

Warm-Up

Imagery and Symbolism in “The Scarlet Ibis”



Lesson Question



Lesson Goals

Read by James Hurst.Analyze the effects of .

Identify the meanings of symbols in the story.

Identify examples of and its purpose.

Words to Know

Fill in this table as you work through the lesson. You may also use the glossary to help you.

	to study closely and carefully
	a person, object, image, word, or event that takes on a meaning beyond its literal meaning
	the introduction of hints suggesting what will happen later in the story
	vivid language that appeals to the senses



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Recognizing a Deeper Meaning

Often in the world around us we can [redacted] many things with the same item. For example, have you ever noticed that the bald eagle is featured on the back of many United States quarters?

The [redacted] is actually a bird that's indigenous to North America, and that's one reason why it was chosen as the national bird for the United States in 1782.

But why was it chosen as the national bird? Not just because it lives in the United States, but also because it shows qualities that are important to people in the United States, qualities like [redacted] or [redacted].

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Imagery

[] is vivid language that appeals to the senses. Readers can

[] the imagery an author uses to understand its importance.

[] **imagery**

We stood close to the stage, close enough to see the whites of the singer's soulful brown eyes. The music coursed through us, vibrating the floorboards and rattling our ears.

We moved as one with the wave of the crowd.

[] **imagery**

We went to the concert, and our seats were great! We were in the first row next to the stage, close to the band. The music was so loud!

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Noticing Imagery

Underline the phrase that connects smells to a sense of hearing.

It was in the clove of seasons, summer was dead but autumn had not yet been born, that the ibis lit in the bleeding tree. The flower garden was stained with rotting brown magnolia petals and ironweeds grew rank amid the purple phlox. The five o'clocks by the chimney still marked time, but the oriole nest in the elm was untenanted and rocked back and forth like an empty cradle. The last graveyard flowers were blooming, and their smell drifted across the cotton field and through every room of our house, speaking softly the names of our dead.

—“*The Scarlet Ibis*,”
James Hurst

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Using Imagery to Show Characters

Underline the words and phrases that physically describe the character Dodd.

He was born when I was six and was, from the outset, a disappointment. He seemed all head, with a tiny body which was red and shriveled like an old man's. Everybody thought he was going to die – everybody except Aunt Nicey, who had delivered him. . . . They named him William Armstrong, which was like tying a big tail on a small kite. . . .

I thought myself pretty smart at many things, like holding my breath, running, jumping, or climbing the vines in Old Woman Swamp, and I wanted more than anything else someone to race to Horsehead Landing, someone to box with, and someone to perch with in the top fork of the great pine behind the barn, where across the fields and swamps you could see the sea. I wanted a brother. But Mama, crying, told me that even if William Armstrong lived, he would never do these things with me. He might not, she sobbed, even be “all there.”

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Symbolism

A [] is a person, object, image, word, or event that takes on one or more meanings beyond its literal meaning.

Literal meaning: red rose

Literal meaning: ring

Symbolic meaning: []

Symbolic meaning: [], unity

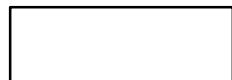
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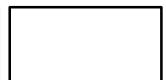
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Symbols vs. Signs

have literal
meanings and symbolic meanings.



- A flag
- Patriotism and pride



are often confused with
symbols, but a sign has only one meaning.



- Peace

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A Symbol’s Purpose and Function

Symbols are used in literature to:

- express ideas and concepts.
- connect the reader with an idea or .

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Interpreting Symbols in Literature

To interpret a [redacted], ask yourself:

- Is there an object or idea with significance beyond its [redacted] meaning?
- What ideas and images are connected to it?
- What [redacted] does it create?

Underline an object with a meaning beyond its literal meaning to the writer of the passage.

Doodle was my brother and he was going to cling to me forever, no matter what I did, so I dragged him across the burning cotton field to share with him the only beauty I knew, Old Woman Swamp. I pulled the go-cart through the saw-tooth fern, down into the green dimness where the palmetto fronds whispered by the stream. I lifted him out and set him down in the soft rubber grass beside a tall pine. His eyes were round with wonder as he gazed about him, and his little hands began to stroke the rubber grass.



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Imagery and Symbolism in “The Scarlet Ibis”

James Hurst (b. 1922)

- Grew up on a coastal farm in
- Served in World War II
- in New York and Italy for a career in opera
- Received the Atlantic First for “The Scarlet Ibis”
- Gave up music and worked in a New York City bank for most of his career

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Foreshadowing

[] is the introduction of hints to what will happen later in

the story. Foreshadowing can increase interest, help the reader make

[], and add suspense.

[]
[]
But sometimes (like right now), as I sit in the cool, green-draped parlor, the grindstone begins to turn, and time with all its changes is ground away – and I remember Doodle.

– “*The Scarlet Ibis*,”

James Hurst

[]
[]
They named him William Armstrong, which was like tying a big tail on a small kite. Such a name sounds good only on a tombstone.

– “*The Scarlet Ibis*,”

James Hurst



Summary

Imagery and Symbolism in “The Scarlet Ibis”



Lesson Question

In what ways do imagery and symbolism function in a story?

Answer

Use this space to write any questions or thoughts about this lesson.