

What Is a Symbol?

Part 1

Silently read the following statements about symbols and be prepared to ask a question if you need clarification.

- The word *symbol* is based on a Greek word meaning “to throw together or compare.”
- A symbol is an object, action, or ritual that has meaning beyond itself: the object or action is concrete, and the meaning is abstract.
- Humans, by nature, are symbol makers. Relating abstract realities, such as love, to concrete realities, such as a wedding band or an exchange of wedding vows, gives meaning to our lives.

Part 2

The following objects or actions can be understood as symbols. Explain how each can represent an abstract idea. Use the first example as a model:

Symbol	Abstract Meaning
Fire	action, passion, transformation
Evergreen tree	
The Sign of the Cross	
The color red	
A journey	



