

LITERARY MOVEMENTS

SYMBOLISM

• Symbolism:-

This movement developed during the beginning of 20th Century. This was a reaction against naturalism (Scientific and Objective manner) and realism.

Reaction against the description and objectivity of Realism and Scientific tendency of Naturalism.

• Origin:-

The term symbol is derived from the Greek language. In Greek, there is a verb "Symbolon" which means "mark" or "sign".

• General Definition:-

Symbol is an object, animate or inanimate which represents

or stands for something.

Example:-

• Dove is a symbol for peace, Rose for beauty, Lion for strength.

→ Actions and gestures are also symbolic.

e.g.: - • Raised arm stands for surrender.

• A clinched fist symbolizes anger.

→ Symbols were already used in Greek and Romantic poetry by poets like

Edmund Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton, John Donne etc during 16th and 17th century.

Main Uses of Symbolism

→ Symbolism gives a writer freedom to add Double level of meaning to this work.

→ Literal meaning is self evident and symbolic meaning

is unable to be understood easily as things are said indirectly through the use of symbols.

→ It gives reader an opportunity to brood over and fetch the meaning himself.

→ It provides reader an insight into the author's mind and allows reader to dive deep in to the deeper philosophical meaning suggested by author's.

→ In Symbolism meanings are suggested indirectly.

Definition of Symbolism

Carlyle

"In Symbolism there is concealment yet revelation."

Explanation:-

Some things are closed and locked but still

it expresses something very important.

This movement developed in France in 1880's.

Gain popularity with the publication of Jean More's Manifesto of Le Figaro in 1886.

Later became more popular in the field of painting and theatre.

It influenced American and European literature in the beginning of the 20th century.

Symbolism tried to explore subjective or personal experiences and sensations through suggestive use of symbolized language.

They through their short / few number of words or sentence structure tries to express deeper philosophical as well as romantic experiences.

• Major Functions of

Symbols:-

● Symbols have the power to express the most complex thoughts.

● They can express the things in less number of words and images.

● They convey some hidden meanings which are more serious and appealing.

Use of Symbolism in Literature:-

1. In symbolist literature meanings are suggested in an indirect manner they are not named once you name something it is likely to be destroyed but when you suggest something it is open ended and that's why it is impermanent, it is perceptual. zoya (perpetual).

2. Novelist, poets convey

his vision, philosophy of life, to express his thoughts and ideas the artist can use four mediums of expression such as

- (i) Verbal (speech)
- (2) Structure (Language)
- (3) Gestures
- (4) Symbols

3. When the ideas are complex thoughts, Philosophical ideas in literature.

• Symbolist Views:-

- They think that absolute truth could only be found within, describe truth in form of symbols and metaphors.
- They find truth within themselves. (through Symbols and metaphors).
- They are closely associated with impressionism (we cannot see real truth, we can see

it by light which is reflected
in our eyes.)

⇒ Work Symbolist Movement

was published by Arthur
Symons after this work
movements came into being.

Main Practitioner of Symbolism:-

- Jean Mores published **Symbolist Manifesto** and laid out the goals of symbolist authors.
- W-B Yeats, T-S Eliot, James Joyce, Virginia Woolf.
- All used symbols and metaphors to convey the idea.
- W-B Yeats famous for symbols **Gyre**.
- Images and symbols conveyed become more important.
- Edgar Allan Poe's

(poetic theory) **showcase**

the importance of symbols.

- **W.B Yeats** who himself a known Symbolist of English poetry rightly opines that

"Symbolist gives ~~dumb~~ things voices and bodiless things bodies"

- Authors use tools to use symbols in their works.
 - They use figures of speech like Simile, Metaphor, allegory.

Modern Writers have used numerous Symbols in their works:-

Following writers used numerous symbols in their works

- ✓
- (i) **Earnest Hemingway** used symbols in his work **"Old Man and the Sea".**
(Novel)

- 1) T.S Eliot in "The Wasteland"
- 2) Emily Bronte in "The Wuthering Heights"
- 3) Virginia Woolf "To the Lighthouse"
- 4) W.B Yeats in poem "Sailing to Byzantium".
- 5) Franz Kafka in "Metamorphosis"

- Examples of Symbols in English Literature:-

"A Rainbow" by William Shakespeare.

My heart leaps up
when I behold, A
beautiful Rainbow in the
sky.

Here Rainbow is a symbol
of Hope and General well being.

"As you like it" by
William Shakespeare

All the world's

stage, and all the Men
and women merely
players.

The world is symbolically
presented as a stage. Man
and women are presented as
the actors performing their
respective roles.

"Fire and Ice" by
"Robert Frost"

In this poem fire
symbolizes destructive emotions
such as **jealousy** and **anger**.

Ice in the poem, symbolizes
hate and **loneliness**.

"Night" by "Elie Wiesel"

The concept of night
is used throughout the book
to symbolize **death** and
darkness.

• Types:-

There are three types of
Symbolism:-

Symbolism

1. Through Physical object
2. Through Character
3. Through event

1. Through Physical Object:-

Most often, physical objects
are used to symbolize
an idea or concept, as a way
of pointing the reader towards
some of basic themes that a
work is dealing with.

2. Through Character:-

Sometimes, character
themselves can serve as
symbols of a particular
virtue or vice, or of political
ideology.

3. Through Events:-

Events can also be symbolic. For example, while a character's long, wild hair might symbolize a period of youth or innocence, a scene in which the character chops off his/her long hair might symbolizes a loss of innocence.