

SMART™ Lesson

Analyzing the Use of Symbolism in Literature

Welcome to this lesson on analyzing the use of symbolism in literature. Symbolism is a literary device used by authors to represent abstract ideas or concepts through the use of objects, characters, or events. It adds depth and meaning to a piece of literature, making it richer and more interesting to read.

Examples of Symbolism in Literature

Symbolism can take many forms in literature. Here are some examples:

- The green light in F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* symbolizes Gatsby's longing for the past and his desire to be reunited with his lost love, Daisy.
- The scarlet letter in Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* symbolizes both Hester's shame and her strength in the face of adversity.
- The mockingjay pin in Suzanne Collins's *The Hunger Games* symbolizes rebellion against the Capitol and solidarity with the oppressed districts.

Analyzing Symbolism

When analyzing the use of symbolism in literature, it is important to consider the following questions:

- What is the symbol being used to represent?
- How does the symbol contribute to the overall meaning of the work?
- How does the symbol interact with other elements of the story, such as plot, character, and theme?

Practice Questions

1. What is symbolism and why is it used in literature?
2. What are some examples of symbolism in literature that you have read?
3. In *The Great Gatsby*, what does the green light symbolize?
4. In *The Scarlet Letter*, what does the scarlet letter symbolize?
5. In *The Hunger Games*, what does the mockingjay pin symbolize?
6. Why is it important to analyze the use of symbolism in literature?