



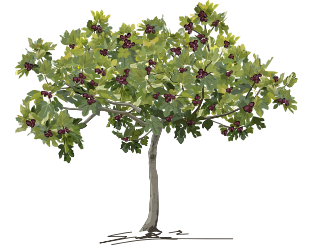
## ROLL OF THUNDER, HEAR MY CRY: EXPLORING SYMBOLS

**Symbolism** is a literary device that uses symbols, such as words, colors, objects, or places, to represent other ideas or concepts. Authors use symbolism to add emotion, connect themes, define characters, and add significance to the story.

Consider the importance of the following symbols in *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*. What deeper meaning does each bring to the story? Choose three symbols and complete the chart below. An example has been done for you.

- school bus
- Sunday clothes
- Wallace store
- books
- fig tree

- Uncle Hammer's car
- Stacey's coat
- Jeremy's flute
- fire
- weather



Symbol	Meaning	Explanation
land	independence	Many Black families in the area are sharecroppers, meaning that they're indebted to the land owners. Because the Logan family owns their own land, they are not indebted to anyone else.
school bus	power and freedom	The white children get to ride the bus to school while the Logan children and their classmates have to walk, no matter how far they live from school. The white children are appalled when their school bus breaks down and they're told to walk home, as if walking is beneath them.
fig tree	the Logan family	Papa describes the fig tree as having "roots that run deep," and he tells Cassie that the fig tree persists even in the face of challenges. The Logan family never gives up, just like the fig tree. He also says that the fig tree (the Logan family) belongs just as much as the oak and walnut trees (the white people).
books	oppression and hope	The worn-out school books represent oppression because the students at Great Faith wouldn't otherwise have books—they're told to be grateful for the chance to have the books. At Christmas, the Logan children receive brand-new books, which represent hope. The family values books and the lessons they teach.