

Assessment

Nonfiction: Symbols, Maps, and Art: Read to Learn

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Mapmakers use symbols to represent information about areas. A mapmaker uses lines to communicate. Those lines may represent streets; they could stand for borders. A border divides two places, and it is a division in the real world that mapmakers represent with lines. On a map of the United States you see lines marking the boundaries of the states. Usually they are black lines that show **historic divisions** set up long ago. There have been battles about borders in history; territory has been something that countries have fought about throughout history.

Mapmakers use color as symbols. They use blue to show water, and other colors, too. A relief map shows elevation and the shape of terrain with colors. Mapmakers use pictures as symbols—those pictures are called icons. They, the colors, and the lines are all symbolic representations of something that is real. The mapmaker may put a picture of an airplane to show an airport, or a train to represent a train station. The mapmaker is like an artist. The map **illuminates** the place the mapmaker shows.

An artist communicates about places with colors and lines just as a mapmaker does. Many artists use symbols to help people understand places. A painter may put a dark cloud in a painting. That dark cloud stands for a problem. A painter may use color as a symbol, such as yellow to show happiness or gold to show a person is rich. The painter may put a rainbow in a painting, not just to have the colors but as a symbol. It shows that the storm is over, that there is calm and probably a better time. It is an **image** that has been part of art for centuries.

There are some maps that are art, they represent places and are special maps. They're not used to find locations but to appreciate places. Artists make them. About 100 years ago an artist made a bedcover. It was made for people to use. It was special. It was not like most bedcovers. The artist sewed it as a big map. It showed the United States. The artist used black thread to show borders and brown thread to show routes. Routes are ways people travel between places—for example, you have a route you take to school. The bedcover map showed routes people travel across the United States.

There is another cloth map called *Map of the Middle West*. This **textile** shows some states. It uses blue to show water and black to show borders. It uses icons to show special features of different states. It has a corn plant on Illinois, which is a state with much agriculture. That plant is a symbol. It shows that corn is important. It has other symbols. It shows many things. It was not designed as a teaching tool, but it does illuminate our country.

When you paint a picture, you can use symbols to communicate ideas, and you can use colors to show feelings. One common symbol in art is the use of a dove, and while it is a bird, it really is included in the painting to communicate an idea. It represents peace. You could paint a rainbow to show happiness or a big sun to communicate joy.

You could create a pictorial map of the United States. You could use color to show climate, shading states with cold climates gray and shading warm states red. People could learn from your map about American environments. You could add more symbols. You could show many facts with pictures. And you could show **facets** of this country. You could show the kinds of resources we have. You could show the ways people use the land. It would be a map. And it would be art, too.

Directions: Choose the best answer for each question

1. What does **facet** mean in the passage?

- a. art
- b. part
- c. symbol
- d. map

2. What does **historic divisions** mean in the passage?

- a. state boundaries
- b. old maps
- c. black lines
- d. geography

3. What does **textile** mean in the passage?

- a. work of art
- b. colorful map
- c. cloth art
- d. symbolic art

4. What does **illuminate** mean in the passage?

- a. picture
- b. symbol
- c. show
- d. explain

5. *Write your own answer to this question.*

What does **image** mean in the passage?

Questions developed for Chicago Public Schools by CUE, 2009.

TEACHER NOTES: Develop Students' Skills: Exercise Thinking

These questions have not been validated, so decisions about student's achievement should not be made based on their responses. They are intended to exercise skills. Recommended activities include: students work in pairs to choose the best response; give students the questions without the responses so they generate their own answers; students make up additional questions; students make up questions like these for another passage.

Answers: *You can remove this answer key and then give it to students and ask them to figure out the basis for the correct response.*

Item	1	2	3	4
Answer	b	a	c	d

Question 5 is open-ended. Here is a suggested response.

5. Image means a visual symbol.

Skill: Infer Meaning of Word from Context 7th Grade Assessment

Fiction: My Painting

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I wanted to show people how I felt about my new country. My family had moved here 5 years ago when I was just 7 years old. When we came I did not know any English. Everything was novel, and I was surprised every day. I had lived in a **remote** village far from the city. Now I was living in a city where there were so many people, every day was a discovery about living in an urban area in America.

We would take the elevated train downtown. There we viewed buildings that **noted** architects had designed. These architects were so famous that people all over the world knew their names, but I had never heard of them before. I looked up and was astonished at how immense the buildings were. I wondered how they had been constructed to reach what looked like a mile into the sky. Then I saw a construction site where I observed workmen putting up a steel framework, and I knew that the tall buildings had those strong frames.

I went to a school that was bigger than my whole village. More than 1,000 students go to the school. I remember my first day was full of trepidation. The principal was friendly, and the teacher was supportive, but I was **mystified**. I could not understand what the teacher and students were saying. Then another student came up to me during lunch. She said hello in Russian, and I was so glad to hear a familiar language from her that I felt much better.

The teacher arranged for her to sit next to me for the rest of the school year to help me comprehend what they were saying. I appreciated this special support, and she was my official translator. But I wanted to learn English; I wanted to be independent, so every day after school we would go to my home. She would help me learn English. To **reciprocate**, my mother would cook her family dinner. Once a week they would come to dinner and we would have long conversations. We would try hard to learn English, so instead of Russian everyone would converse in English.

Now I have learned English, and I have learned so much about the United States, and still I discover new insights all the time. I will put some symbols in my painting that show how I feel about this land. I want to communicate that it is a land of helpful people and a land of many heritages. It is a land of collaboration. People here work together to contribute to progress. I'm thinking of putting a flag in the background and then putting people holding hands in the foreground. I'll make a sketch first and then I will paint it.

Making a painting is a lot like writing an essay. First you think of the idea you want to **express**. Then you think of ways to communicate that idea. I think my painting will be a great way to tell people how I feel about my new homeland.

Directions: Choose the best answer for each question

6. What does **remote** mean in the passage?

- a. small
- b. distant
- c. urban
- d. village

7. What does **noted** mean in the passage?

- a. architect
- b. famous
- c. urban
- d. surprising

8. What does **mystified** mean in the passage?

- a. learned
- b. smart
- c. ready
- d. confused

9. What does **reciprocate** mean in the passage?

- a. return
- b. remember
- c. respond
- d. recall

10. Write your own answer to this question.

What does **express** mean in the passage? How do you know?

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Answers: You can remove this answer key and then give it to students and ask them to figure out the basis for the correct response.

Item	6	7	8	9
Answer	b	b	d	a

Question 10 is open-ended. Here is a suggested response.

10. Express means communicate. The meaning is clear because it is about how painting is like writing.