

2. Symbolism

- Identify symbols within a work.
- Discuss the literal meaning of the “symbol” in the context of the work.
- Explain the symbolism in the larger context of life.
- Analyze the effect or purpose of the symbolism.
- Reflect on the insight gained.

The student example of the symbolic dialectical journal is from “The Scarlet Ibis” by James Hurst.

Symbolism—Literal	Symbolism—Abstract	Effect, Purpose, or Insight
The ibis is literally a tropical bird that has been blown off-course and injured in a storm. The bird dies in the narrator’s yard.	Symbolically the ibis represents Doodle. The ibis, like Doodle, is out of place, fragile, and unique.	The bird, like Doodle, is uncoordinated and struggles mightily. The death of the bird symbolizes and foreshadows the death of Doodle. Using the ibis as a symbol allows the reader to see the beauty of Doodle’s uniqueness and frailty and illustrates his struggle to the end.

Choose four passages from each work you are reading that seem to you to be symbolic (You will have a total of 8 entries).

Analyze it using the format above. Include at least three different symbols per novel.

Journals must be typed. (your journal is actually your written work, but you may put your work into a notebook or folder if you like—you can also generate a table on the computer like the one above, and type directly in to your table. Create a separate table for each book)

