Determining Theme Worksheet Justifying My Answers

1. The wicked man will in the end be punished for his crimes.
   a. Durante was a murderer (102)
   b. “... I kinda like the job” (106). Durante begins to like destroying the irrigation system and “murdering” the vines.
   c. (110) Durante dies of thirst in a horrible way.

2. Surviving in this world is a constant struggle.
   a. Tony has an elaborate irrigation system so that his vines can survive in the desert (the vines “sip enough life” from the system (102).
   b. Durante is trying to survive by fleeing ahead of the sheriff and his posse (102).
   c. Durante must struggle to survive in the desert without water; his enemies are wild animals (coyotes, buzzards), the sheriff, and eventually Tony.

3. Appearances are not always what they seem. (#6)
   a. Durante is surprised that Tony is a marksman: “You kill rabbits with a rifle?” (104)
   b. Durante does not think that Tony is the type of person who would fight back: “The trouble with you is you’re yellow ... you just sit back and take it” (107).
   c. Durante does not think Tony will walk half a mile to get his rifle back, but Tony does! This means that Durante could never come back to the vineyard.
4. When you begin to commit evil acts, you can expect evil in return; don’t look for someone to save you from your evil.
   a. “I deserve it” (108). Durante realizes that Tony was justified in getting revenge.
   b. “Durante had condemned [all the vines] to death” (108). Durante murdered something very precious to Tony.
   c. “But there were no stars in heaven…. He had no more hope” (110). Durante can’t expect God to help him after these crimes.

5. The earth is a cruel and unforgiving place that does not care [personification!] if we humans live or die.
   a. The author uses personification as if the earth were a living thing that had to drink water in order to survive: “that whisper of drinking” (110).
   b. The sky has a face (like a human) but it is blind: “out of the blind face of that sky” (110). The blind sky does not see or care about human suffering.
   c. The heat, dust, and dryness of the desert mean that all life is constantly on the verge of death