

The Scarlet Ibis

by James Hurst

Feature Menu



Background

Introducing the Story



Quickwrite

Literary Focus: Symbols



Vocabulary

Reading Skills: Making
Inferences from Details



Meet the
Writer



Previous

Next

Collection
Menu

Exit

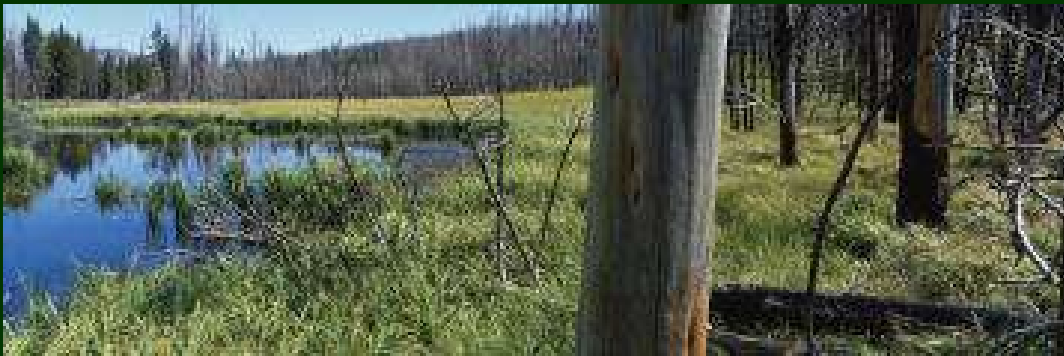
The Scarlet Ibis

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The Scarlet Ibis

Introducing the Story



I thought myself pretty smart at many things . . .



Previous

Next

Feature
Menu

Exit

The Scarlet Ibis

Introducing the Story

In “The Scarlet Ibis” the narrator tells of his experience growing up with his physically disabled brother, Doodle, on a farm in the South.

- The narrator develops a bond with his younger brother and teaches him to walk. But he learns a tragic lesson when he pushes Doodle too hard.

I did not know then that pride is a wonderful, terrible thing, a seed that bears two vines, life and death.

[End of Section]



The Scarlet Ibis

Literary Focus: Symbols

A **symbol** is an object, event, person, or animal that stands for something more than itself. ▾

- Symbols are all around you in your everyday life. Their special meanings have been handed down over time.



The Scarlet Ibis

Literary Focus: Symbols

In literature, symbols add deeper levels of meaning to a work. ▼

- A writer might take a regular object or event and make it stand for some human concern. ▼
- Sometimes a symbol is associated with a particular character. ▼

Symbols speak to the reader's emotions and imagination. They make stories memorable.



The Scarlet Ibis

Literary Focus: Symbols

In "The Scarlet Ibis," you'll notice similarities and links between one character and a bird.

- Pay attention to how the author makes a symbolic connection between the character and the bird.
- This symbolism can help deepen your understanding of the character.



[End of Section]



Previous

Next

Feature
Menu

Exit

The Scarlet Ibis

Reading Skills: Making Inferences from Details



As you read a story, you make **inferences**, or educated guesses, about what the writer is trying to say.

- You can base your inferences on your own prior knowledge and on evidence from the text.

Prior Knowledge

- about how stories work
- about your own life experiences



Evidence from Text

- descriptions
- setting
- dialogue



Inference



The Scarlet Ibis

Reading Skills: Making Inferences from Details



One way to make better inferences is to notice important details in the story.

- Details may seem insignificant at first, but most writers choose details carefully to help convey a certain meaning or message.
- Colors, seasons, names, times, objects, animals, and clothing—almost any little thing can help you make inferences about meaning.



The Scarlet Ibis

Reading Skills: Making Inferences from Details



Pay attention to details as you read "The Scarlet Ibis," and practice making inferences. Keep track of the little things:

trees

colors

flowers

animals

gestures

weather

What larger meanings can you infer from these details?

[End of Section]



Previous

Next

Feature
Menu

Exit