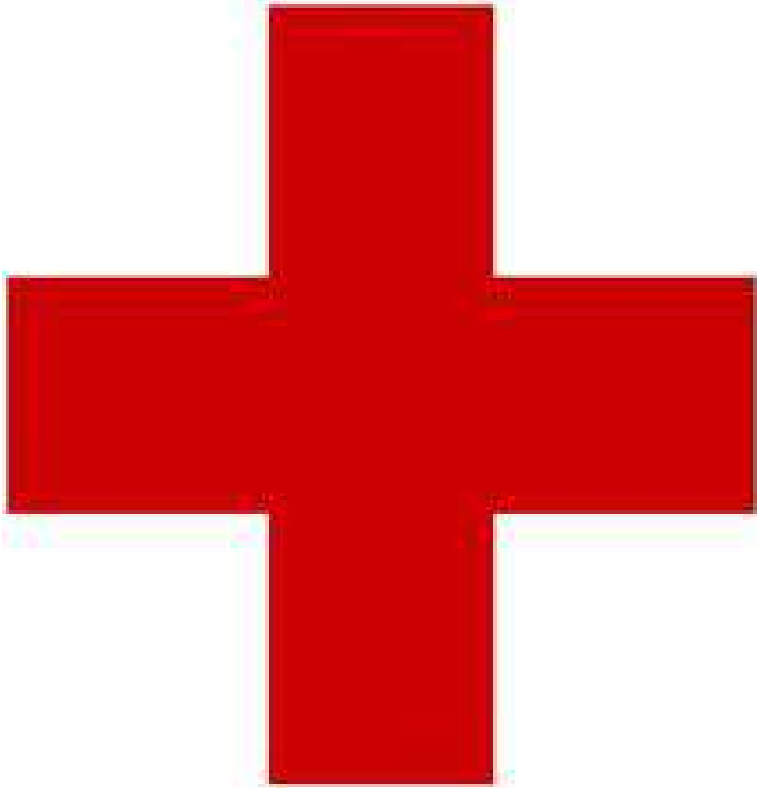




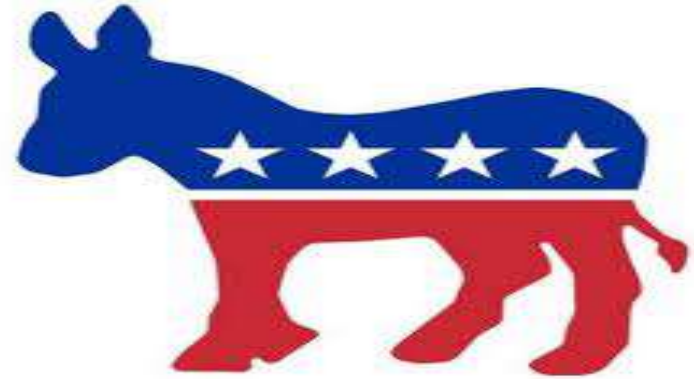
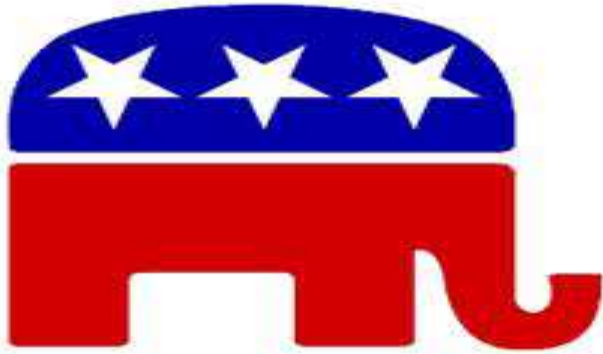
Symbols and Motifs



Equivalent Symbols

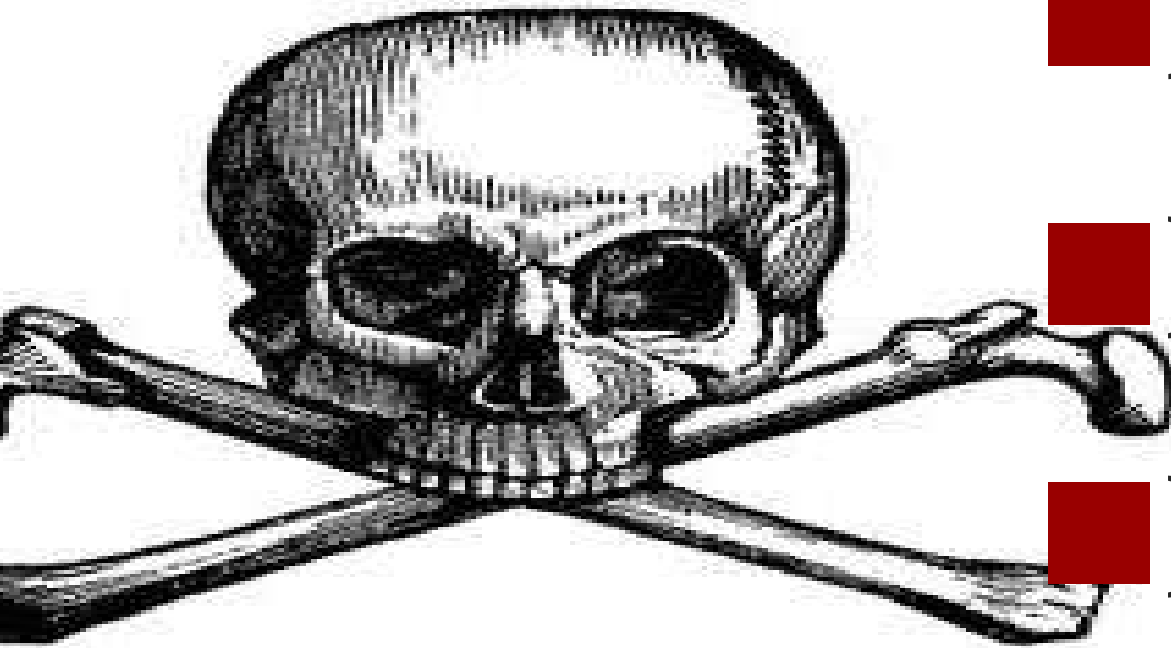








Symbols: multiple meanings



■ Death

■ Poison

■ Pirates!



