

Name _____

Date _____

Raggedy CHAN

Understanding Symbolism in Literature Answer Key

Symbolism in literature is where the author uses characters, places or situations to represent, or stand for, something else. The story of *Raggedy Chan* is really two stories in one: There is the fairytale told to Emma by Auntie Gracie, and then there is the cultural story that touches on the hardships that all immigrants to America have to endure. Despite all these hardships, immigrants today still come to America. Author Camille Piccott uses symbolism in *Raggedy Chan* to communicate the never-ending hope generated by the United States to people all over the world.

Now that we have discussed **symbolism** in class, write in 1 sentence describing what each of these symbols really means

1. Raggedy Sam: Raggedy Sam represents “Uncle Sam,” the national personification of the United States. Who better to welcome Raggedy Chan to America?

2. Yao-chi gives her name to Tiger Dragon to take back to Queen Mother for safe-keeping. When Yao-chi releases her name, what does it symbolize?

In order to assimilate into American culture, many immigrants gave up their native names and took American names.

3. The golden gate through which Raggedy Chan follows Raggedy Sam: This gate represents the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco. San Francisco was the city where most Asian immigrants entered America.

4. Raggedy Chan, with great pain and agony, receives new eyes: After immigrants have been in America for a while, they begin to see and do things in the American way.

5. Raggedy Dan’s (hot dog vendor) treatment of Raggedy Chan: The United States has a history of racism. Many immigrants were, and still are, mistreated.

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6. The truck that Raggedy Chan buys is red: Red is a very lucky color for Chinese (many good luck symbols for Chinese are red).

7. Raggedy Stan's (the car salesman) initial treatment of Raggedy Chan: An example of America's prejudice against people whose skin happens to be different than the mainstream.

8. The Pern-yi caterpillars replace Raggedy Chan's skin: Raggedy Chan thinks that if she can change her skin and look more like the Jung-wu, she will not be a target for racism . If she is not discriminated against for being different, she will be able to purchase a car and continue her search for Winged Dragon.

9. Paul Bunyan and Babe, the blue ox: They represent all the hope, promise and goodness that America represents. If everyone was "bad" here in the United States, then no one would want to come or stay here. Because of the hope and promise, many people today want to come here to live, often risking their lives to get here.

10. The death of Drought Fury: The death of Drought Fury symbolizes the triumph of good over evil, as well as the end of the drought on Kunlun.

11. The disintegrating of the orb that carried the name of Yao-chi: Even though Raggedy Chan is back in Kunlun, she is not the same as before she left. During the time she was hunting for Winged Dragon, she endured both physical and mental changes. Kunlun may be the same, but she is not. She cannot live there anymore.
