The theme of a literary work is the general insight about life that it shares with readers. Literary works often communicate theme through the experiences of characters, details describing the events and setting of the work, and literary devices such as symbolism and irony. In “The Necklace,” themes are conveyed indirectly through the comments and actions of the characters. What insights about life can you find in the experiences of Madame Loisel and the descriptions of the society in which she lives? What insights are shared through the actions of Don Trine and the other people in his town?

**DIRECTIONS**: After you’ve read the story, think about which of each story’s details and events lead you to the story’s theme, or general insight about life. Then read the following passage from the story and describe how the passage relates to theme.

She was one of those pretty, charming young women who was born, as if by an error of Fate, into a petty official’s family. She had no dowry, no hopes, not the slightest chance of being appreciated, understood, loved, and married by a rich and distinguished man.

1. What does this passage say about the society in which Madame Loisel lives?

2. How does the passage relate to a theme of the story?