

Name \_\_\_\_\_

“The Scarlet Ibis”  
By James Hurst

**Symbolism – use of symbols in literature**

Symbol- a person, place, thing, or event that represents both itself and a larger idea or feeling

**Diction- the author’s choice of words**

**Denotation – the literal or primary meaning of a word, in contrast to the feelings or ideas that the word suggests**

**Connotation- the social meaning; what the words suggests beyond the dictionary meaning (denotation)**

For the word below, explain what the word literally means and also what the word could suggest in our culture.

Word	Denotation	Connotation
brother		

**Setting**

<b>Geographical place</b>	
<b>Historical year</b>	
<b>Physical place</b>	
<b>Atmosphere</b>	
<b>World events</b>	

Name:

Period:

# *The Scarlet Ibis* – James Hurst



**1. PREREADING:** Are you the oldest, youngest, middle or only child? What is your relationship like with your brother(s) and sister(s)? \_\_\_\_\_

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**2. PARAGRAPHS 1 & 2:** In the beginning of the story, the author tells us that it was as the seasons were changing, and he writes, “It’s strange that all this is so clear to me, now that time has had its way.” This story’s setting is in the (CIRCLE ONE):      **PAST**      or      **PRESENT**

**3. PARAGRAPHS 1, 2 & 3:** The author repeats the words “bleeding” to mean “red”. Go back to those paragraphs and circle the words. List 5 objects or expressions that you can think of that are “red” or include “red.”

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

**4. PARAGRAPHS 2 & 3:** There is a shift in voice between the second and third paragraph. What is the shift?

- (CIRCLE ONE):
- |                        |                                |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|
| a. From child to adult | c. From uneducated to educated |
| b. From adult to child | d. From sane to insane         |

**5. What is wrong with Doodle when he is born?** \_\_\_\_\_

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**6. Why does the narrator give his brother the nickname “Doodle?”** \_\_\_\_\_

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**7. Why does Doodle’s father build him a go-cart? What must the narrator do with Doodle and his go-cart?** \_\_\_\_\_

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**8. PARAGRAPH 9:** Doodle comes with a long list of “do’s” and “don’ts,” but how does his brother treat him? \_\_\_\_\_

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**9. Why does Doodle cry when his brother takes him to Old Woman Swamp? What does this show about Doodle?** \_\_\_\_\_

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**10. PARAGRAPH 10: What does the narrator do to his brother Doodle that is particularly cruel?**

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**11. What might this incident with the coffin foreshadow?** \_\_\_\_\_

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**12. Why does the narrator decide he is going to teach his brother Doodle to walk?** \_\_\_\_\_

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**13. PARAGRAPH 11: What do you think that the author means when he says, "All of us must have something to be proud of, and Doodle had become my something."** \_\_\_\_\_

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**14. What do you think the narrator means when he says, "pride is a wonderful, terrible thing, a seed that bears two vines, life and death?" What might this foreshadow?**

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**15. How does the family react to seeing Doodle walk? Why do they react this way?** \_\_\_\_\_

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**16. How does the narrator react to the scene? Why does he react that way?**

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**17. PARAGRAPH 14:** Do you think the narrator is judging himself too harshly in the end of this paragraph? Is he really only motivated by his own pride? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**18. PARAGRAPH 16:** Now that Doodle has learned to walk, what other things does his brother want to teach him? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**19. PARAGRAPH 17 – INFERENCE:** Why do you think Doodle doesn't care about what the other school children may think of him? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**20. PARAGRAPH 18 – INFERENCE:** Why do you think Doodle goes ahead with the plan that his brother proposes? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**21. PREDICTION:** Do you think Doodle achieve all of these goals before he starts school in the fall? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**22. PARAGRAPHS 19 & 20:** What does Doodle hear that leads him outside? What does he find? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**23. What is wrong with the scarlet ibis? What happens next?** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**24. PARAGRAPH 22 – INFERENCE:** Why do you think Doodle feels so strongly about burying the scarlet ibis? What do you think he is feeling? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**25. Why does Doodle have such a strong reaction to the sick and exhausted scarlet ibis? What do the two have in common?** \_\_\_\_\_

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**26. PARAGRAPH 23: What does the bad weather foreshadow?**

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**27. What did Doodle fail at? What does the author mean when he writes, “We never spoke but I knew he was watching me, waiting for a sign of mercy.”** \_\_\_\_\_

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**28. What happens to Doodle after the author leaves him behind in the rain storm?**

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**29. PARAGRAPH 28: Why does the author call his brother “my fallen scarlet ibis?”**

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