

### The SIFT Method of Literary Analysis

(from *The AP Vertical Teams Guide for English*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. The College Board, 2002, 17-22.)

Teachers may introduce the following technique to help young readers begin to practice literary analysis. This method allows students to “sift” through the parts in order to comprehend the whole.

#### *SIFT Method*

**Symbol:** examine the title and text for symbolism



The snake could suggest evil or temptation

**Images:** identify the images and sensory details



The car could suggest materialism, wealth, the American dream

**Figures of speech:** analyze figurative language and other devices



“Free as a bird” suggests lack of restraints or boundaries, freedom to choose

**Tone and Theme:** discuss how all devices reveal tone and theme.



Angry? Shocked? Delighted? How does the story make you feel?

And what does the story mean to you?