played over the intercom to get the day started. Music idea: *These Boots are Made for Walking* by Nancy Sinatra

- Staff Recognition: Principal places in teacher mailboxes a note formed in the shape of a **shoe** sole. These notes are intended to recognize great teaching strategies, acknowledge quality teaching or a positive activity that is going on in the classroom. This could also be a way to recognize state test standards being taught or any part of a building improvement plan that is being implemented.

- Paychecks: Theme related gifts can be attached to paychecks, such as:
 - Gift Certificate from McDonald's displaying the Golden Arches
 - Skor candy bar with a note saying you "Skor" big when it comes to working with kids."
 - Big stuff Oreo cookies with a note that says thanks for a job well done.
 - Heart candy with a note that says you are the "Heart and Sole" of the school. Thanks for your hard work.
 - Snicker candy bar with a note that has a picture of a tennis **shoe** and says Have a "sneaker-ific" Year!
 - Money for a can of pop with a note that says "Step on in for a Pop on me"

Staff Development Ideas: Staff reads and discusses the book **Positive Words, Powerful Results** by Hal Urban. It is a book that focuses on ways to be positive to others.

Student Incentives

- Read a positive statement over the intercom each morning. A good source for these statements can be found at www.pops.com - click on “daily deposit.”
- Footprint that says you are stepping toward success is given to a student. It lets others know the student is displaying good citizenship skills that help them become successful at school.
- Give happy birthday pencils to students on their birthdays and announce the student’s name over the intercom.
- Have different shaped **shoes** that are the award certificates for students passing levels of academic achievements test.
- Give super bubble gum for student helpers. Students that help with a substitute, display good manners, help in the lunchroom or any behavior that the school might like to recognize.
- Display academic achievement awards on the **SHOES** Award Wall or a designated area in your school building.

Building-Wide Academic Achievement Program

Building-wide academic achievement programs can be focused around the theme. Examples include timed math tests, spelling, reading skills, keyboarding skills, or any area in which students master a skill level and move forward to the next. This method can be adapted to meet your own building needs.

Example of a Building-Wide Timed Math Test: “Walking Down the Road of Success”

This test is administered weekly on basic facts in addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division and is intended to help students improve these skills.

Each student is given a cut out of a [shoe](#) or boot and their name is written on the cut out. As the student passes the timed test at each level their [shoe](#) moves down the road toward success. The road is displayed on a wall in which students can view their successes. As the student passes each level of the timed math test the [shoe](#) moves down the road through all seven stops a long the road. The goal is to pass all seven levels. A chart is created and placed in each classroom displaying the student successes.

Upon successfully completing each level students receive a certificate and a prize from the principal. Each certificate is printed to reflect the theme and includes the student name, date, level tested and the principal’s signature.

Classroom teacher aides help with grading the tests, keeping progress records, moving the [shoes](#), and preparing tests for the next week.

After the completion of all seven levels the student’s name is announced over the intercom.

Examples of prizes and certificates

Level 1- Stop 1—Student receives an award that says “You are off on the right foot. A prize could be a **shoe** eraser

Level 2- Stop 2---Students receive an award that says “Keep on trucking.” A prize could be a key chain with a flip flop **shoe** on the chain.

Level 3- Stop 3—Student receives an award that says “We are moving on out” The prize could be a pack of bubble gum.

Level 4- Stop 4---Student receives an award that says it is time for a “Rest Stop” A coupon is given for a free can of pop from the principal.

Level 5- Stop 5—Student receives an award stating that they have jumped through the hoops. Prize could be a Big Stuff Cookie.

Level 6- Stop 6---Students receive an award that states you are sneaking up on the final stop. Prize could be a snicker candy bar.

Level 7- Stop 7--- Students receive an award stating you have made it through the arches of success. Prize could be a hamburger certificate from McDonald’s.

Note: This is an example of how a building-wide timed test was implemented. Other strategies may be adopted and we’d be happy to hear from you about how your school used the **SHOES** theme. Please e-mail your stories to <admin@schoolthemes.org>

Helping the teacher create a common vision or common goal has shown **tremendous** success. Staff members and students all respond to an enthusiastic school wide - **theme presentation**.

Presentation is the key... educators want school spirit to be high... they desire inspired learning and they know it helps to generate classroom excitement.

Students and their education family benefit from good, fun, creative and results oriented endeavors that support their school, their classmates and community.

We hope you have enjoyed the creative prospects we've shared as part of the **SHOES** theme and would enjoy hearing from you. As you recognize by now there is room for additional creativity in both the presentation and execution of our themes.

Wishing you the best in education successes,

<http://www.schoolthemes.org>

 schoolthemes.org 

H.A.T.S.

Helping All To Succeed

Each of our themes is introduced in acronym form. Additional discussions may be found at our web site <http://www.schoolthemes.org/acronyms.html> This “play on words” can provide additional sessions for staff fun and creativity.

The name (acronym) selected for your school theme represents your first attempt at creativity. Whether you choose one of our “named” themes or create your own... the fun really begins here.

The name is not what’s important.

It’s your imagination and the methods you use to promote your School’s Spirit.

The word or words chosen may become your school’s slogan for perhaps a full year. Although you’ve selected our theme - **HATS**, - you might chose to change the name to fit your school’s character or special needs.

Once you’ve seen our examples of theme implementation, you’ll know it’s ok to make changes to suit your style. In fact it’s encouraged. You’ll want to support lasting school spirit so be creative, inventive and have some fun with new concepts.

Once again, it’s likely your theme (**HATS**) will be displayed on school correspondence, wall murals, lockers, etc. So have fun with step number one.

The bonding, staff unity, student participation and excitement commences now.

Next – we assume total staff participation and support. Without the commitment of the entire staff, themes are just *whispers in the wind*.

Like all good ideas – there is a “kick-off” session and each unique theme contains ideas related to that particular acronym. In your case – the theme [HATS](#) has been selected and we’ve incorporated related ideas or “theme” content concepts.

Remember – *a key concept* - themes must contribute to a students’ learning success.

If not - why use them?

Your day is already filled with many other demanding tasks...

However, when you have staff buy in... school themes... become the catalysts that ignite the inspiration fuse. Excitement is contagious... effective school wide themes inspire, motivate, and excite staff and students.

Student successes mean better grades, better attitudes, and a positive learning environment. It’s much easier to promote school spirit when you have an effective program that benefits all participants and encourages full participation.

Theme [HATS](#):

The [HATS](#) theme offers a great opportunity to emphasize careers and the education required for different career paths. Imagine the theme support you could introduce with fireman hats, police officer hats, Navy, Marine, Army, Air Force, Coast Guard, etc. Hats are used as symbols of student interest in various professions. HATS can also be emphasized across the curriculum to study different historical time periods.

As an example, various hats were worn during different time periods in history and can support biographical studies in everything from language arts and still life drawings to Presidents, Sports figures, and First Ladies.



Theme Kick Off: What is it?

A theme kick off is held at the beginning of each school year. This kick off is a cookout... for the staff and their families. Often new staff members and their families are introduced at the same time the next years' THEME is introduced. It is also a great time to thank the families for their continuing support.

Following the cookout... the staff remains to begin decorating their classrooms. This is an evening demonstrating staff teamwork. Drawings and contests are held for the staff members and prizes related to the school theme are awarded. They might include decorations for bulletin boards, stickers, note pads, or even larger gifts that may be donated by local businesses.

This can be a memorable evening.

Theme shirts

- Each staff member receives a theme shirt at the beginning of the school year. The kick off – cook out is often a good time to present the shirts.

- How do you provide shirts for your staff ? You may choose fund raisers, a business sponsor, parent/teacher organizations or individual staff members as a means to purchase shirts.
- Our web site provides links to top of the line vendors if you haven't selected a local resource for shirts.
<http://www.schoolthemes.org/school-spirit-shirt.html>.
- The theme shirt is usually a short sleeve T-shirt however, long sleeve T-shirts, polo shirts, denim shirts or sweatshirts have also been selected.



- **HATS** shirt: The shirt is beige in color with a chest full of different hats outlined in black on the back of the shirt. The front of the shirt is a **hat** with the initials of the school.
- Theme shirts are typically worn on the first day of school, during monthly theme celebrations, staff dinners, district meetings, field trips and staff recognition days.
- Shirts are available for students, parents, and patrons to purchase during student enrollment. They provide symbols of staff unity and school teamwork for your education family.

Decorating Ideas

- **H.A.T.S.** is displayed throughout the building and can be accompanied by the words “**Hats** Off to our Students”.

- **H.A.T.S.** theme mural is painted on the wall where student success awards are displayed. The theme mural matches the back of the theme shirts.
- Curtains in the office and classrooms can be made of hat material.
- **Hats** are used as symbols around the building for different activities going on in each area of the curriculum. The classroom selects a hat that would represent their room.



- All communication documents such as parent newsletters, staff bulletins, front covers of student and staff handbooks, the school website, and school stationary, display the **HATS** theme.
- Ideal names for the school newsletter include – Top News of the Week , then select a top **hat** from available clip art. Additional classroom news can be accompanied by the selected **hat** symbol chosen by each classroom.

Staff Incentives

- First school year staff meeting: Each staff member is asked to bring a **hat** and support reasons it can be used to symbolize student education processes.

- First Day of School: Theme related treats are offered and a **HATS** banner or mural is placed in the lounge for the first day of school.

----- Sidebar -----

Many schools have become more aware of the advantages and disadvantages of eating in certain ways. People are much more aware of the relationship between what they eat and how they feel. Along with a push to decrease junk and increase nutritional content in school lunch, many school districts also are placing limits on pre-packaged food and drink that have become a mainstay for some middle-and high-school-aged students.

It's all part of encouraging healthy lifestyle choices. Concentration and ability to learn can be affected by nutrition.

And what's in the food we eat ?

Here's a link to the Agriculture Department's food search tool. If reading this document offline, Copy the link URL, then paste in your browser window.

[http://199.133.10.140/codesearchwebapp/\(5rdkvyej0ukns5rpgmu15k55\)/codesearch.aspx](http://199.133.10.140/codesearchwebapp/(5rdkvyej0ukns5rpgmu15k55)/codesearch.aspx)

Alternatively, here's a link to additional food survey information.

<http://www.ars.usda.gov/Services/docs.htm?docid=7673> (click on food search tool)

-----Sidebar end -----

Ideas for treats:

- Birthday Celebrations: Once a month we celebrate staff birthdays in conjunction with the **H.A.T.S.** theme. Staff members wear theme shirts and provide treats for the birthday celebrants. Staff members sign up at the beginning of the year choosing the month they will be responsible for organizing the celebration and providing treats.

