**Themes:**

There are many themes in the poem, such as (a) the theme of leadership (b) the theme of nature (c) the theme of imperfection (d) the theme of balance.

**the theme of leadership**

In the theme of leadership, the title and the context of the poem are fully about leadership. The title of the poem “the Leader and the Led” creates juxtaposition between two subjects (leading and following). The whole poem is about who wants to lead and who doesn’t want to be a follower of a certain leader.

**the theme of nature**

The characters and the setting in the poem, reveal the theme of nature. Such characters and environment send a feeling of freshness and greenness to the readers of the poem.

Memory of the zoo or that of the jungle book is revived. The forest where every event happens, the giraffe, the zebra, the lion, the impala, the antelope, are words portraying living natures.

**the theme of imperfection**

Another theme in the poem is the theme of imperfection. The poem sends the message that perfection is not the recipe for leadership. The animals that felt they are worthy because of their strengths and powerful qualities are disqualified like those who possess weaknesses.

In line 11 – 12 (The elephant trudges into the power tussle/ But his colleagues dread his trampling feet), the elephant strength disqualified him while the weakness of warthog was his certificate of disqualification, as seen in line 13 (the warthog is too ugly).

**the theme of balance**

The theme of balance shows that half strength and half weakness is the guaranteed trait to leadership. Professor Osundare revealed the solution via the forest sage because it takes wisdom to arrive at any solution to a problem.

Line 17 – 20:

“’Our need calls for a hybrid of habits”,

Proclaims the Forest Sage,

“A little bit of a lion

A little bit of a lamb

Tough like a tiger, compassionate like a doe

Transparent like a river, mysterious like a lake’

**Supportive facts**

* No leader is perfect / has complete leadership needs
* Compromise as key to successful leadership
* Servant leadership as a good model for leadership