

Some authors use the same characters or similar characters in many of their stories. These stories might be in a **series**, or a set of books connected by their characters. Although the characters may be the same, each story in a series may have a different **setting** where the action takes place. The **plots**, or the way the events in stories happen, may also be different. You can also compare the **themes**, or the central message about life the stories offer.

Look at the titles and pictures from a book series called *The Adventures of Super Cat*. Think about what is similar between the pictures and what is different.



Look at the chart below. It compares and contrasts the two books about Super Cat.

	Book 1	Book 2
Setting	Empire State Building, New York City	a volcano
Plot	Super Cat rescues a kitten.	Super Cat stops a volcano from erupting.
Theme	Use your powers to do good things.	Use your powers to do good things.

Good readers notice what is the same and what is different about the settings, plots, and themes of stories that have the same or similar characters.



Read the descriptions of the next two books about Super Cat.

Genre: Fantasy

Book 3: Super Cat Climbs Mount Everest

Super Cat travels to the highest mountain to save frightened climbers from a snow monster. He meets the monster and learns it is a baby creature who has lost its mother. Super Cat helps it find its family. The climbers feel safe again.

Book 4: Super Cat Discovers a Planet

Super Cat lands on an uncharted planet full of angry people. They are so grumpy that Super Cat decides to leave the planet. But then he learns that all their water has disappeared. No wonder they're unhappy! Using his superhero glasses, he finds a new underground water source. The people are saved—and much friendlier.

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Explore how to answer this question: "What theme do both books have in common?"

These books have different settings and plots, but they share a similar message. Identifying the main problem in the plot and how it is solved will help you find the theme of a story.

Fill in the blanks to complete the chart about the problem and solution in each story.

Book	What is the problem?	How is the problem solved?	Why is the problem solved?
3	A snow <u>monster</u> is scaring a group of mountain climbers.	Super Cat helps the baby creature find its <u>family</u> .	Super Cat learns the snow monster is a lost <u>baby creature</u> .
4	All the <u>water</u> on a planet has disappeared.	Super Cat uses superhero <u>glasses</u> to find water for the people.	Super Cat decides to stay on the planet and help after learning why the people are angry.

Fill in the blank below to write about the theme of both books.

The theme in both books is that understanding others can help solve problems.