- Mailbox Treats: For Each Month with Paychecks
 - ✓ August-**Hats** off to a Good Year with a visor or baseball cap with the school logo
 - ✓ September-Payday Candy Bar for that first paycheck of the new year
 - ✓ October-We are getting into the swing of things and give them baseball shaped gum
 - ✓ November-You spice up this staff and give a spice to each staff member
 - ✓ December-You are a real gift to education with an invitation to an open house to celebrate teachers. Provide teachers with various winter **hats**.
 - ✓ January-Zero Candy Bar with a note that says it is cold outside but warm and friendly in your class.
 - ✓ February-You have a heart of gold and give a heart chocolate. Could also conduct a Mardi Gras celebration with colorful derby **hats** and celebrate the successes for the year.
 - ✓ March-It is lucky for me that I have you as part of this staff. Give a gold coin of chocolate with the note of thanks.
 - ✓ April-April Showers bring May Flowers and give them a shower cap
 - ✓ May-May the end of your year be bright. Give them a candle.

- Staff Recognition: Principal places in teacher mailboxes a **Hat** shaped note that recognizes great teaching strategies that have been observed. The note is written to acknowledge quality teaching or an activity that is going on in the classroom. This could also be a way to recognize test standards being taught or any part of a building improvement plan that is being implemented.

Staff Development Ideas: Staff reads and discusses the book **I Read but I Don't Understand** by Cris Tovani. This book explains how different content leads to different student expectations. Every teacher should be a reading teacher. The **HATS** theme is supported in that readers recognize they put on a different reading **hat** based on different in subject matter.

Student Incentives

- Read a positive statement over the intercom each morning. A good source for these statements can be found at www.pops.com click on “daily deposit.”
- Present stickers of various kinds when the student is displaying good citizenship or implementing a character trait your school is working on for the year.
- Place **HATS** with student names in the hallways and reward them with stars for good behaviors.
- Give birthday **hats** to students on their birthdays and announce the student's name over the intercom.
- Have **HAT** award certificates for students passing levels of academic achievement tests.
- Give different shaped **hats** as awards for lunchroom helpers, classroom helpers and add a treat to go along with their certificate or **hat** shape.
- Display academic achievement awards on the **HAT** Award Wall or a designated area in your school building.

Building-Wide Academic Achievement Program

Building-wide academic achievement programs can be focused around the theme. Examples include timed math tests, spelling, reading skills, keyboarding skills, or any area in which students master a skill level and move forward to the next. This method can be adapted to meet your own building needs.

Example of a Building-Wide Timed Math Test: Hats that would go on a Math Mind. The object is to pass all the timed math tests. After passing all levels the student would design a hat for the math mind to display in the hallway. A party hat will be given to each student to wear to the final celebration. A cake and drinks will be furnished in the student's honor.

This test is administered weekly on basic facts in addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division and is intended to help students improve these skills.

Each student is given a hat cut out and they write their name on it. As the student passes the timed test at each level their hat moves toward the top of the head of a student body displayed in the hallway. The hats rotate around the head until they pass all the levels. The goal is to pass all seven levels. A chart is created and placed in each classroom displaying the student successes.

Upon successfully completing each level, students receive a certificate and a prize from the principal. Each certificate is printed to reflect the HATS theme and includes student name, date, level tested and the principal's signature.

Classroom teacher aides help with grading the tests, keeping progress records, moving the hats, and preparing tests for the next week.

After the completion of all seven levels the student's name is announced over the intercom.

Examples of prizes and certificates

Level 1- You were magnificent passing Level 1 and students receive a **hat** magnet.

Level 2- I am sure happy you made it past level two and students receive a happy face pencil.

Level 3- You went right through level 3 with no mistakes. The student is given an eraser for their good work.

Level 4- You showed us your dedication to math by passing level 4. Students receive a pencil with the school visor or baseball cap.

Level 5- You can now sit and relax after this test so enjoy a pop on the principal.

Level 6- **Hats** off to you for passing level 6. The students receive a **hat** of their choice from the **hat** box.

Level 7- You have now passed all seven levels and here is an invitation to the math celebration.

Note: This is an example of how a building-wide timed test was implemented. Other strategies may be adopted and we'd be happy to hear from you about how your school used the **Hats** theme. Please e-mail your stories to <admin@schoolthemes.org>

Helping the teacher create a common vision or common goal has shown **tremendous** success. Staff members and students all respond to an enthusiastic school wide - **theme presentation**.

Presentation is the key... educators want school spirit to be high... they desire inspired learning and they know it helps to generate classroom excitement.



Students and their education family benefit from good, fun, creative and results oriented endeavors that support their school, their classmates and community.

We hope you have enjoyed the creative prospects we've shared as part of the **HATS** theme and would enjoy hearing from you. As you recognize by now there is room for additional creativity in both the presentation and execution of our themes.

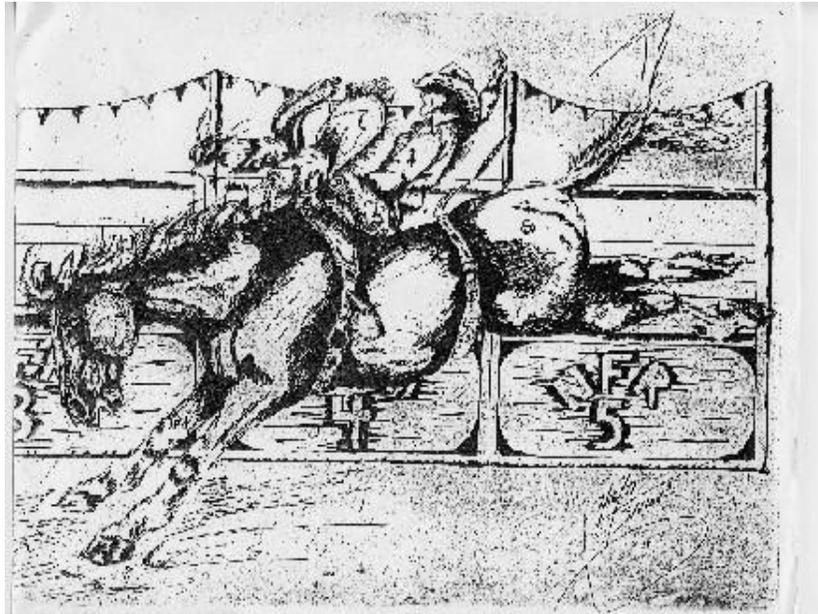
Wishing you the best in education successes,

<http://www.schoolthemes.org>



“R O D E O”

Reaching Outcomes through Daily Educational Opportunities



Each theme is introduced in acronym form. Additional discussions may be found at our web site <http://www.schoolthemes.org/acronyms.html>. This “play on words” can provide additional sessions for staff fun and creativity.

Next – we assume total staff participation and support. Without the commitment of the entire staff, themes are just *whispers in the wind*.

Like all good ideas – there is a “kick-off” session and each unique theme contains ideas related to that particular acronym. In your case – the theme RODEO has been selected and we’ve incorporated related ideas or “theme” content concepts.

Remember – *a key concept* - themes must contribute to a students’ learning success.

If not - why use them ?

Your day is already filled with many other demanding tasks...

However, when you have staff buy in... school themes... become the catalysts that ignite the inspiration fuse. Excitement is contagious... effective school wide themes inspire, motivate, and excite staff and students.

Rodeo:

Rodeo is a great theme for focusing on district, state, and federal standards. The acronym for the theme Rodeo lends itself to emphasizing the importance of daily work. Daily opportunities help students reach the standards set by the teacher, district, state, or federal institutions.

Theme Kick Off: What is it?

A theme kick off is held at the beginning of each school year. This kick off is a cookout... for the staff and their families. Often new staff members and their families are introduced at the same time the next year's THEME is introduced. It is also a great time to thank the families for their continuing support.

Following the cookout... the staff remains to begin decorating their classrooms. This is an evening demonstrating staff teamwork. Drawings and contests are held for the staff members and prizes related to the school theme are awarded. They might include decorations for bulletin boards; stickers, note pads, or even larger gifts that may be donated by local businesses.

This can be a memorable evening.

Theme Shirt :

- Each staff member receives a theme shirt at the beginning of the school year. The kick off – cook out is often a good time to present the shirts.
- How do you provide shirts for your staff ? You may choose fund raisers, a business sponsor, parent/teacher organizations or individual staff members as a means to purchase shirts. Our web site provides links to top of the line vendors if you haven't selected a local resource for shirts.
<http://www.schoolthemes.org/school-spirit-shirt.html>. The theme shirt is usually a short sleeve T-shirt however, long sleeve T-shirts, polo shirts, denim shirts or sweatshirts have also been selected.
- **RODEO** theme shirt: Black with white lettering. On the left front - the logo is a cowboy with a branding iron. The branding iron is your school's initials. The back of the shirt presents a bucking bronco with **R.O.D.E.O.** printed underneath. Theme shirts are typically worn on the first day of school, during monthly theme celebrations, staff dinners, district meetings, field trips and staff recognition days.
- Shirts are available for students, parents, and patrons to purchase during student enrollment. They provide symbols of staff unity and school teamwork for your education family.

Decorating Ideas

- A **RODEO** mural is painted on the wall where student success awards are displayed. The mural theme matches the shirt logo.
- Curtains for the office and individual classrooms can be purchased or made from **RODEO** related items such as bandana's.

- Pictures of cowboys, horses, etc. utilized on bulletin boards.
- Grading rubrics can be designed around **RODEO** events. The requirements for a paper or project are identified. If all the requirements for an “A” are met, students earn the bull riding status, a B might earn bronco-riding status, and so on.
- All communication documents such as parent newsletters, staff bulletins, the school web site, school stationary, student and staff handbooks, etc., display the **RODEO** theme.

Staff Incentives

- First school year staff meeting: teachers receive a red bandana or cowboy hat. It is filled with supplies such as a cowboy boot key chain, a pen with the **RODEO** theme printed on it, or a personal bandana etc.
- First day of school: Provide cookies shaped as cowboy boots, barns, hats or other theme related shapes and place a **RODEO** theme banner in the lounge.
- Birthday Celebrations: Once a month we celebrate staff birthdays in conjunction with a **RODEO** Day theme. Staff members wear theme shirts and provide treats for the birthday celebrant.
- Mailbox Treats: On **RODEO** Days the principal puts items in staff mailboxes to go along with the theme... such as:
 - ✓ Cowboy cutout with 50 cents attached. “Have a pop on me.”
 - ✓ **Rodeo** pencils
 - ✓ **Rodeo** related stickers

- ✓ Horse-shaped cookies
 - ✓ Notepads with **RODEO** imprinted on them.
 - ✓ Sub stub - the principal provides a substitution stub for all staff members. They may use this sub stub which obligates the principal to relieve them of their duty for a designated period of time. This also provides the means for the principal to demonstrate staff support.
- Music: **RODEO** Day play a recording of I'M A RHINESTONE COWBOY by Glen Campbell, or **RODEO** by Garth Brooks over the intercom.
 - Paycheck Ideas:
 - Payday candy bar with the first check or statement of the year
 - Skor candy bar with a note attached: "You really Skor when it comes to working with kids."
 - Maverick playing cards with "Take a little time to play."
 - Jolly Rancher candy with "This check should make you jolly."
 - Package of Western trail mix with "Hit that happy trail to the bank."
 - Cowboy hat with, "Hats off to a great teacher!"
 - Recognition: Principal sends "Ropin' good work" notes to teachers after observing good teaching skills.
 - Staff socials: Might include going to a **RODEO**, a social at a barn with a cook out and hayrack ride, barn party with line or square dancing.
 - Competition: Staff is encouraged to wear Cowboy attire and those who participate receive a small prize. Their names are then added to a drawing for **RODEO** Tickets.

