

Exercise walk-through

The function of a symbol ■ 8.4

eXercise

You must be able to

- state the CED's claim about symbols and attitude
- explain how the use of a symbol reveals perspective
- distinguish the symbol's meaning from the speaker's use of it
- analyse a symbol as evidence about a speaker

Method — The claim

Symbols in a text and the way they are used may imply that a narrator, character, or speaker has a particular attitude or perspective.

Method — Use reveals perspective

“And the way they are used” is the operative phrase. The same symbol handled with reverence or with contempt tells you about the handler.

Method — Meaning and use

A symbol's meaning is what it stands for; its use is what the speaker does with it. Two speakers can share a symbol and reveal opposite perspectives through how they invoke it.

Method — As evidence

Ask: what does this speaker assume the reader will feel about this symbol, and what does that assumption reveal about them?

Practice 2.1 ■ 2 marks

State the CED's claim about symbols and attitude.

Solution 2.1

Method: The claim

Worked steps

symbols and the way they are used may imply **B1** that a narrator, character or speaker has a particular attitude or perspective **B1**.

Practice 2.2 ■ 2 marks

Distinguish a symbol's meaning from its use.

Solution 2.2

Method: Meaning and use

Worked steps

the meaning is what the symbol stands for **B1**; the use is what the speaker does with it **B1**.

Practice 2.3 ■ 2 marks

A symbol is evidence about a speaker.

- (a) State the question to ask.
- (b) State the operative phrase in the CED's sentence.

Solution 2.3

Worked steps

(a) what the speaker assumes the reader will feel about the symbol **B1** and what that assumption reveals about them **B1**. (b) “and the way they are used” **B1**.

Exam-style 3.1 ■ 1 mark

Symbols may imply that a speaker has a particular

A attitude or perspective

B age

C occupation

D accent

Solution 3.1

Method: The claim

A attitude or perspective



B age

C occupation

D accent

Worked steps

A. attitude or perspective.

Exam-style 3.2 ■ 1 mark

Two speakers using the same symbol may reveal

- A** opposite perspectives
- B** identical views
- C** nothing
- D** the author's opinion

Solution 3.2

Method: Meaning and use

A opposite perspectives



B identical views

C nothing

D the author's opinion

Worked steps

A. opposite perspectives.

Exam-style 3.3 ■ 1 mark

One speaker calls a flag “a rag”; another calls it “the colours”.

- (a) State what differs.
- (b) Explain what each reveals.

Solution 3.3

Worked steps

(a) not the symbol but the use **B1**. (b) “a rag” reduces it to material and denies the loyalty attached **B1**; “the colours” invokes that loyalty as a shared and unquestioned thing **B1**.