

First Last

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**A Sample Three  
Paragraph  
Essay**

Symbolism in a City

An author has many tools at his or her disposal. For example, he or she may use a heart or a rose to metaphorically depict the beauty of love, or light and dark imagery to help readers imagine a conflict between good and evil. These tools help to bring simple words on the page to life in a way that might not be possible without them. Similarly, in the short story, “The Fall of the City” the author uses a great deal of symbolism to take a simple, child’s tool and infuse it with much more meaning. By writing symbolically, Teddy’s imaginary world comes to represent different aspects of his life; namely, the tumultuous relationship he has with his aunt and uncle, his desire to be recognized, and his loss of innocence. This symbolism brings Teddy’s world to life and reveals the realism of the story.

The first use of symbolism found in the story is that the imaginary wars Teddy holds are representative of his battle-like relationship with his aunt and uncle. In Teddy’s real life, his aunt and uncle are abusive to him, and so they become enemies to Upalia in his imagination. In fact, Teddy’s uncle’s “round, florid face [is imagined to be] Silka, Duke of Anders” (132). Teddy imagines that his uncle is actually Upalia’s enemy because he has been treated so poorly. The kingdom of Upalia, therefore, represents a safe place for Teddy to escape the “attacks” of his guardians. Readers can imagine how challenging Teddy’s life is through this use of symbolism. A second similarity is how King Theodore, the Upalian king, is a symbol of Teddy’s want for love and recognition. Since Teddy has grown up in a very hostile environment in which he is

either ignored or mistreated, he creates his beloved king, and names him after himself. This again shows how Teddy's imaginary world represents something more than his real world, and again reminds the audience of the severity of his struggle. Finally, the destruction of the city of Upalia is representative of Teddy's loss of innocence. Here, in his kingdom, Teddy is able to imagine and create, holding on to his childhood purity. However, when his uncle mocks him, Teddy's innocence is destroyed: "The city was how he had left it. Yet everything had changed" (133). Teddy then destroys his city, thereby destroying his innocence and a large part of his childhood.

Clearly, "The Fall of the City" is filled with symbolism. Teddy's war-like relationship with his aunt and uncle is represented by the wars in Upalia, his desire for love and respect is represented in King Theodore's symbolic power, and the destruction of city itself represents the loss of Teddy's innocence. When the author might have depicted Teddy's pain without symbolism, using it brings the story to life. In doing so, the audience remembers how one's own childhood seemed so real, even if no one could understand.