- Staff Development: Read and discuss the books; Life's Greatest Lessons, by Hal Urban. Zaps and Gaps, by Ken Blanchard.

Student Incentives

- Students sing “Home on the Range” on the intercom on RODEO Day
- Stick a cowboy sticker on a student when you “catch them being good”
- Have a “lasso of licorice” party for the students whose names are on the “positive efforts” reward wall.
- Give **RODEO** pencils to students on their birthdays.
- Give **RODEO** bookmarks to “positive helper’s with a substitute”, and/or lunchroom helpers.
- Encourage students to purchase a theme shirt to wear on **RODEO** days. Classroom contests award the class with the highest percentage of students wearing theme T-shirts.
- Have an area **RODEO** personality visit the school and explain how to rope or ride.

Create and use theme songs throughout the year

Here’s a song created during a former theme contest. **RODEO** won and the winning team campaigned with the following song, which they composed and sang to the tune of “Home on the Range.”

“Oh, Give Me A School”

Oh give me a school,
 Where the teachers are cool
 And they know a great theme---when they hear it.
 Where seldom is heard,
 A discouraging word,
 And **RODEO** fills us with spirit!

Please vote for our theme!
It's recycled and clever and keen!
It's straight from the heart,
You can use your own art,
And we'll save the old laminating machine.

Building-Wide Academic Achievement Programs

Building-wide academic achievement programs can be focused around the theme. Examples include timed math tests, spelling, reading skills, keyboarding skills, or any area in which students master a skill level and move forward to the next.

Example of a Building-Wide Timed Math Test: "Oregon Trail"

This test is administered weekly on basic facts in addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division and is intended to help students improve these skills.

Each student is provided a cut out of a covered wagon to move along the Oregon Trail. As the student passes the test at each level the wagon advances down the trail. The goal is to pass all seven levels. A chart is created and placed in each classroom displaying the student successes.

Upon successfully completing each level students receive a certificate and a prize from the principal. Each certificate is printed to reflect the theme in use and includes student name, date, level tested and the principal's signature.

Classroom teacher aides help with grading the tests, keeping progress records, moving the wagons, and preparing tests for the next week.

After completing all seven levels the student's name is announced over the intercom system.

Examples of the prizes and statements on the certificates:

Level 1- Jolly Rancher candy-Congratulations you rode past this level

Level 2- Boot shaped key chain or a boot shaped note pad-Congratulations on kicking by this level

Level 3- Western pencil -Congratulations you penciled in all the correct answers

Level 4- Skor Candy Bar- Congratulations you “scored” big on this one

Level 5- Trail Mix-Congratulations you are on the “trail” to success

Level 6- Cowboy hat-Congratulations and “Hats” off to you

Level 7- Stagecoach ride is arranged for the students who passed all seven levels. Congratulations you earned an official stagecoach ride for completing the Oregon Trail

Helping the teacher create a common vision or common goal has shown **tremendous** success. Staff members and students all respond to an enthusiastic school wide - **theme presentation**.

Presentation is the key... educators want school spirit to be high... they desire inspired learning and they know it helps to generate classroom excitement.

Students and their education family benefit from good, fun, creative and results oriented endeavors that support their school, their classmates and community.

We hope you have enjoyed the creative prospects we've shared as part of the **RODEO** theme and would enjoy hearing from you. As you recognize by now there is room for additional creativity in both the presentation and execution of our themes. We have a lot of fun creating themes and may even arrange a personal presentation of the whole process if you choose.

Wishing you the best education successes,

<http://www.schoolthemes.org>

 schoolthemes.org 



H.A.P.P.Y.

Have A Positive, Productive Year

Each of our themes is introduced in acronym form. Additional discussions may be found at our web site <http://www.schoolthemes.org/acronyms.html> This “play on words” can provide additional sessions for staff fun and creativity.

The name (acronym) selected for your school theme represents your first attempt at creativity. Whether you choose one of our “named” themes or create your own... the fun really begins here.

The name is not what’s important.

It's your imagination and the methods you use to promote your School's Spirit.

The word or words chosen may become your school's slogan for perhaps a full year. Although you've selected our theme - **HAPPY**, - you might chose to change the name to fit your school's character or special needs.

Once you've seen our examples of theme implementation, you'll know it's ok to make changes to suit your style. In fact it's encouraged. You'll want to support lasting school spirit so be creative, inventive and have some fun with new concepts.

Once again, it's likely your theme (**HAPPY**) will be displayed on school correspondence, wall murals, lockers, etc. So have fun with step number one.

The bonding, staff unity, student participation and excitement commences now.

Next – we assume total staff participation and support. Without the commitment of the entire staff, themes are just *whispers in the wind*.

Like all good ideas – there is a “kick-off” session and each unique theme contains ideas related to that particular acronym. In your case – the theme **HAPPY** has been selected and we've incorporated related ideas or “theme” content concepts.

Remember – *a key concept* - themes must contribute to a students' learning success.

If not - why use them ?

Your day is already filled with may other demanding tasks...

However, when you have staff buy in... school themes... become the catalysts that ignite the inspiration fuse. Excitement is contagious... effective school wide themes inspire, motivate, and excite staff and students.

The Theme Happy:

Happy is a theme that brings joy to a school. Imagine your school with bright yellow **happy** faces decorating the halls and classrooms. Everywhere you look there is a smile. It promotes a positive climate for teaching and learning. When a positive learning environment is offered the staff and students become very productive.

Theme Kick Off: What is it?

A theme kick off is held at the beginning of each school year. This kick off is a cookout... for the staff and their families. Often new staff members and their families are introduced at the same time the next years' THEME is introduced. It is also a great time to thank the families for their continuing support.

Following the cookout... the staff remains to begin decorating their classrooms. This is an evening demonstrating staff teamwork. Drawings and contests are held for the staff members and prizes related to the school theme are awarded. They might include decorations for bulletin boards; stickers, note pads, or even larger gifts that may be donated by local businesses.

This can be a memorable evening.

Theme shirt:

- Each staff member receives a theme shirt at the beginning of the school year. The kick off – cook out is often a good time to present the shirts.

- **How do you provide shirts for your staff?** You may choose fund raisers, a business sponsor, parent/teacher organizations or individual staff members as a means to purchase shirts. Our web site provides links to top of the line vendors if you haven't selected a local resource for shirts.
<http://www.schoolthemes.org/school-spirit-shirt.html>. The theme shirt is usually a short sleeve T-shirt however, long sleeve T-shirts, polo shirts, denim shirts or sweatshirts have also been selected.
- **HAPPY** theme shirt: Purple with yellow lettering or school colors can be a good choice. On the left front – the logo is a **HAPPY** face of your choosing. Place your school initials below the **HAPPY** face and print **H.A.P.P.Y.** on the back of the shirt. Theme shirts are typically worn on the first day of school, during monthly theme celebrations, staff dinners, district meetings, field trips and staff recognition days.
- Theme shirts are available for students, parents, and patrons to purchase during enrollment. They provide symbols of staff unity and school teamwork for your education family.

Decorating Ideas

- **H.A.P.P.Y.** (Have a Positive Productive Year) is displayed throughout the building to promote your theme.
- A **HAPPY** theme mural is painted on the wall where student success awards are displayed. The mural theme matches the shirt logo. If an open wall is not available bulletin boards or display cases may be used.
- Curtains for the office and individual classrooms can be purchased or made from **HAPPY** theme content ideas.

- Smiley faces utilized on bulletin boards or other ideas related to the **HAPPY** theme such as clowns, giggles, and pats on the back are good content ideas.
- All communications documents such as parent newsletters, staff bulletins, the school web site, school stationary, student and staff handbooks, etc., display the **HAPPY** theme.

Staff Incentives

- First school year staff meeting: Staff receives a paper sack (with the theme on the sack) or a smiley face cup filled with smiley face items such as: pencils, pens, stress ball, etc. A “sub stub” is included in their sack for one hour free substitution by the principal. The sub stub time is to be used to grow professionally. It can be a time to observe another teacher or use as planning time with a fellow teacher.
- First Day of School: Theme related treats and a banner displaying the theme can be placed in the lounge. Ideas for treats: Smiley face cookies, giggle cookies, or treats of your choice.

----- Sidebar -----

Many schools have become more aware of the advantages and disadvantages of eating in certain ways. People are much more aware of the relationship between what they eat and how they feel. Along with a push to decrease junk and increase nutritional content in school lunch, many school districts also are placing limits on pre-packaged food and drink that have become a mainstay for some middle-and high-school-aged students.

It’s all part of encouraging healthy lifestyle choices. Concentration and ability to learn can be affected by nutrition.

And what's in the food we eat ?

Here's a link to the Agriculture Department's food search tool. If reading this document offline, Copy the link URL, then paste in your browser window.

[http://199.133.10.140/codesearchwebapp/\(5rdkvyej0ukns5rpgmu15k55\)/codesearch.aspx](http://199.133.10.140/codesearchwebapp/(5rdkvyej0ukns5rpgmu15k55)/codesearch.aspx)

Alternatively, here's a link to additional food survey information.