Symbol: etymology

- Derived from the Greek verb “symballein” and the related noun “symbolon”
- Symballein = “to put together”
- Symbolon = “mark,” “taken” or “sign.” (scribd.com)

Symbol: definitions

- a sign, shape or object which is used to represent something else. *A heart shape is the symbol of love.*
- something that is used to represent a quality or idea. *Water, a symbol of life, recurs as an image throughout her poems.*
- a number, letter or sign used in mathematics, music, science, etc. *The symbol for oxygen is O₂.*
- An object can be described as a symbol of something else if it seems to represent it because it is connected with it in a lot of people's minds. *The private jet is a symbol of wealth.* (dictionary.cambridge.org)

Symbols in Literature

- A symbol is the use of a concrete object to represent an abstract idea.
- Occurs when an object, person, or situation represents an abstract idea in addition to a literal meaning.
- Symbols may appear in literature in a number of different ways: an object, a word, a figure of speech, an action, an event, or a character.
- Over time, certain symbols have become 'conventional' or 'traditional' literary symbols because they have an agreed upon meaning, so they can be used to suggest universal ideas. (scribd.com)

Conventional symbols in literature: Seasons

Spring



birth, new beginning

Autumn



decline, aging, nearing death

Summer



maturity, knowledge

Winter



death, sleep, hibernation, or stagnation

Conventional symbols in literature: Colors

Blood
Passion
Emotion

Danger
Daring

■ Death
■ Ignorance
■ Evil

■ Innocence
■ Purity
■ Enlightenment
■ Light

■ Inexperience
■ Immaturity
■ Hope
■ New Life

Conventional symbols in literature: Walls



- Barriers between people
- both physical and mental

Conventional symbols in literature: Key



- The power to let in or shut out
- To hold a key is to have been initiated

Conventional symbols in literature: Ladder



- Ascension
- Realization of potential

Conventional symbols in literature: Journey



- Quest for truth
- Life itself

Conventional symbols in literature: Storms



- Violent human emotions

Conventional symbols in literature: Water



- Origin of life
- Washes away guilt
- Regeneration

Conventional Symbols in Literature: Animals



■ Peace

■ Purity

Conventional Symbols in Literature: Animals



■ slyness

■ cleverness

Conventional Symbols in Literature: Animals



■ death

■ destruction

Conventional Symbols in Literature: Animals



■ power

■ pride

Conventional Symbols in Literature: Animals



■ pride

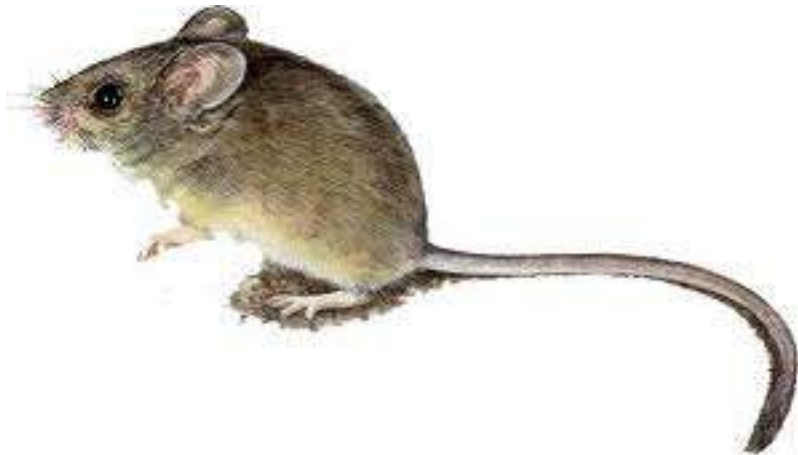
■ vanity

Conventional Symbols in Literature: Animals



- temptation
- evil

Conventional Symbols in Literature: Animals



■ shyness

■ weakness

Conventional Symbols in Literature: Animals



■ wisdom

Conventional Symbols in Literature: Animals



- sacrifice
- child of God

Motif



Motif



Motif

- a recurring thematic element
- a recurring object, concept, or structure in a work of literature
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RkcWPzYAqkk>

So what's the difference between symbol & motif?

Symbol

- Is something concrete that stands for something abstract
- Appears only once

Motif

- Can be concrete OR abstract
- Recurs again and again

Motif

Motifs (i.e., recurring thematic elements) are quite prevalent; they may have served as mnemonic devices when the tales were still passed on orally. Examples of common motifs include

- journeys through dark forests
- enchanted transformations
- magical cures or other spells
- encounters with helpful animals or mysterious creatures
- foolish bargains
- impossible tasks
- clever deceptions
- the use of the number 3

The magic, when it appears, is always greeted by the characters with matter-of-factness. Characters acknowledge magic as a normal part of life without surprise or disbelief.