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# EXEMPLAR

Units *&* Lessons

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

**Grade 7**

Grant funded by:

## Lesson 5: Symbolism and Thematic Quotation Analysis – the Feather and the Circle

**Focus Standard(s):** RL.7.2, SL.7.1

**Additional Standard(s):** RL.7.1, L.7.1b

**Estimated Time:** 2-3 days

**Texts:** *Touching Spirit Bear*, Chapters 4-6

**Resources and Materials:**

- Chart Paper
- Markers
- Handout 5.1: Socratic Seminar Resource Packet
- [Anchor Chart](#)
- [Frayer Model Template](#)
- How to teach with the Fish Bowl Method: [Middle School Fish Bowl Discussion](#)
- How to teach with the Socratic Method: [Socratic Seminar](#)
- How to use the [Frayer Model](#)
- LearnZillion’s video [“Revise by Varying Sentence Patterns”](#)
- Video: [Symbols and Symbolism Explained](#)

**Lesson Target(s):**

- Analyze how symbolism develops a theme.
- Participate in a Socratic Seminar (student-led, whole group discussion) in which analysis is made of how the author uses symbolism to reveal or develop the theme. This discussion will create an authentic dialogue, deepening student thinking about the text by forcing them to speak about their thinking and ground it in text based evidence.

**Guiding Question(s):**

- What do the feather and the circle symbolize at this point in the novel? How does this symbolism contribute to the theme?

## Vocabulary

<p><b>Academic Vocabulary:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Socratic seminar</li> <li>• Symbolism</li> <li>• Theme</li> </ul>	<p><b>Instructional Strategies for Academic Vocabulary:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Introduce words with student-friendly definition and pictures</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Model how to use the words in writing/discussion</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Read and discuss the meaning of word in multiple contexts</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Students create pictures/symbols to represent words</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Students write/discuss using the words</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Students act out the words or attach movements to the words</li> </ul>
<p><b>In-ConTEXT Vocabulary:</b> Have students search through the text(s) for words that are unfamiliar to them. If it is a word that has clear context clues, teach students a strategy to determine the meaning of the word from the context clues. See the strategies listed in the “Strategies for Teaching How to Determine Meaning from Context Clues” section.</p>	<p><b>Strategies for Teaching How to Determine Meaning from Context Clues:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Model the CPR context clue strategy.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Use an <a href="#">Anchor Chart</a></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> to model how to use context clues to determine the meaning of words.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Direct Instruction Text Vocabulary:</b> Have students search through the text(s) for words that are unfamiliar to them. If it is a word that does not have clear context clue, use one or more of the strategies listed in the “Instructional Strategies for Direct Instruction Text Vocabulary” section.</p>	<p><b>Instructional Strategies for Direct Instruction Text Vocabulary:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Introduce words with student-friendly definition and pictures</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Model how to use the words in writing/discussion</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Read and discuss the meaning of word in multiple contexts</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Students create pictures/symbols to represent words</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Students write/discuss using the words</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Students act out the words or attach movements to the words</li> </ul>

Symbol	Type of Text and Interpretation of Symbol
	Instructional support and/or extension suggestions for students who are EL, have disabilities, or perform/read well below the grade level and/or for students who and/or a more advanced text for students who perform/read well above grade level
✓	Assessment (Pre-assessment, Formative, Self, or Summative)

## Instructional Plan

### Understanding Lesson Purpose and Student Outcomes:

Students analyze symbolism in the reading and determine how it develops the theme of the text. Participation in a Socratic Seminar will assist students in seeing the relationship between symbolism and the theme. Students will defend their position using text-based evidence.

### Anticipatory Set/Introduction to the Lesson: Teacher-Led Discussion

Display or hold a physical object, such as a ring or a tree, and ask students to discuss what idea this object could represent. Once students provide some answers, present different scenarios/contexts and ask students how this may change what the object represents. For example, a ring in a marriage may represent love and happiness, but in the movie *Lord of the Rings*, it does not represent those ideas.

### Activity 1: Symbolism Mini-Lesson (10-15 minutes)

T: Themes are the author's message/idea about a topic/subject. Symbols are one way the author delivers that message/idea. In other words, symbols both develop and reflect a story's themes, and therefore are chosen carefully by the author. Provide students with a copy of the [Frayer](#) Model Template. Let's watch this [Symbols and Symbolism Explained](#) video to understand more about symbols and themes. As you watch, take notes on the Frayer model to define and provide facts, examples, and non-examples of symbols.

**Note:** If students are not familiar with how to use complete a Frayer model, play the video [Frayer Model](#). Have students share and discuss what they learned from the video.

Have students come up with an object and discuss what it could symbolize in different contexts.

### Activity 2: Socratic Seminar (65-75 minutes)

Direct students to think about the symbolism used in Chapters 4-6, focusing on the feather that is used in the Healing/Hearing Circle for Cole's case and the image of a circle itself.