<http://www.ars.usda.gov/Services/docs.htm?docid=7673> (click on food search tool)

-----Sidebar end -----

- Birthday Celebrations: Once a month we celebrate staff birthdays in conjunction with a **HAPPY** day theme. Staff members wear theme shirts and provide treats for the birthday celebrants. How do you know who is responsible for treats? At the beginning of the year the staff list is divided up by months. Each month a different group is responsible for organizing and planning treats for that month.
- Mailbox Treats:
 - ✓ **HAPPY** Gram with 50 cents attached. "Have a pop on me."
 - ✓ **HAPPY** face pencils
 - ✓ **HAPPY** face stickers
 - ✓ **HAPPY** face buttons
 - ✓ Giggle cookies
 - ✓ **HAPPY** face suckers
 - ✓ **HAPPY** face notepads

- Music: Theme day music is played over the intercom to get the day started. Music ideas: A recording of Happy Days TV theme song, [HAPPY, HAPPY Birthday Baby](#) by Connie Francis, [Get HAPPY](#) by Tony Bennett or [HAPPY Sweet Sixteen](#) by Neil Sedaka.
- Recognition: Principal sends “[HAPPY](#) Gram” (a note pad that has the label of [HAPPY](#) gram) to teachers after observing. The note is designed to recognize quality teaching or a supporting classroom activity. This could be a way to recognize test standards that are being taught or any part of a building improvement plan that is being implemented.
- Paychecks: Theme related gifts can be attached to paychecks, such as:
 - [HAPPY](#) face stress ball with a note, “I hope this first paycheck takes some of the ‘stress’ out of your life”
 - Package or stick of Carefree gum with a note saying “Have a ‘carefree’ day”
 - Snicker candy bar “Snicker all the way to the bank”
 - February check give a package of sweet tarts with a note, “You are a real ‘sweet’ heart”
 - Smiley face bubble necklace with a note, “Have a ‘bubbling’ good time”
 - Spring check give a peanut butter egg with a note, “Our teachers are ‘egg’ ceptional”
 - Helium smiley face balloon with a note, “Our teachers rise above all the rest”
 - Smiley face pen with a note, “Use this pen to endorse your check and smile, smile, smile”

Staff Development read and discuss the books:

The Power of Positive Students, by Dr. William Mitchell.

Fun Works: Creating Places Where People Love to Work, by Leslie Yerkes

Student Incentives

- Read a positive statement over the intercom each morning. A good source for these statements can be found at www.pops.com click on “daily deposit.”
- Stick a smiley face sticker on a student when you “catch them smiling”.
- Have cookie and milk party to recognize students who have displayed positive behavior.
- Give smiley face pencils to students on their birthdays and announce the students names over the intercom.
- Have smiley face award certificates for students passing levels of academic achievements test.
- Give smiley face suckers to positive helpers. Students that help with a substitute, display good manners, help in the lunchroom or any behavior that should be recognized.
- Display academic achievement awards on the **HAPPY** theme wall or the designated area in your school.

Building-Wide Academic Achievement Program

Building-wide academic achievement programs can be focused around the theme. Examples include timed math tests, spelling, reading skills, keyboarding skills, or any area in which students master a skill level and move forward to the next.

Example of a Building-Wide Time Math Test: “Traveling Through the Solar System”

This test is administered weekly on basic facts in addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division and is intended to help students improve these skills.

Each student is provided a cut out sun with his or her name to travel through the solar system. The solar system is displayed on a hallway wall where students can view their successes. As the student passes each level of the time math test the sun moves to the planet matching the fact test. A classroom chart is created with each student's name and a sticker is placed by their name to monitor test progress.

Upon successfully completing each level the student receives an award and prize from the principal. When a student completes all the seven levels, the teacher may challenge the student to take the test with less time allotted.

Classroom teacher aides help with grading the tests, keeping progress records, moving the sun and preparing tests for the next week.

The certificates given to the students when each level is successfully completed include student name, the date the test was taken, the level of the test, and the signature of the principal. After a student successfully passes all levels, their name is announced over the intercom. Prizes and certificates are provided weekly as the students pass each level of the test.

Examples of prizes and certificates

Level 1- Planet Mercury—Student receives a model space ship.

Congratulations and way to blast through level one

Level 2- Planet Venus---Students are given a starburst. Congratulations on moving through the “Stars”

Level 3- Planet Mars---Students are given a pack of red hots. Congratulations you are “Red Hot”

Level 4- Planet Jupiter---Students are given a top. Congratulations you are spinning right through the solar system

Level 5- Planet Saturn---Students are given a **HAPPY** face ring. Congratulations you are “rings” above the rest

Level 6- Planet Uranus---Students are given a long piece of licorice. Congratulations on passing level six and you are a “long” way from home.

Level 7- Planet Pluto--- Students choose from a prize box of several **HAPPY** face items. Congratulations you are going home. You have completed your trip through the planets.

Helping the teacher create a common vision or common goal has shown **tremendous** success. Staff members and students all respond to an enthusiastic school wide - **theme presentation**.

Presentation is the key... educators want school spirit to be high... they desire inspired learning and they know it helps to generate classroom excitement.

Students and their education family benefit from good, fun, creative and results oriented endeavors that support their school, their classmates and community.

We hope you have enjoyed the creative prospects we’ve shared as part of the **HAPPY** theme and would enjoy hearing from you. As you recognize by now there is room for additional creativity in both the presentation and execution of our themes.

Wishing you the best in education successes,

<http://www.schoolthemes.org>

 schoolthemes.org 

C.H.A.M.P.I.O.N.S.

Children with **H**appy **A**ttitudes **M**ake **P**ositive **I**nfluences **O**n **N**eighborhood **S**chools

Each of our themes is introduced in acronym form. Additional discussions may be found at our web site <http://www.schoolthemes.org/acronyms.html> This “play on words” can provide additional sessions for staff fun and creativity.

The name (acronym) selected for your school theme represents your first attempt at creativity. Whether you choose one of our “named” themes or create your own... the fun really begins here.

The name is not what’s important.

It’s your imagination and the methods you use to promote your School’s Spirit.

The word or words chosen may become your school’s slogan for perhaps a full year. Although you’ve selected our theme - **CHAMPIONS**, - you might chose to change the name to fit your school’s character or special needs.

Once you’ve seen our examples of theme implementation, you’ll know it’s ok to make changes to suit your style. In fact it’s encouraged. You’ll want to support lasting school spirit so be creative, inventive and have some fun with new concepts.

Once again, it’s likely your theme (**CHAMPIONS**) will be displayed on school correspondence, wall murals, lockers, etc. So have fun with step number one.

The bonding, staff unity, student participation and excitement commences now.

Next – we assume total staff participation and support. Without the commitment of the entire staff, themes are just *whispers in the wind*.

Like all good ideas – there is a “kick-off” session and each unique theme contains ideas related to that particular acronym. In your case – the theme **CHAMPIONS** has been selected and we’ve incorporated related ideas or “theme” content concepts.

Remember – *a key concept* - themes must contribute to a students’ learning success.

If not - why use them?

Your day is already filled with many other demanding tasks...

However, when you have staff buy in... school themes... become the catalysts that ignite the inspiration fuse. Excitement is contagious... effective school wide themes inspire, motivate, and excite staff and students.

Theme: C.H.A.M.P.I.O.N.S

The **CHAMPIONS** theme offers a great opportunity to emphasize citizenship excellence in the classroom and school environment. It can also be used to promote strategies that influence or create competitions among students. Building decorations for the **champions** theme could capture and display Olympics moments, various sports personalities or even Horse racing **champions**.

The Olympic motto is Citius—Altius—Fortius, which is Latin for "faster, higher, stronger." The intended meaning is that one's focus should be on bettering one's achievements, rather than on coming in first.

The **champions** theme can emphasize good citizenship that encourages students to be **champions** of character in whatever they do. Explanations or definitions of **champion** characters can be displayed throughout the building. Specific character traits can be adopted for the school year.

The [champions](#) theme can be utilized in creative ways depending upon school needs and desired focus. An additional example might be to issue [champion](#) medals or declare students as [champions](#) of their class based on state assessment scores.

[Champion](#) teams might be formed based on selected scoring criteria. These analogies all support school spirit and contribute to a very positive learning environment. You're championing worthy causes with this theme and there are endless opportunities to recognize and promote student successes.

This list of [champions](#) is long... but not all-inclusive...

Jessie Owens Track & Field 2003
Darrell Waltrip Auto Racing 2003
San Antonio Spurs Basketball 2003
Tampa Bay Football 2002
Sarah Hughes Figure Skating 2002
Cael Sanderson Wrestling 2002
Emmitt Smith Football 2002
Tiger Woods Golf 2001
Barry Bonds Baseball 2001
Jim Thorpe American Athlete 2001
Walter Payton Football 2000
Muhammad Ali Boxing 1999
Brandi Chastain Women's Soccer 1999

Wayne Gretzky Hockey 2003 –
Jack Nicklaus & Tiger Woods Golf 2003
Joe Paterno Coaching Great 2003
New England Patriots Football 2002
Hank Aaron Baseball 2002
Ozzie Smith Baseball 2002
Althea Gibson Tennis 2001
Dave Winfield/ Kirby Puckett Baseball 2001
Cal Ripken Jr. Baseball 2001
St. Louis Rams Football 2000
Pete Sampras Tennis 2000
Barry Sanders Football 1999
Mia Hamm Women's Soccer 1999

Joe Torre Baseball 1999
Arnold Palmer Golf 1999

Arizona Diamondbacks Baseball 1998
Mark McGwire Baseball 1998
U.S. Gold Medal Team Women's Hockey 1998
Arthur Ashe Tennis 1997

U.S. Gold Medal Team Men's Hockey 1997
Dale Earnhardt Auto Racing 1996

U.S. Gold Medal Team Women's Gymnastics 1996
Dan O'Brien Track & Field 1996
Tom Dolan Swimming 1996
Dan Marino Football 1995
John Elway Football 1993
Johnny Bench Baseball 1989
Michael Jordan Basketball 1988
Chris Evert Tennis 1987
Mary Lou Retton Gymnastics 1984
Bob Richards Track & Field 1969
Raymond Berry Football 1967
Tim McCarver Baseball 1967
Lt. Billy Mills Track 1966
Tom Tresh Baseball 1964
Bob Cousy Basketball 1956
Duke Snider Baseball 1956
Glenn Davis Football 1952

Lance Armstrong Cycling 1999
Denver Broncos Football 1998

Brett Favre Football 1998
Richard Petty Auto Racing 1998
Tiger Woods Golf 1998
Franco Harris Football 1997

Jackie Robinson Baseball 1996
Steve Young Football 1996

Michael Johnson Track 1996
Amy Van Dyken Swimming 1996
Roger Staubach Football 1996
Cal Ripken Jr. Baseball 1995
Barry Sanders Football 1992
Jim Palmer Baseball 1989
Steve Largent Football 1988
Walter Payton Football 1986
Bruce Jenner Track & Field 1977
Tom Matte Football 1968
Joe Horlen Baseball 1967
Bobby Richardson Baseball 1967
Bart Starr Football 1964
Esther Williams Swimming 1959
Bobby Layne Football 1956
Roy Campanella Baseball 1952
Preacher Roe Baseball 1952

Bob Waterfield Football 1952

Otto Graham Football 1951

Bob Lemon Baseball 1951

Ralph Kiner Baseball 1951

Leo Durocher Baseball 1939

Bob Feller Baseball 1938

Lefty Grove Baseball 1938

Carl Hubbell Baseball 1938

Lefty Gomez Baseball 1937

Mel Ott Baseball 1937

Harold Trosky Baseball 1937

Wilbur Shaw Auto Racing 1936

Babe Didrikson Zaharias American Athlete 1935

Jimmie Foxx Baseball 1934

Ellsworth Vines Tennis 1934

Tom Fears Football 1951

George Kell Baseball 1951

Johnny Lujack Football 1951

Hank Greenberg Baseball 1947

Johnny Mize Baseball 1939

Charles Gehring Baseball 1938

Billy Herman Baseball 1938

Earl Averill Baseball 1937

Bronko Nagurski Football 1937

Cecil Travis Baseball 1937

Kit Klein Speedskating 1936

Dizzy Dean Baseball 1935

Lou Gehrig Baseball 1934

Elinor Smith Aviator 1934

Theme Kick Off: What is it?

