

The Scarlet Ibis

Writing Assignment

Authors often embed symbols in their stories to enhance a theme and/or a character's traits. Hurst uses birds, images/references to death, and numerous shades of red as symbols to enrich the meaning of his story, "The Scarlet Ibis." Follow the steps below as you create a well-developed paragraph in which you examine how Hurst uses symbolism to support his theme/message to the reader.

Step 1: Why do you think Hurst wrote this story? What larger message was he trying to convey to us? Write your idea down here, making sure it is a bold and arguable statement:

(Congratulations! You just wrote the hardest part of your paragraph's topic sentence.)

Step 2: Looking at the grid you completed yesterday, choose one of the three categories - birds, death/dying, or the color red. This will be the over-arching symbol category that you will discuss in your paragraph.

Step 3: After you've chosen one of the categories, look at all six pieces of concrete detail you found in the story yesterday. Circle the two that would work best as support for the thesis statement you wrote in Step 1.

Step 4: Start writing your paragraph. Begin with your topic sentence from Step 1. Then, build supporting ideas/arguments based on the two pieces of text you selected in Step 3. Include lots of rich, deep analysis of the quoted material. Be sure to convey how Hurst uses symbols to enrich the reader's understanding of the story and to support his larger theme. Don't forget to include a closing sentence.

Step 5: Go back and carefully proofread your paragraph, fixing any errors in grammar, punctuation, or flow. Don't forget to include an original title at the top of your paragraph.

