**Literary Guidepost/Archetype Bellringer Practice #4:**

**Symbolism:** a one-to-one correspondence is an allegory (the object can represent one thing/idea)—a true symbol may represent many ideas, adding richness to the text, and multiple possibilities. However, it is NOT true that a symbol can mean whatever you want it to mean. Your identification of a symbol must be disciplined by the text; in other words, you must have real evidence from the text related to that symbol to prove your point.

**Literary Example:** In Joseph Heller’s *Catch-22*, Milo’s chocolate covered cotton could symbolize a number of ideas. Milo’s monopoly on the Egyptian cotton market left his syndicate with a boundless surplus, and he is trying to find other uses to sell it for. It could be showing how profit motive far surpasses customer satisfaction and even product safety. It also erodes at the idea that a syndicate is equally beneficial to all of its members, as Milo tries to peddle inedible and disgusting food to them. The chocolate covered cotton may also symbolize the redundancy of commercialism and the creation of completely unusable products.

**Questions to consider to complete your bellringer**:

1. Does the lens of the viewer/reader focus on an object with great detail? If it is repeatedly and intensely illustrated, it could be a symbol.

2. Does the object reappear? A recurring image may be symbolic.

3. Does the object come into contact with the characters? Effects on character development or arc could be symbolic.

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