

Symbolism

A **symbol** is a word or image that represents something else. The eagle is a symbol of the United States. The dove is a symbol of peace. The balance scale is a symbol of justice. Poets find the symbol a useful device because the symbol usually carries with it a stronger emotional impact. For example, the symbol of the cross will usually create a stronger emotional response than the word "Christianity".

What does the colour **white** symbolize? _____

What does **Santa Claus** symbolize? _____

What does **Cupid** symbolize? _____

Read the poem "Fingerprints" by Kim Johnson.

Fingerprints

*When I tell you to sit down
you stand straight,
hands by your sides,
curled into small fists.
When I ask you to come with me,
you sit with thin arms
crossed defiantly.
You grin wildly when you are bad.
You are a disobedient child.
But you are not mine,
and I cannot stop you.
Insolent child.*

*Your arms are thin,
aren't they.
And bruised.
Has your defiance at home caused them
to pick you up
or drop you down?
Strange how there are always
four small bruises on the front,
a large one on back.
Sometimes your cheek is—
Have you fallen off your bicycle again?
Again?
Poor child.*

Kim Johnson uses the marks on the child's body, "four small bruises on the front, a large one on back" as visual symbols of _____

****Note:** The meaning of a symbol arises from the reader's experience, each reader drawing whatever connections are meaningful for him or her.

New symbols are formed all the time. Create some original symbols for each of these ideas.

1. Beauty: _____
2. Wisdom: _____
3. Love: _____
4. Evil: _____

Coat of Arms

Using symbols, words and pictures create a Coat of Arms to represent your life.

Possible categories include:

- Personality
- Extra-curricular
- Past-times/hobbies
- Values
- Vices
- Virtues