A theme kick off is held at the beginning of each school year. This kick off is a cookout... for the staff and their families. Often new staff members and their families are introduced at the same time the next years' THEME is introduced. It is also a great time to thank the families for their continuing support.

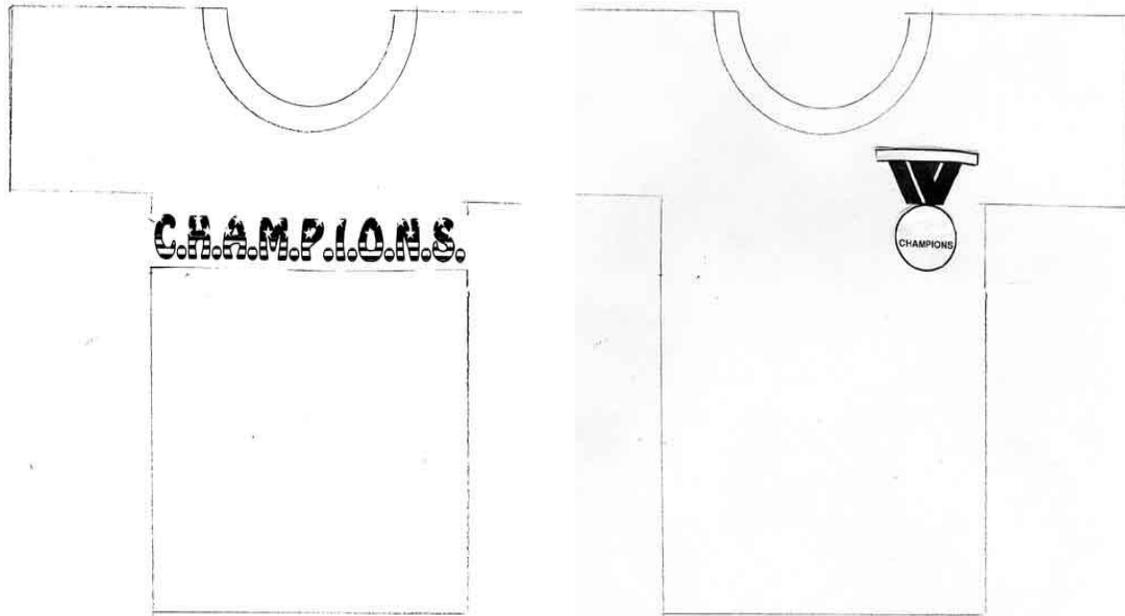
Following the cookout... the staff remains to begin decorating their classrooms. This is an evening demonstrating staff teamwork. Drawings and contests are held for the staff members and prizes related to the school theme are awarded. They might include decorations for bulletin boards, stickers, note pads, or even larger gifts that may be donated by local businesses.

This can be a memorable evening.

Theme shirts

- Each staff member receives a theme shirt at the beginning of the school year. The kick off – cook out is often a good time to present the shirts.
- How do you provide shirts for your staff ? You may choose fund raisers, a business sponsor, parent/teacher organizations or individual staff members as a means to purchase shirts. Our web site provides links to top of the line vendors if you haven't selected a local resource for shirts.
<http://www.schoolthemes.org/school-spirit-shirt.html>. The theme shirt is usually a short sleeve T-shirt however; long sleeve T-shirts, polo shirts, denim shirts or sweatshirts have also been selected.
- **C.H.A.M.P.I.O.N.S.** shirt: White shirt with the word **champions** spelled out on the back. The color of the letters can be selected to represent your school colors or typically red, white and blue are default colors. The front of the shirt displays a medal with your school name printed in the center.
- Theme shirts are typically worn on the first day of school, during monthly theme celebrations, staff dinners, district meetings, field trips and staff recognition days.

- Shirts are available for students, parents, and patrons to purchase during student enrollment. They provide symbols of staff unity and school teamwork for your education family.



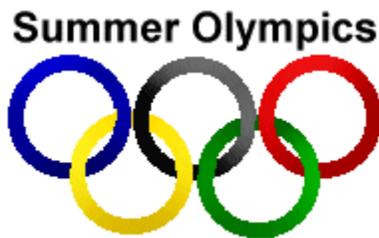
Decorating Ideas

- **C.H.A.M.P.I.O.N.S.** is displayed throughout the building accompanied by its various definitions: *“One that wins first place or first prize in a competition” ... “ One that is clearly superior or has the attributes of a winner” ... “An ardent defender or supporter of a cause or another person” ... “To fight for, to defend, or support as a **champion.**”*

- Pictures of current and historical **champions** are placed throughout the building. A brief explanation of their positive character traits accompanies each picture. Award walls exhibit various honors - such as Gold, Silver and Bronze medal student accomplishments. These achievements can be selected from Honor Roll, Test scores, Sports team wins, debate teams, most improved student recognition's, cheerleader performance or any education attribute deemed worthy of championship recognition.
- **C.H.A.M.P.I.O.N.S.** theme mural is painted on the wall where students are recognized for sportsmanship or good citizenship. The theme mural design matches the back of the theme shirts.
- Red, White, and Blue material is used - or match the colors selected for your theme shirt letters. Similar colors are used for office and classroom curtains.
- Medals, sports figures, ribbons, **Champion** spark plugs, box of Wheaties and Olympic rings can be used as symbols to recognize student successes.
- All communication documents such as parent newsletters, staff bulletins, front covers of student and staff handbooks, the school website, and school stationary, display the **CHAMPIONS** theme. Ideal names for the school newsletter: Gold Medal Events or Blue Ribbon News.

Staff Incentives

First school year staff meeting: Banners are hung announcing - We are the **Champions**. The school year schedule or calendar can be itemized as in the form of Olympics Events. Olympic Rings are displayed and Hershey Stars are offered as meeting treats. Olympic rings are placed under staff chairs and teachers selecting those seats are awarded prizes. *[Each of the five Olympic rings is a different color. Together, they represent the five inhabited continents, although no particular ring is meant to represent any specific continent. (The Americas are treated as one continent.) The rings are interlaced to represent the idea that the Olympics are universal, bringing athletes from the entire world together.]*



- First Day of School: Theme related treats and a banner announcing the **CHAMPIONS** theme is placed in the lounge. Ideas for treats: Small boxes of Wheaties are placed in the lounge for the Breakfast of Champions.

----- Sidebar -----

Many schools have become more aware of the advantages and disadvantages of eating in certain ways. People are much more aware of the relationship between what they eat and how they feel. Along with a push to decrease junk and increase nutritional content in school lunch, many school districts also are placing limits on pre-packaged food and drink that have become a mainstay for some middle-and high-school-aged students.

It's all part of encouraging healthy lifestyle choices. Concentration and ability to learn can be affected by nutrition.

And what's in the food we eat ?

Here's a link to the Agriculture Department's food search tool. If reading this document offline, Copy the link URL, then paste in your browser window.

[http://199.133.10.140/codesearchwebapp/\(5rdkvyej0ukns5rpgmu15k55\)/codesearch.aspx](http://199.133.10.140/codesearchwebapp/(5rdkvyej0ukns5rpgmu15k55)/codesearch.aspx)

Alternatively, here's a link to additional food survey information.

<http://www.ars.usda.gov/Services/docs.htm?docid=7673> (click on food search tool)

-----Sidebar end -----

- Birthday Celebrations: Once a month we celebrate staff birthdays in conjunction with the [champions](#) theme. Staff members wear theme shirts and provide treats for the birthday celebrants. On these days Staff members may pick costume dress, i.e. golf, hockey uniforms, football jerseys, etc., that symbolize some well known [champion](#).

- Staff members sign up at the beginning of the year selecting the month they choose to be responsible for organizing the celebration and providing treats.

- Mailbox Treats:
 - ✓ Life savers to represent Olympic rings
 - ✓ USA notepads
 - ✓ Star magnets
 - ✓ Medals that can be worn around the neck
 - ✓ Key chains with different sports participating in the Olympics
 - ✓ Blank paper medals to write a note to a staff member

- Music: Theme day music is played over the intercom to get the day started. Music idea: *We are the Champions* by the group Queen.
- Staff Recognition: Principal places medal shaped notes in teacher mailboxes recognizing great teaching strategies. The notes are written to acknowledge quality teaching or other special classroom activities. This process can also be used to recognize state test standards being taught or any part of a building improvement plan that is currently focused.
- Paychecks: Theme related gifts can be attached to paychecks, such as:
 - Gift Certificate from McDonald's displaying the Golden Arches
 - Skor candy bar with a note saying you "Skor" big when it comes to working with kids."
 - Small box of Wheaties stating "You are a **Champion** when it comes to teaching."
 - Highlighter with a note that says "Effective teachers highlight a child's year."
 - Business cards for each staff member with a note stating "You are a true professional."
 - A Rose is given with a note stating "The staff at your school are appreciated."

Staff Development Ideas: Staff reads and discusses the book Gung Ho by Ken Blanchard. **Gung Ho!**-... an invaluable management tool that outlines foolproof ways to increase productivity by fostering excellent morale in the workplace. Through the inspirational story of business leaders, the revolutionary technique of **Gung Ho!** ...

Is revealed in three simple, yet amazingly powerful principles:

The Spirit of the Squirrel: Practice worthwhile work

The Way of the Beaver: Be in control of achieving the goal

The Gift of the Goose: Cheer each other

Student Incentives

- Read a positive statement over the intercom each morning. A good source for these statements can be found at www.pops.com. Click on “daily deposit.”
- A ribbon or medal stating “you are stepping toward success” is presented to deserving students. This lets others know the student is displaying good citizenship skills that will help them become successful.
- Give happy birthday pencils to students on their birthdays and announce their name over the intercom.
- Have different symbols from the Olympic games [*Flames, doves, oath, torches*] on the award certificates for students passing levels of academic achievements test.
- Give super bubble gum for student helpers. Students that help with a substitute, display good manners, help in the lunchroom or any behavior that the school might like to recognize.
- Display academic achievement awards on the **Champions** Award Wall or a designated area in your school building.

Building-Wide Academic Achievement Program

Building-wide academic achievement programs can be focused around the theme. Examples include timed math tests, spelling, reading skills, keyboarding skills, or any area in which students master a skill level and move forward to the next. This method can be adapted to meet your own building needs.

