

Name: _____

Suspense & Symbolism Study Guide

ANSWER KEY

1. What is the definition of symbolism?

Symbolism occurs when a concrete object represents an abstract idea. The use of specific objects, images, numbers, characters, and/or settings to represent abstract ideas present in a story.

2. What are some ways to determine if something is a symbol in a book or story? (Think about the video we watched on symbolism – look at your notes!)

- **Watch for something that stands out or is repeated numerous times**
- **Find something it resembles**
- **Examine the author's attitude towards it**

3. Give **three examples** of symbols from the stories we read/watched together and describe what they represent. Be sure to back up with evidence from the text. **Evidence may vary, but should include quotes or specific examples from the text.**

Symbol	Meaning
The monkey's paw	In "The Tale of the Monkey's Paw," the monkey's paw could represent greed, fate, or even death. For example, the Whites used the monkey's paw to wish for 300 pounds, even if though they didn't need it. By doing so, they eventually lost their son, showing how their greediness cost their son his life.
The elevator	In "The Elevator," the elevator could represent Martin's fear. The elevator is the setting that brings Martin the most anxiety and is a large reason why Martin is so scared of the fat lady.
The black cat	In "The Black Cat," the black cat could represent death. The black cat brought about its own death and then the second black cat was the cause of the narrator's wife's death as well as the narrator's.

4. What is the definition of suspense?

A state or feeling of excited or anxious uncertainty about what may happen.

5. What are the **four** elements necessary for suspense?

1. **Reader empathy**
2. **Reader concern**
3. **Impending danger**
4. **Escalating tension**

6. What are **three** of the methods that authors use to create suspense?

1. **Time constraints**
2. **Worry**
3. **Isolation**

(Other methods are mentioned in the notes)

7. What are the **four** major types of conflict? Provide examples of each. (Note: Person vs. Fate/Other is NOT one)

1. Person vs. **Person**
 - **Two siblings get into an argument at home.**
 - **Narrator from “The Tell-Tale Heart” and the old man with the creepy eye.**
2. Person vs. **Self**
 - **Deciding whether to go out and get in trouble with your parents or stay in and finish your homework.**
 - **Martin deciding whether or not to take the stairs or the elevator.**
3. Person vs. **Society**
 - **Unhappy with the laws of the government, a group of people decide to peacefully protest to make change.**
4. Person vs. **Nature**
 - **A natural disaster destroys a town, forcing the citizens to rebuild and start over.**

8. What tragic childhood events influenced Poe’s writing?

He was orphaned at a young age (both of his parents died); he was separated from his siblings; his high school sweetheart married someone who was wealthier and better suited for her than Poe.

9. How would you describe Poe’s style of writing? Explain with examples.

Poe’s style of writing can be described as being dark and suspenseful. He creates this through his use of repetition, suspenseful plots, and creepy imagery. Examples will vary, but should highlight Poe’s writing style.

10. What are some of the theories surrounding Poe’s death?

- **Rabies**
- **Carbon monoxide poisoning**
- **Alcoholism**
- **Gang fight (due to political differences)**
- **Poison**
- **Etc.**