

Exercise walk-through

The function of a symbol ■ 7.8

eXercise

You must be able to

- state when a setting becomes symbolic
- name the kinds of abstraction a setting may be associated with
- state the CED's claim about universal associations
- distinguish a place from what it has come to mean

Method — Becoming symbolic

A setting may become symbolic when it is, or comes to be, associated with abstractions such as emotions, ideologies, and beliefs. “Comes to be” allows a place to acquire the association within the text.

Method — Abstractions

Emotions, ideologies and beliefs — not objects. A symbolic setting stands for something that cannot be pointed at.

Method — Universal associations

Over time, some settings have developed certain associations such that they almost universally symbolise particular concepts. “Almost” — the CED does not claim a fixed code.

Method — Place and meaning

A setting keeps working as a place while it symbolises. An analysis that treats the house only as an idea has lost the literal level that makes the symbol persuasive.

Practice 2.1 ■ 2 marks

State when a setting becomes symbolic.

Solution 2.1

Worked steps

when it is, or comes to be, associated with abstractions **B1** such as emotions, ideologies and beliefs **B1**.

Practice 2.2 ■ 3 marks

Name the kinds of abstraction a setting may be associated with.

Solution 2.2

Method: Becoming symbolic

Worked steps

emotions **B1**; ideologies **B1**; beliefs **B1**.

Practice 2.3 ■ 2 marks

A symbolic setting is still a place.

- (a) Explain why this matters.
- (b) State the force of “almost universally”.

Solution 2.3

Method: Becoming symbolic

Worked steps

(a) the setting continues to work as a place **B1**, and the literal level is what makes the symbolic reading persuasive **B1**. (b) the CED does not claim a fixed code of universal meanings **B1**.

Exam-style 3.1 ■ 1 mark

“Comes to be associated” allows a place to acquire its meaning

A within the text

B before writing

C never

D only in poetry

Solution 3.1

Method: Becoming symbolic

A within the text



B before writing

C never

D only in poetry

Worked steps

A. within the text.

Exam-style 3.2 ■ 1 mark

Settings symbolise abstractions such as emotions, ideologies and

A beliefs

B furniture

C dates

D names

Solution 3.2

Method: Becoming symbolic

A beliefs



B furniture

C dates

D names

Worked steps

A. beliefs.

Exam-style 3.3 ■ 1 mark

A student writes only about what a house “represents”.

- (a) State what has been lost.
- (b) Explain why the literal level matters.

Solution 3.3

Method: Place and meaning

Worked steps

(a) the house as an actual place in the story **B1**. (b) the symbolic meaning grows out of what the house literally is and does **B1**, so removing that leaves the reading unsupported **B1**.