

SYMBOLS

Symbols are objects, characters, figures, or colors used to represent abstract ideas or concepts. The Marlin Magnificent and glorious, the marlin symbolizes the ideal opponent. In a world in which “everything kills everything else in some way,” Santiago feels genuinely lucky to find himself matched against a creature that brings out the best in him: his strength and courage, his love and respect. The Shovel-Nosed Sharks The shovel-nosed sharks are little more than moving appetites who thoughtlessly and gracelessly attack the marlin. As opponents for the old man, they stand in bold contrast to the marlin, which is worthy of Santiago’s effort and strength. They symbolize and embody the destructive laws of the universe and attest to the fact that those laws can be transcended only when equals fight to the death. Because they are base predators, Santiago wins no glory from battling them. Themes, Motifs, and Symbols •