Symbols are not just in works of art and literature, but a part of everyday life. Symbols are all around us—your school mascot, the peace sign on your friend’s necklace, a bald eagle on a stamp, the number 13, just to name a few. Think about symbols in your world and choose one to explore. Write the name of your symbol in the middle of the circle below. Then answer the questions outside the circle to reveal the levels of meaning that the symbol represents.

Does the symbol represent a group of people? If so, how do you think your symbol makes the individual group members feel when they see it?

Where does your symbol come from? Is it ancient or modern? Has its meaning changed over time?

Where have you seen your symbol? Have you ever used the symbol in an e-mail, text message, or among friends?

Scared, happy, hopeful? What are the first words that come to mind when you see your symbol?

What does your symbol mean to you? Does it mean something different to others? Why or why not?

Are there stories, songs, or legends about your symbol?

Are there other symbols with similar meanings? Opposite meanings?

Write It Out: Write a short essay about a symbol that speaks to you, whether it’s an ancient design or the logo on your baseball cap. When did the symbol become important to you and why?