Distribute **Handout 5.1: Socratic Seminar Packet**. Tell them that they will prepare for the Socratic Seminar by coming up with a "Plan for Discussion" that includes what they plan to talk about, questions they plan on asking, etc. concerning the symbols of the feather and ring. Display and discuss some of the resources from **Handout 5.1: Socratic Seminar Packet** to be used during the seminar. Tell them some questions they may ask and discuss are the following:

1. What idea/concept do you think the feather represents in the circle? Why?

2. What makes a feather a good object for the speaker of the circle to hold? Why do you think it was originally chosen for this purpose in Healing Circles/Circle Justice?
3. Look carefully at how different people in Cole’s circle physically hold or handle the feather. What can that tell us about that character?
4. How does this symbol contribute to the development of a theme?
5. What are some of the ways that “circles” or “rings” appear/feature in our lives and environments? (possible answers: wedding ring, the moon, the sun...)
6. Why do you think the Native Americans chose a circle as the shape to organize this type of meeting around?
7. What could be the deeper implication that this is a Healing Circle or Circle Justice meeting?
8. How does this symbol contribute to the development of a theme?

Have students work with a partner ahead of time to discuss possible answers to these questions.

Have students participate in a 2-circle Socratic Seminar, with each student taking a turn on the inner (discussion) circle and the outer (observing) circle. Have students complete a peer evaluation sheet on one classmate (pre-assigned by the teacher). After the first circle spends 25-30 minutes in discussion about the first symbol, the inner and outer circles will switch places, and the second group will discuss the second symbol for 25-30 minutes.

**Note:** This activity is predicated on the teacher having explicitly taught Speaking/Listening Skills and Strategies along with Socratic Seminar procedures (or Fishbowl Protocol) earlier in the year. If you are not familiar with them, watch How to teach with the Socratic Method: [Socratic Seminar](#) and How to teach with the Fish Bowl Method: [Middle School Fish Bowl Discussion](#) for insight into how to use these 2 methods.

**Activity 3: Symbolism Drawing and Evidence** (10-15 minutes)

Have students draw both symbols on two different sheets of paper. Have students locate and write multiple pieces of text evidence that discusses the symbol. Then have students write on the back how this symbol reveals/develops a theme.

**Activity 4: L.7.1b Practice**

Review previous discussions about how the author in the anchor text uses varying simple, compound, complex, and compound complex sentences to signal differing relationships among ideas. Look at some additional sentences in the recently-read sections of the anchor text or in other texts to discuss how the author continues to do this. If necessary, have students view LearnZillion’s video [“Revise by Varying Sentence Patterns”](#) again. Have them return to their writing in Activity 3 to revise their writing, being sure to choose varying simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences to signal differing relationships among ideas.

- ✓ Check for mastery of standard in their writing. Provide feedback to correct misconceptions and validate understandings.

**Reflection and Closing:**

Have students complete a self-assessment/evaluation based on feedback from the **Handout 5.2: Socratic Seminar Packet**.

- ✓ Read each student's self-evaluation to check for any struggles or misconceptions that may have gone unobserved during the Socratic Seminar.

**Homework**

Continue reading the anchor text as prescribed by the teacher.

## Handout 5.1: Socratic Seminar Packet

### Rules for Socratic Seminar

- Be courteous at all times
- Listen while others are talking
- Support all comments with evidence from the source
- Avoid raising your hand to talk - instead jump in at an appropriate time
- When disagreeing with a previous comment, disagree with the idea rather than attack the person
- Address the group when talking, not the teacher

### I am responsible for...

- Asking questions about what I have read, heard, and seen.
- Asking for clarification of any passage I have read but which I do not understand.
- Being courteous and respectful of my peers.
- Pausing and thinking before I respond to the facilitator's questions or to a comment made by a peer.
- Giving my opinions clearly.
- Making judgments that I can defend with textual evidence.
- Explaining to others how I have inferred an idea by exploring the passage that has led to this conclusion.
- Locating facts and examples in the text that can be cited as evidence for a particular argument.
- Listening attentively and patiently as peers share their ideas.
- Listening critically to others' opinions and taking issue with inaccuracies or illogical reasoning.
- Clarifying information and lending support to a peer's argument.
- Moving the seminar forward with new concepts.
- Maintaining an open mind to a diversity of opinions.
- Listening acutely to a peer's entire position before taking issue with it.
- Searching for connections with previous readings or prior studies.
- Avoiding repetitiveness by developing stronger listening skills.
- Being willing to change my opinion if more information is given or if my reasoning has been flawed.
- Being prepared by having read the text thoroughly and reflectively.
- Having marked key issues from my text so I can identify the evidence.
- Exhibiting mature behavior with patience and self-control.



**After the Discussion: What would you have like to have said in the discussion?**



For training or questions regarding this unit,  
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