

Name _____



Symbols of Oz

In *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, L. Frank Baum fills the story with symbols that represent ideas about society, leadership, and personal growth. Through Dorothy's journey, Baum explores deeper messages about the world and the people in it.

Dorothy represents the everyday person—kind, brave, and searching for a place to belong. Her journey through Oz symbolizes the challenges people face in life and how they grow from their experiences. She learns that she has the strength and wisdom

to find her own way home, just as people must trust themselves to overcome obstacles.

The Scarecrow, Tin Woodman, and Cowardly Lion each symbolize different qualities that people value. The Scarecrow believes he lacks intelligence, but he constantly solves problems. He represents the idea that knowledge comes from experience, not just having a diploma. The Tin Woodman, made entirely of metal, thinks he has no heart, yet he shows more kindness than anyone else. He symbolizes the importance of emotions and compassion in a world that sometimes values work over feelings. The Cowardly Lion believes he has no courage, but he bravely defends his friends. His story reminds us that true courage is not about being fearless—it's about doing what is right even when afraid.

The Wizard of Oz is another powerful symbol. He appears to be a great and mighty ruler, but in reality, he is just an ordinary man using tricks to make himself seem powerful. He represents leaders who may not be as wise or strong as they pretend to be. The people of Oz believe in him because they want to, just as in real life, people sometimes place too much faith in leaders who rely on illusion rather than true wisdom.

Even Dorothy's silver shoes symbolize something important. She has the power to return home all along, but she doesn't realize it until the end of her journey. This shows that people often have the ability to solve their own problems, even if they don't see it at first.

Baum's story is more than just a fairy tale—it is filled with messages about believing in oneself, questioning authority, and valuing intelligence, love, and bravery. Through symbolism, *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* teaches readers that they already have the qualities they need to succeed.