Example of a Building-Wide Timed Math Test: Wall of Champions

This test is administered weekly on basic facts in addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division and is intended to help students improve these skills. Each student writes their name on the cut out of a **champion** athlete. As the student passes the timed test at each level their “**champion**” moves to the next event or level. Various Olympic events can be selected ... *Baseball, Handball, Archery, Fencing, Beach Volleyball, Volleyball, Triathlon, Cycling, Diving, Shooting, Weightlifting, Canoe-Kayak, Gymnastics, Badminton, Wrestling, Sailing, Table Tennis, Rowing, Basketball, Hockey, Boxing, Judo, Synchronized Swimming, Tennis, Pentathlon, Taekwondo, Swimming, Softball, Waterpolo, Football, Equestrian...* The wall is labeled the Wall of Success. The 5 Olympic Rings are displayed and 7 events are chosen. This display provides students a visual report of their progress as they pass each test level. The goal is to pass all seven selected events. A chart is placed in each classroom displaying the student successes.

Upon successfully completing each event students receive a certificate and a prize from the principal. Each certificate is printed to reflect the **champion** theme and includes the student’s name, date, level tested and the principal’s signature.

Classroom teacher aides help with grading the tests, keeping progress records, moving the **champion** cut outs and preparing tests for the next week. After the completion of all seven levels the student’s name is announced over the intercom.

Examples of prizes and certificates

Level 1- Students receive a certificate award that says “You are off on the right foot.” A prize could be a pencil with the school theme printed on it.

Level 2- Students receive an award that says “Keep on moving.” A prize could be a key chain with different sports represented.

Level 3- Students receive an award that says “You are headed for the top” The prize could be a preferred seat at the top of the bleachers.

Level 4- Students receive an award that says “You are headed for the Gold” with a chocolate wrapped coin.

Level 5- Students receive an award stating “You have jumped through the hoops.” Prize could be a jump rope.

Level 6- Students receive an award that states “You are sneaking up on the final stop.” Prize could be a sneaker eraser.

Level 7- Students receive an award stating “You are the **Champion**” Those students are recognized with a trip to a local sporting event, i.e. baseball game, a bowling trip, soccer or hockey game depending on the area in which you live.

Note: This is an example of how a building-wide timed test was implemented. Other strategies may be adopted and we’d be happy to hear from you about how your school used the **Champions** theme. Please e-mail your stories to <admin@schoolthemes.org>

Helping the teacher create a common vision or common goal has shown **tremendous** success. Staff members and students all respond to an enthusiastic school wide - **theme presentation**.

Presentation is the key... educators want school spirit to be high... they desire inspired learning and they know it helps to generate classroom excitement.

Students and their education family benefit from good, fun, creative and results oriented endeavors that support their school, their classmates and community.

We hope you have enjoyed the creative prospects we've shared as part of the **Champions** theme and would enjoy hearing from you. As you recognize by now there is room for additional creativity in both the presentation and execution of our themes.

Wishing you the best in education successes,

<http://www.schoolthemes.org>

 schoolthemes.org 

S.T.A.R.S.

Study Try Achieve *for* Recognition and Success

Each of our themes is introduced in acronym form. Additional discussions may be found at our web site <http://www.schoolthemes.org/acronyms.html> This “play on words” can provide additional sessions for staff fun and creativity.

The name (acronym) selected for your school theme represents your first attempt at creativity. Whether you choose one of our “named” themes or create your own... the fun really begins here.

The name is not what’s important.

It’s your imagination and the methods you use to promote your School’s Spirit.

The word or words chosen may become your school’s slogan for perhaps a full year. Although you’ve selected our theme - **STARS**, - you might chose to change the name to fit your school’s character or special needs.

Once you’ve seen our examples of theme implementation, you’ll know it’s ok to make changes to suit your style. In fact it’s encouraged. You’ll want to support lasting school spirit so be creative, inventive and have some fun with new concepts.

Once again, it’s likely your theme (**STARS**) will be displayed on school correspondence, wall murals, lockers, etc. So have fun with step number one.

The bonding, staff unity, student participation and excitement commences now.

Next – we assume total staff participation and support. Without the commitment of the entire staff, themes are just *whispers in the wind*.

Like all good ideas – there is a “kick-off” session and each unique theme contains ideas related to that particular acronym. In your case – the theme **STARS** has been selected and we’ve incorporated related ideas or “theme” content concepts.

Remember – *a key concept* - themes must contribute to a students’ learning success.

If not - why use them ?

Your day is already filled with may other demanding tasks...

However, when you have staff buy in... school themes... become the catalysts that ignite the inspiration fuse. Excitement is contagious... effective school wide themes inspire, motivate, and excite staff and students.

Theme STARS:

All students represent potential stars... and let’s not forget parents, teachers, administrators and the entire education family community. There are multiple opportunities to recognize everyone with the STARS theme. Special PTA letters could be sent to STAR parents (hopefully, all of them)... thanking them for supporting their child’s education goals and successes.

Each teacher deserves special STAR recognition everyday for their commitment to children and the learning environment. And let’s also remember the STARS in the administrative arena... our principals, superintendents, secretaries, librarians, janitors, buss drivers, security personnel, guidance counselors, cooks, nurses.... And on and on.... Many opportunities exist to recognize these folks (STARS) for their unending kindness, judgment, respect, courage, self discipline and responsibility. Let’s remember the countless others not mentioned and give each of them the truly deserved STAR recognition.

The **STARS** theme presents opportunities to recognize academic success across the entire education spectrum. Some well known “STARS” lend their popularity in support of education venues and several sponsor programs or documentaries referencing some of education’s challenges. As in all themes – we want the kids and staff to be able to recognize the concepts and relate to the issues. The STARS theme enables both.

Whether it’s Oprah Winfrey sponsoring the documentary “*A Celebration of Differences*” on learning disabilities... a discussion of celebrity Tommy Smothers’ dyslexia... or Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library’s commitment to helping children Dream More, Learn More, Care More and Be More, these STARS and others you may discover on your own, help kids relate to various education issues.

As teachers know, many kids thrive “outside the box” and words like ashamed, feeling stupid, never really getting it, covering up, embarrassed that others will find out, etc.; offer a window into the world of those who may have learning disabilities. The STARS theme also offers creative opportunities allowing educators to focus on the many classroom learning differences.

Theme Kick Off: What is it?

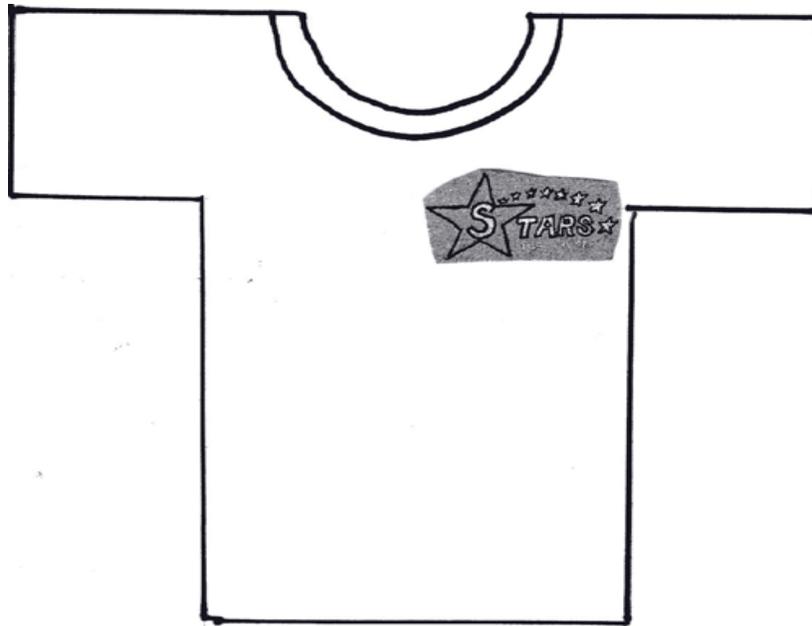
A theme kick off is held at the beginning of each school year. This kick off is a cookout... for the staff and their families. Often new staff members and their families are introduced at the same time the next years’ THEME is introduced. It is also a great time to thank the families for their continuing support.

Following the cookout... the staff remains to begin decorating their classrooms. This is an evening where staff teamwork is emphasized. The teachers help each other decorate their rooms and get them ready for the first day of students. While the staff is working in their rooms, drawings and contests are held for the staff members and prizes related to the school theme are awarded. They might include decorations for bulletin boards, stickers, note pads, or even larger gifts that may be donated by local businesses.

This can be a memorable evening with lots of laughter and team work.

Theme shirts

- Each staff member receives a theme shirt at the beginning of the school year. The kick off – cook out is often a good time to present the shirts.
- How do you provide shirts for your staff ? You may choose fund raisers, a business sponsor, parent/teacher organizations or individual staff members as a means to purchase shirts. Our web site provides links to top of the line vendors if you haven't selected a local resource for shirts.
<http://www.schoolthemes.org/school-spirit-shirt.html> . The theme shirt is usually a short sleeve T-shirt however, long sleeve T-shirts, polo shirts, denim shirts or sweatshirts have also been selected.
- **STARS** shirt: Royal Blue with the word **stars** in gold letters. The front of the shirt contains the outline of a **star**. The letter "S" displays little stars shooting out in a rainbow arch. The back of the shirt displays the word **star** in bold letters - gold print. The staff members help design the shirts.
- Theme shirts are typically worn on the first day of school, during monthly theme celebrations, staff dinners, district meetings, field trips and staff recognition days.



- Shirts are available for students, parents, and patrons to purchase during student enrollment. They provide symbols of staff unity and school teamwork for your education family.

Decorating Ideas

- **STARS** are displayed throughout the building and can be accompanied by well known movie **stars**. Various displays can also accommodate a “reaching for the **stars**” emphasis... **Stars** may also be hung from the ceilings noting student goals for the year.
- **Stars** theme mural is painted on the wall where student success awards are displayed. The theme mural matches the front of the shirt and additional concepts might include ... Reach for the **Stars**, Academic **Stars**, Students Shine Brightly, etc...

- **Stars** can be used in the classroom to assign job responsibilities. Student groups may form and become clusters of **stars** in the galaxy – these clusters can relate to particular science lessons.
- Research can be conducted to discover individuals that have made a difference by helping others. These findings can be matched to character building traits that are important to successful children. Individual and group goals may be written on **stars** and hung from classroom ceilings.
- All communication documents such as parent newsletters, staff bulletins, front covers of student and staff handbooks, the school website, and school stationery, display the **Stars** theme. Ideal names for the school newsletter include-----The _____**STAR**. or Welcome to the _____Galaxy. Your school's name fills the blank. Each class can pick a **star** to present their news in the parent letter.

Staff Incentives

- First school year staff meeting: The staff receives teacher supplies containing theme related items. **Starburst** candy and Orbit gum are possible treats. Also included is a “substitution **star**” for a designated amount of time during which the principal covers for the staff member. The principal becomes the floating **star** for each teacher. This allows time for teachers to observe other teachers, provide planning time for integrated units, a break from duties, or just an opportunity for the principal to work with students.

