



*Lesson: Interpreting Symbols*

5<sup>th</sup> Grade

**STANDARDS: California**

*Research and Technology*

1.3 Use organizational features of printed text (e.g., [citations](#), end notes, [bibliographic references](#)) to locate relevant information.

1.4 Create simple documents by using electronic media and employing organizational features (e.g., passwords, entry and [pull-down menus](#), word searches, a [thesaurus](#), spell checks).

1.5 Use a thesaurus to identify alternative word choices and meanings.

*Evaluation and Revision*

1.6 Edit and revise manuscripts to improve the meaning and focus of writing by adding, deleting, consolidating, clarifying, and rearranging words and sentences.

**2.0 Writing Applications (Genres and Their Characteristics)**

- a. Using the writing strategies of grade five outlined in Writing Standard 1.0, students:

2.2 Write responses to literature:

- a. Demonstrate an understanding of a literary work.
- b. Support judgments through references to the text and to prior knowledge.
- c. Develop interpretations that exhibit careful reading and understanding.

2.3 Write research reports about important ideas, issues, or events by using the following guidelines:

- a. Frame questions that direct the investigation.
- b. Establish a controlling idea or topic.
- c. Develop the topic with simple facts, details, examples, and explanations.

*Comprehension*

1.1 Ask questions that seek information not already discussed.

1.2 Interpret a speaker's verbal and nonverbal messages, purposes, and perspectives.

1.3 Make inferences or draw conclusions based on an oral report.

*Organization and Delivery of Oral Communication*

1.4 Select a focus, organizational structure, and point of view for an oral presentation.



1.5 Clarify and support spoken ideas with evidence and examples.

1.6 Engage the audience with appropriate verbal cues, facial expressions, and gestures.

### *Analysis and Evaluation of Oral and Media Communications*

1.8 Analyze media as sources for information, entertainment, persuasion, interpretation of events, and transmission of culture.

## **2.0 Speaking Applications (Genres and Their Characteristics)**

2.2 Deliver informative presentations about an important idea, issue, or event by the following means:

- a. Frame questions to direct the investigation.
- b. Establish a controlling idea or topic.
- c. Develop the topic with simple facts, details, examples, and explanations.

2.3 Deliver oral responses to literature:

- b. Articulate an understanding of several ideas or images communicated by the literary work.
- c. Use examples or textual evidence from the work to support conclusions.

## **Literacy: Identifying Symbols in Literature**

**Motivation:** Ask students to identify symbols in their daily life. If necessary, start by defining symbols. Some examples of symbols include the [donkey and the elephant for democrats and republicans](#); road signs that signal curves, crosswalks, and intersections; and different colors representing different sports teams.

**Group Activity:** Watch *Bosch* and *Tibetan Painting in My Studio* in *Painting with Elizabeth Murray*. What symbols does Murray point out? What do these symbols mean? Where do they come from? Are they still meaningful today?

**Independent Activity:** Identify symbols that appear in the literature you are reading in class. Try and find alternative ways in which these concepts are symbolized in other forms of art. How, for example, is fear symbolized in paintings or in music? What about happiness? (You do not have to limit yourself to emotions, but they are fairly easy to work with at this grade level.) You must find at least two alternative places in which the symbol appears, and at least one of them must be something other than a book. Then, develop your own piece of art that includes this symbol. It could be a short story, a



painting, a sculpture, a drawing, or a song. Do not limit yourself to western art and literature. Present your creation and your findings to the class.