

Macbeth Journal # 5B

★ How does Shakespeare make use of symbolism in Act II and/or Act III to create multiple layers of meaning?

★ Use the sentence frame below for an opening claim:

imply that
suggest that
develop
emphasize
contrast
parallel

Analysis of "HOW" Sentence Frame

In-OR-
Throughout

1 _____, Shakespeare **symbolizes** _____ to **VERB** _____
(Section/text) (infininitives)

? , ? , and ? by _____ (verb ending in -ing) (analysis)

★ Check your pre-notes, and select one of the three major symbols.

OUTCOMES

Impact (Tone and Mood)
Meaning (Theme or Main Idea)
Purpose or Perspective

★ okay if some contradict others

VERBS

showing	establishing
suggesting	juxtaposing
describing	emphasizing
implying	presenting
subverting	revealing
providing	conveying
appealing	reinforcing
demonstrating	comparing

★ Then, support your interpretation two or more relevant quotations that are woven into your response.

★ How can this one symbol serve multiple functions?

KEEP IT ALL LIMITED TO A SINGLE PAGE!

Two Types of Symbols:

A. General

A general symbol is universal in its meaning. Even if the symbol were removed from a work of literature, it would still suggest a larger meaning.

Ex: While the sea symbolizes the universal voyage from life to death in *The Odyssey*, it retains this association independent from literature. The "sea" is a general symbol.

Ex: In poetry, a "rose" often is not only a flower, but also a general symbol for romantic love.

B. Specific

A specific symbol is not universal in its meaning. It acquires a specific meaning based on how it relates to the content of a novel, poem, etc. The symbol's significance exists only within the context created by the author.

Ex: A hunting cap in *The Catcher in the Rye* has no universal meaning, but within the novel it is worn backwards and symbolizes a looking back at childhood.

Ex: A pair of eyes on a billboard in the *Great Gatsby* has no universal meaning, but within the story symbolizes the eyes of God watching humanity.

Tips about Symbols:

- The story itself must furnish a clue that a detail is to be taken symbolically. Symbols nearly always signal their existence by emphasis, repetition, or position.
- The meaning of a literary symbol must be established and supported by the entire context of the story. The symbol has its meaning in the story, not outside it.
- To be called a symbol, an item must suggest a meaning different in kind from its literal meaning; a symbol is something more than its class or type.
- A symbol **will** have more than one meaning. This does not mean that the symbol can mean anything you want it to because possible meanings are always controlled by the context.

Follow These Steps When Writing About Symbolism:

1. **Determine what objects, characters, or actions are symbolic.** To identify a symbol, note if an object seems to
 - appear repeatedly
 - have an unusually vivid quality
 - be described with language conveying much emphasis
 - have more significance than its literal reality would suggest
2. **Determine symbolic meanings.** Carefully examine how the symbol functions in relation to the story. Ask yourself what idea is represented by the symbol.
3. **Classify the symbols.** Classification may reveal opposite relationships, such as symbols of good and evil, life and death, or eternal and ephemeral. Or symbols may fall into isolated categories, such as destruction, innocence, or sexuality.
4. **Classify the meanings of a symbol.** Determine how much depth a particular symbol has and classify its possible meanings. While your paper may focus on only one major symbol, you may be able to divide it into two specific meanings and two general meanings.

Remember: A symbol has a literal meaning in a story but suggests or represents other meanings. Not all symbolism is obvious; often it is subtle and indirect. **That said, you never want to ignore the literal context.**