- First Day of School: Theme related treats and a theme banner are placed in the lounge for the first day of school. Ideas for treats: **Star** Shaped Sugar Cookies, Lucky **Stars** can be placed under teacher chairs instructing them to come to the office to claim their prize. Teachers are recognized over the intercom for being the **Star** Teacher and additional academic information may be provided so other teachers and students get to know the staff better. Research shows that developing relationships with people is one of the keys for success. It is important for students to learn this early and get to know their teachers.

----- Sidebar -----

Many schools have become more aware of the advantages and disadvantages of eating in certain ways. People are much more aware of the relationship between what they eat and how they feel. Along with a push to decrease junk and increase nutritional content in school lunch, many school districts also are placing limits on pre-packaged food and drink that have become a mainstay for some middle-and high-school-aged students.

It's all part of encouraging healthy lifestyle choices. Concentration and ability to learn can be affected by nutrition.

And what's in the food we eat ?

Here's a link to the Agriculture Department's food search tool. If reading this document offline, Copy the link URL, then paste in your browser window.

[http://199.133.10.140/codesearchwebapp/\(5rdkvyej0ukns5rpgmu15k55\)/codesearch.aspx](http://199.133.10.140/codesearchwebapp/(5rdkvyej0ukns5rpgmu15k55)/codesearch.aspx)

Alternatively, here's a link to additional food survey information.

<http://www.ars.usda.gov/Services/docs.htm?docid=7673> (click on food search tool)

-----Sidebar end -----

- Birthday Celebrations: Once a month we celebrate staff birthdays in conjunction with the **Stars** Day theme. Staff members wear theme shirts and provide treats for the birthday celebrants. Staff members sign up at the beginning of the year choosing the month to be responsible for bringing treats and for organizing the celebration.
- Mailbox Treats or Paycheck Treats:
 - ✓ **Star**burst candy with a note attached saying “you are a burst of fresh air.”
 - ✓ **Star**-shaped bubbles <http://www.orientaltrading.com>, order item (IN-24/170) with a note stating “you have a bubbling personality.”
 - ✓ **Star**-shaped glasses <http://www.orientaltrading.com>, order item (DK-83-117) with a note stating “you see only the brightest students through these glasses - every child in your room.”
 - ✓ Chocolate **Stars** with a note stating “you are a real **star** teacher.”
 - ✓ **Star** magnets with a note stating “you magnetize students with knowledge.”
 - ✓ **Star** erasers with a note stating “you are the **star** that erases all the student’s worries.”
 - ✓ **Star**-shaped notepads with a note stating “Big thanks to a stunning teacher.”
 - ✓ **Star** shaped candle with a note stating “you shine brightly.”
 - ✓ **Star** shaped pin with a note stating “you Are the Student’s Shinning **Star**.”
- Music: Theme day music is played over the intercom to get the day started. Music ideas: “You Are My Lucky **Star**” by Madonna.
- Staff Recognition: Principal places a **Star** shaped note in teacher mailboxes. The note recognizes great teaching strategies that have been observed.

- The note is written to acknowledge quality teaching or a special activity observed in the classroom. This could also be a way to recognize test standards being taught or any part of a building improvement plan that is being implemented.

Staff Development Ideas: Staff reads and discusses the book *How Full Is Your Bucket* by Donald Clifton & Tom Rath. In this book, the authors, a grandfather-grandson team, explore positive experiences dealing with recognition and praise. The book comes with a unique access code www.bucketbook.com, which offers a positive impact assessment and drop-shaped note cards that can be used to give praise and recognition to others.

Student Incentives

- Read a positive statement over the intercom each morning. A good source for these statements can be found at www.pops.com click on “attitude boosters.”
- Stick a **Star** sticker on a student when they are observed displaying good citizenship or implementing a character trait your school is working on for the year.
- Give **star** pencils to students on their birthdays and announce the student’s name over the intercom.
- Provide **Star** award certificates for students passing levels of academic achievement tests.
- Give **star** related treats to student helpers. Students that help with a substitute, display good manners, help in the lunchroom or any behavior that the school might like to recognize. Items such as **star** pencils, erasers, pens, **star** certificates, **star**-shaped glasses, or other **star** shaped items may be used.

- Display academic achievement awards on the **Stars** Award Wall or make a walk of fame as in Hollywood ... and recognize individual **stars**.

Building-Wide Academic Achievement Program

Building-wide academic achievement programs can be focused around the theme. Examples include timed math tests, spelling, reading skills, keyboarding skills, or any area in which students master a skill level and move forward to the next. This method can be adapted to meet your own building needs.

Example of a Building-Wide Timed Math Test: “The Walk of Fame”

This test is administered weekly on basic facts in addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division and is intended to help students improve these skills.

Each student is given a **star** cut out and writes their name on it. As the student passes the timed test at each level their **star** moves along the Hollywood Walk of Fame. The students can view their successes as they move along the walk. The walk can be labeled something such as “The Big **Star** Walk...” or include the name of your school as appropriate. There are seven levels of the walk marked one through seven. The goal is to pass all seven levels and become the **star** of the school. A chart is created and placed in each classroom displaying the student successes.

Upon successfully completing each level, students receive a certificate and a prize from the principal. Each certificate is printed to reflect the theme in use and includes student name, date, level tested and the principal’s signature.

Classroom teacher aides help with grading the tests, keeping progress records, moving the **stars**, and preparing tests for the next week.

After the completion of all seven levels the student's name is announced over the intercom.

Examples of prizes and certificates

Level 1- Student receives a **star** eraser with a certificate that states “you have erased level one.”

Level 2- Student receives a **star** bouncing ball.

<http://www.orientaltrading.com>, (order item - PH-12-2386) with a certificate that states “you are bouncing down the walk of fame.”

Level 3- Student receives a mini package of chocolate **stars** with a certificate that states “you are well on your way to being the big **star**.”

Level 4- Student receives a package of **Starburst** with a certificate that states “you are bursting out in front of the rest.”

Level 5- Student receives a pencil gripper to put on their pencil with a certificate that states “this should help you move right along.”

Level 6- Student receives a flashing ring with a certificate that states “you are shining bright.”

Level 7- Student receives a pair of **star**-shaped sunglasses to wear to the Walk of Fame dedication in their honor.

Note: This is an example of how a building-wide timed test was implemented. Other strategies may be adopted and we'd be happy to hear from you about how your school used the **Star** theme. Please e-mail your stories to <admin@schoolthemes.org>

Helping the teacher create a common vision or common goal has shown **tremendous** success. Staff members and students all respond to an enthusiastic school wide - **theme presentation**.

Presentation is the key... educators want school spirit to be high... they desire inspired learning and they know it helps to generate classroom excitement.

Students and their education family benefit from good, fun, creative and results oriented endeavors that support their school, their classmates and community.

We hope you have enjoyed the creative prospects we've shared as part of the **Stars** theme and would enjoy hearing from you. As you recognize by now there is room for additional creativity in both the presentation and execution of our themes.

Wishing you the best in education successes,

<http://www.schoolthemes.org>

 schoolthemes.org 

----- And Your Special **FREE** Theme -----

P O W E R

Providing Opportunities With Enrichment and Responsibility

We've associated the Power theme with a new before school program called the Power Hour. Although all of our themes are intended to promote school spirit, we also recognize the need to balance that objective with student and teacher academic priorities.

Thus, this school theme idea shares how an improved time management initiative can be designed to meet individual student needs and promote academic successes.

A school theme idea suggested by a middle school administrator and a recent addition to our school theme list.

P.O.W.E.R.

Providing **O**pportunities **W**ith **E**nrichment and **R**esponsibility

Each of our themes is introduced in acronym form. Additional discussions may be found at our web site <http://www.schoolthemes.org/acronyms.html> This “play on words” can provide additional sessions for staff fun and creativity.

The name (acronym) selected for your school theme represents your first attempt at creativity. Whether you choose one of our “named” themes or create your own... the fun really begins here.

The name is not what’s important.

It’s your imagination and the methods you use to promote your School’s Spirit.

The word or words chosen may become your school’s slogan for perhaps a full year. Although you’ve selected our theme - **POWER**, - you might chose to change the name to fit your school’s character or special needs.

Once you’ve seen our examples of theme implementation, you’ll know it’s ok to make changes to suit your style. In fact it’s encouraged. You’ll want to support lasting school spirit so be creative, inventive and have some fun with new concepts.

Once again, it’s likely your theme (**POWER**) will be displayed on school correspondence, wall murals, lockers, etc. So have fun with step number one.

The bonding, staff unity, student participation and excitement commences now.

Next – we assume total staff participation and support. Without the commitment of the entire staff, themes are just *whispers in the wind*.

Like all good ideas – there is a “kick-off” session and each unique theme contains ideas related to that particular acronym. In your case – the theme **POWER** has been selected and we’ve incorporated related ideas or “theme” content concepts.

Remember – *a key concept* - themes must contribute to a students’ learning success.

If not - why use them?

Your day is already filled with many other demanding tasks...

However, when you have staff buy in... school themes... become the catalysts that ignite the inspiration fuse. Excitement is contagious... effective school wide themes inspire, motivate, and excite staff and students.

Theme POWER:

We’ve associated the **POWER** theme with a new before school program called the **POWER HOUR**. Although all of our themes are intended to promote school spirit – we also recognize the need to balance that objective with student and teacher academic priorities.

Thus, the **POWER HOUR** implements improved time management initiatives designed to meet individual student needs and promote academic successes. We’ll provide a schedule example in a later section of the theme.

Student successes mean better grades, better attitudes, and a positive learning environment. It’s much easier to promote school spirit when you have an effective program that benefits all participants and encourages full participation.

A dedicated **POWER HOUR** offers enrichment activities for all and provides the time and help to complete school work. Additionally, teachers can use this “before school” time as a common planning session.

While teachers are planning during the **POWER HOUR**, paraprofessionals are assigned to designated subject matter rooms, helping students with math, science, history etc. Paraprofessionals, instructional aides, secretaries, vice principal’s and administrative practicum students all participate in the successful **POWER HOUR** concept. The Principal’s time is spent most productively in an instructional leadership role.

Theme Kick Off: What is it?

A theme kick off is held at the beginning of each school year. This kick off is a cookout... for the staff and their families. Often new staff members and their families are introduced at the same time the next years’ THEME is introduced. It is also a great time to thank the families for their continuing support.

Following the cookout... the staff remains to begin decorating their classrooms. This is an evening demonstrating staff teamwork. Drawings and contests are held for the staff members and prizes related to the school theme are awarded. They might include decorations for bulletin boards, stickers, note pads, or even larger gifts that may be donated by local businesses.

This can be a memorable evening.

