

Symbolism - Comprehension & Analysis Activity

USING JASON REYNOLDS'
"ERASER TATTOO"



Nouvelle ELA

SYMBOLISM ACTIVITY

Using Jason Reynolds' "Eraser Tattoo"



Comprehension & Analysis

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SYMBOLISM: "Eraser Tattoo"

PURPOSE	<p>"Eraser Tattoo" by Jason Reynolds is a fictional short story about two teenagers in a relationship who are facing a challenge: one of them is moving away.</p> <p>This short story serves as an effective tool for analyzing symbolism within a story.</p>
MATERIAL	<p>"Eraser Tattoo" – this provided link may require you to sign up for Common Lit, which is a free educational resource that I HIGHLY recommend and use frequently. You can opt to find it through another free means with a quick online search.</p>
OBJECTIVE(S)	<p>Students will determine and analyze the figuratively symbolic meanings within the short story (RL.9-10.1).</p>
SUGGESTED LESSON	
BELL RINGER (7-10 min)	<p>Use the corresponding bell ringer prompt included in this resource (access the editable version here). This includes a mini-introduction to the literary element and a quick practice for students to apply their learning of this literary element as they read the short story.</p> <p>Optional: Have students share and discuss with a partner or in small groups.</p>
	<p>Conduct a first read of the short story. You can read this aloud as a class, listen to the audio reading aloud, have students read in pairs, groups, or independently. You know your students best.</p> <p>Complete the worksheet* and have students work through their literary analysis. This can be completed as a guided practice, a group analysis, or independent practice.</p>

Suggested ~50-minute lesson plan outline included complete with extension ideas, standard(s), and linked materials.



Symbolism uses **symbols**—a person, an object, an image, words, a situation, etc.—to **represent meaning beyond the literal**.

In other words, symbols represent one thing while communicating a deeper meaning.

Example: The **image** below is **literally** an open door. Now, let's say we have been reading a short story about a character who has felt trapped in a job they hate and a love
fill th

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PRACTICE: Choose **one** of the three items below and give it **symbolic meaning** by **creating a story** behind it (see the 2 previous examples for reference).



necklace



A trophy



A key

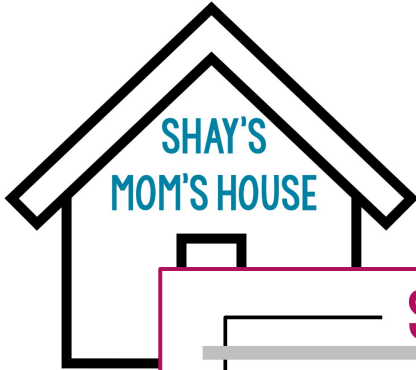
Includes an editable bell ringer activity that introduces the literary element & provides students with a guided practice opportunity



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SYMBOLISM: "Eraser Tattoo"

Instructions: For each of the 3 symbols below, cite a quote, then analyze the quote for its symbolic meaning.

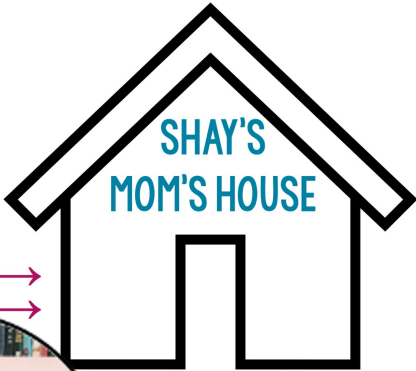


WHAT DOES THE HOUSE SYMBOLIZE TO SHAY'S MOM?

QUOTE	ANALYSIS
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WHAT DOES THE HOUSE SYMBOLIZE TO SHAY'S MOM?

QUOTE	ANALYSIS
"[Shay's mother] couldn't stop crying. This had been her home for over twenty years [...] This was where Shay took her first steps" (Reynolds).	To Shay's mom, the house symbolizes milestone memories of raising her daughter.

WHAT DOES THE ERASER TATTOO SYMBOLIZE TO DANTE & SHAY?

Students read the short story, then analyze quotes for symbolism.

Suggested answers included.



