A Good Theme Must Have:

1. A topic **limited** enough to allow a thorough investigation.

2. A **specific aim**. What do you want your theme to do for the reader? Can you state that aim in a sentence?

3. An idea that can be **summarized in one sentence**. What is the point your essay is written to make?

4. A **controlling attitude** to govern the tone of your writing. Will you treat the subject humorously, reverently, seriously, objectively?

5. Adherence to the principles or order; that is, **an organization** that seems reasonable and logical.

6. Discussion paragraphs that **develop** some aspect of the theme statement and that have a top sentence expressed or clearly implied.

7. **Support** of the topic sentence of each paragraph such as details, enumerations, definitions, analogies, evidence, logical structures, as needed to support your general statements.

8. **Consistency** in person, tense, voice, number and tone.

9. Words that say **precisely**, not approximately, what you mean.

10. **Clear sentences** employing the accepted standards of punctuation and grammar.

11. A **variety** of sentence structures.

12. A **title** that suggests or states the point the essay was written to make.

13. Capital letters, italics, syllabication, hyphens, and other manuscript mechanics **as needed**.

14. **Neat** manuscript in prescribed format.