Theme shirts

- Each staff member receives a theme shirt at the beginning of the school year. The kick off – cook out is often a good time to present the shirts.

- How do you provide shirts for your staff ? You may choose fund raisers, a business sponsor, parent/teacher organizations or individual staff members as a means to purchase shirts.
- Our web site provides links to top of the line vendors if you haven't selected a local resource for shirts. The theme shirt is usually a short sleeve T-shirt but Staff's have also purchased long sleeve T-shirts, polo shirts, denim shirts or sweatshirts. www.schoolthemes.org/get-started-with-school-themes.html
- **POWER** shirt: Red with the slogan Knowledge is **Power** on the left front pocket area. On the back of the shirt is your school's mission statement.
- Theme shirts are typically worn on the first day of school, during monthly theme celebrations, staff dinners, district meetings, field trips and staff recognition days.
- Shirts are available for students, parents, and patrons to purchase during student enrollment. They provide symbols of staff unity and school teamwork for your education family.

Decorating Ideas

- **P.O.W.E.R.** is displayed throughout the building and the focus is - Knowledge is **Power**. You might use your front display case to recognize academic success with pictures of students achieving the Standard of Excellence on their state assessments.
- Banners are hung in the common areas recognizing all classes achieving the Standard of Excellence and announcing the year of award.

- Decorations for **P.O.W.E.R.** may include many different representations. As we mentioned above, your creativity is important. It's your school and no one knows it like you do.

----- sidebar -----

Let's discover a few opportunities together. We've picked knowledge is **Power** and there are many ways to highlight the **POWER** concept. You'll probably have a school logo, shirt logo, school correspondence, wall murals etc.. to decorate.

So how do you display **POWER** in a fashion that is obvious, has relevance and can be used in fun ways to promote school spirit ?

Tough question !

As you read these **POWER** related items..... let some **POWERful** thinking take over and discover how you can create school spirit and display it in creative ways.

Knowledge is Power, Nuclear Power, Power of thinking, Solar Power, Power-To-Charm, Power-of-Nature, Racing Power, Wind Power, Power Point, Within the Halls of Power, Personal Power, People Power, Power of Belief, Power of Money, Power Play, Power Bar, Power Drink, etc.

So whether you use racing cars, dollar bills, **powerful** storms, **power** point slides, **powerful** people, eat **power** bars, **power** drinks, horse **power** or combinations of all the above, there's ample opportunity to **power** your way to a **powerful** school theme presentation for your school.

----- Sidebar End -----

- All communication documents such as parent newsletters, staff bulletins, front covers of student and staff handbooks, the school website, and school stationary, display the **P.O.W.E.R.** theme. Your school newsletter name might be changed to (MySchool) **POWER NEWS**.

Staff Incentives

- First school year staff meeting: The staff receives a tie-dye bag with teacher supplies such as pencils, erasers, and sticker packs that are decorated with happy faces, peace symbols, flowers and stickers.
- A “substitution stub” for a designated amount of time during which the principal covers for the staff member. This allows time for teachers to observe other teachers, provide planning time for integrated units, a break from duties, or just an opportunity for the principal to work in another’s shoes.
- First Day of School: Theme related treats and a banner presenting your theme is placed in the lounge for the first day of school. Ideas for treats: Happy Face Sugar Cookies, Smiley face snack crackers and other treats from the 60’s and 70’s.

----- Sidebar -----

Many schools have become more aware of the advantages and disadvantages of eating in certain ways. People are much more aware of the relationship between what they eat and how they feel. Along with a push to decrease junk and increase nutritional content in school lunch, many school districts also are placing limits on pre-packaged food and drink that have become a mainstay for some middle-and high-school-aged students.

It’s all part of encouraging healthy lifestyle choices. Concentration and ability to learn can be affected by nutrition.

And what’s in the food we eat ?

Here's a link to the Agriculture Department's food search tool. If reading this document offline, Copy the link URL, then paste in your browser window.

[http://199.133.10.140/codesearchwebapp/\(5rdkvyej0ukns5rpgmu15k55\)/codesearch.aspx](http://199.133.10.140/codesearchwebapp/(5rdkvyej0ukns5rpgmu15k55)/codesearch.aspx)

Alternatively, here's a link to additional food survey information.

<http://www.ars.usda.gov/Services/docs.htm?docid=7673> (click on food search tool)

-----Sidebar end -----

- Birthday Celebrations: Once a month we celebrate staff birthdays in conjunction with a **POWER** Day theme. Staff members wear theme shirts and provide treats for the birthday celebrants. Staff members sign up at the beginning of the year choosing the month in which they are responsible for organizing the celebration and providing treats.

- Mailbox Treats:
 - ✓ Peace necklace
 - ✓ Retro Sticker Book
 - ✓ Happy Face items
 - ✓ Smiley Face Decorations for Bulletin Boards
 - ✓ Smiley Face Notepads

- Music: Theme day music is played over the intercom to get the day started. Music ideas: A CD with 60's and 70's music.

- Staff Recognition: Principal places in teacher mailboxes, a Smiley note or a note pad with a tie-dye shirt that recognizes great teaching strategies that have been observed. The note is written to acknowledge quality teaching or an activity that is observed in the classroom. This could also be a way to recognize test standards being taught or any part of a building improvement plan that is being implemented.
- Paychecks: Theme related gifts can be attached to paychecks, such as:
 - Bubble gum
 - Tie-dye note pad stating that the teachers are colorful
 - Smiley face erasers stating that the staff erases all the learning problems for students with great teaching
 - Peace necklace with a note stating “you stick your neck out to reach all students”
 - Smiley-face magnet stating “you are magnificent with students”
 - Smiley-face stress ball with a note of thanks

Staff Development Ideas: Staff reads and discusses the book Whatever It Takes by Richard and Rebecca DuFour, Robert Eaker, and Gayle Karhanek. This book addresses professional learning communities and how teams of teachers plan for students that don't learn.

Student Incentives

- Read a positive statement over the intercom each morning. A good source for these statements can be found at www.pops.com - click on “daily deposit.”
- Retro stickers for good work or behavior

- Give retro or smiley face pencils to students on their birthdays and announce the student's name over the intercom.
- Present **POWER** award certificates to students passing levels of academic achievement tests.
- Give pencils, erasers, tie-dye slap bracelets for students that help with a substitute, display good manners, help in the lunchroom or any behavior your school might like to recognize.
- Display academic achievement awards on the **POWER** Award Wall or a designated area in your school building.

-----Sidebar -----

Although we've promoted school spirit and fun in a dedicated learning environment – you still must contend with those events that affect your student's daily academic progress.

The **POWER** theme enables improved time management allowing teachers and supporting professionals the opportunity to extend additional *powerful* help as required. This schedule presents an example of how you might implement the **POWER HOUR** concept at your school.

Middle School Schedule

7th Grade Class Schedule

Time	8:00-8:25	8:30-10:05	10:08-11:38	11:38-12:08	12:11-12:41	12:44-2:14	2:17-3:11
Minutes	25	95	90	30	30	90	A-Day/ 54 /B-Day
A-Day		1	2	Lunch	9	3	4
B-Day		5	6	Lunch	9	7	8
Math	P O W E R			Lunch	Skills		Plan/Plac.Class
Comm.				Lunch	Skills		Plan/Plac.Class
Science				Lunch	Skills		Plan/Plac.Class
Soc. Stu.				Lunch	Skills		Plan/Plac.Class
Phys.Ed.				Lunch	Plan		Extensions
For. Lang.				Lunch	Plan		Problem Solving

8th Grade Class Schedule

				11:41-12:11	12:11-12:41		
A-Day		1	2	10	Lunch	3	4
B-Day		5	6	10	Lunch	7	8
Art	H O U R			Plan	Lunch		Multi-Media
Tech.				Plan	Lunch		T-Bolt TV
Math				Skills	Lunch		Plac.Class/Plan
Comm.				Skills	Lunch		Plac.Class/Plan
Science				Skills	Lunch		Plac.Class/Plan
Soc. Stu.				Skills	Lunch		Plac.Class/Plan
Librarian							Placement Class
Counselor				Skills	Skills		
Spec. Ed.							Resource
Building Tech				Skills	Skills		Webmasters
Extended Learning							Extended Class

Elective Classes

Band							7A/8B
				10	9		
Music				8th Music	7th Music		Drama/1-Act

This example features common teacher planning time “first thing in the morning.” It’s also focused on enabling teachers and students to spend the maximum amount of time together – teaching and learning.

Often, some students need extra time before, during and after school to master certain concepts. Teachers are best able to “help” students when your school’s schedule is designed to support student needs.

-----Sidebar End -----

Extended Time(E.T.)

The names of students not completing work on time are reported to the office daily. Parents are contacted with a request for their child to stay after school. Once again, all necessary personnel resources are utilized to assist students. This process continues until daily progress is judged sufficient.

Knowledge is **Power**

The Focus Is... Academics !

An academic success committee is formed. The committee’s goal is to call attention to your school’s number one priority - student learning.

Your entire education community participates in developing ideas that promote a positive learning environment.

And... you certainly want to remember the importance of student recognition as you promote school spirit.

It’s a **POWER**ful concept supported by some additional **POWER**ful ideas.

Most everyone is familiar with “lettering” in sports.

“Did you Letter in Football, Basketball or Wrestling, etc.”

Well, here’s an idea... let’s implement “Lettering” in Academics at your school !

- Students receive “Letters” when they achieve the academic honor roll for two nine week periods. They receive a pin, bar for repeated semester achievements.
- Conduct Academic award assemblies where students receive their “Letters.”
- Arrange an Academic display case providing pictures of students and certificates for their academic success.
- Hang your school’s banners to recognize academic success on state assessment tests.
- Make special half time announcements at football or basketball games, recognizing student academic success.
- Your students can create an academic float and enter it as part of the town parade.
- Prepare Academic pep assemblies with your school band.
- During your week of state testing, conduct a student “run through” as you would at a football game where teachers will announce their names.
- Upon completion of state assessments plan a Reward dance for students.
- Utilize your student led TV program to include vocabulary words, math facts, student skits, and other information that will help your students remember important information.

Helping teachers create a common vision or common goal has shown **tremendous** success. Staff members and students all respond to an enthusiastic school wide - **theme presentation**.

Presentation is the key... educators want school spirit to be high... they desire inspired learning and they know it helps to generate classroom excitement.

Students and their education family benefit from good, fun, creative and results oriented endeavors that support their school, their classmates and community.

We hope you have enjoyed the creative prospects we've shared as part of the **POWER** theme and would enjoy hearing from you. Please click on the "contact us" feature at our website or send email to <admin@schoolthemes.org>

As you recognize by now there is always room for additional creativity in both the presentation and execution of our themes.

We have a lot of fun creating themes and hope you enjoy the many different ways to implement them.

Wishing you the best in education successes,

<http://www.schoolthemes.org>

 schoolthemes.org 