

## **Significance and the Unique Symbolism of Seasons in Selected Poems**

**By**

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### **Abstract**

This article argues that symbolism should be seen as a representation of itself and the poet's mind, which makes his poem significant and unique. This analysis looks at six poems to show how the seasons uniquely represent the poets' minds and how the symbolism in the poems is significant to the reader. Spring traditionally symbolizes rebirth, a new beginning, optimism, and happiness. It represents seasonal cycles and love in Thomas Carew's "The Spring." Summer and love are frequently linked. It represents the nostalgia past in Geraldine Connolly's "The Summer I Was Sixteen." Autumn is frequently connected to abundance and rebirth. In Wystan Hugh Auden's "Autumn Song," it represents sorrow, loss, and death. Winter is conventionally linked to demise, loss, grief, and hardship. It represents a variety of concepts: emotion in Ogden Nash' "Winter Morning," fake friendship in William Shakespeare's "Blow, Blow, Thou Winter Wind," and affection and thanks for parents in Robert Hayden's poem "Those Winter Sundays." These meanings are conveyed to the reader through symbolism. The interpretation of the symbol's yields meaning to the reader. Symbols have meanings that can be gleaned by the reader. Higher-order cognitive abilities are required for symbol interpretation. The interpretation connects the reader's inner creative strength in a deeply moving way. At the end of the day, this imaginative spirit brings happiness and sets the spirit free. Therefore, the reader finds the ultimate soul fulfillment through freedom and the pleasure of the mind through symbol interpretation.

**Keywords:** Symbolism, Seasons, and Significance

### **1. Introduction**

There is a long history of using symbols to convey meaning beyond their literal meaning. The depiction of gods, demons, and other supernatural beings in cave paintings, hieroglyphics, and conventional signs is one of the oldest examples of symbols conveying complicated tales and ideas. Symbolism appears both in literary works and in everyday life. Scholars in the social sciences have written about symbolism, including the role of symbolic representation in politics for gender issues (Lombardo & Meier, 2019), the history, present, and future of symbolic interactionism (Carter & Fuller, 2016), and invoking equality from parliaments' sensitivity to gender issues through their symbolic role (Verge, 2022).

Writing with symbolism boosts the impact of a work's message and helps authors convey more nuanced ideas. As social scientists study symbolism, scholars from the West and East have studied the symbolism in works by authors for similar reasons. Some studies include the aesthetic-ideological coherence and qualities of the symbol of the mirror in Mukhtor's "The Man at the Mirror" (Toirova, 2019), the symbolic significance of features in Wilde's "The Picture of Dorian Gray" (Rahman, 2015), the symbolic significance of features in Lu Xun's short stories (Ilgo, 2010), and the literary symbolist movement (Symons, 2014). Symbolism is also important in the teaching of canonical literature in the context of critical literacy and critical literature (BorsheimBlack et al., 2014).

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Symbolism has long been an integral part of literature, and poetry is no exception. Many authors, including Arthur Rimbaud, Émile Verhaeren, Francis Vielé-Griffin, Georges Rodenbach, Gustave Kahn, Henri de Régnier, Jean Moréas, Jules Laforgue, Paul Verlaine, René Ghil, Stéphane Mallarmé, and Stuart Merrill, have made significant contributions to the study of symbolism. Subconsciously and consciously, poets are always trying to explain their writing. Poems use symbols to convey meaning to the reader. Symbols can be anything from hand gestures to objects to signals to sentences. They provide universally understood interpretations of experiences and help people make sense of the world around them.

Symbolically transmitted events are interesting to society at large, while those that incorporate the poet's perspective are fascinating in and of themselves. As a result, this study argues that the best way to interpret symbolism is to see it as a depiction of both the symbol and the poet's intentions. The focus of this study was on seasonal poetry. In poetry, seasons serve as symbols for both universal archetypes and the poet's own inner life. There is limited consideration for the latter. The poems "The Spring" by Thomas Carew, "The Summer I Was Sixteen" by Geraldine Connolly, "Autumn Song" by Wystan Hugh Auden, "Winter Morning" by Ogden Nash, "Those Winter Sundays" by Robert Hayden, and "Blow, Blow, thou Winter Wind!" by William Shakespeare were chosen for this study because they provide insights into the poet's worldview and attitude toward inner sentiments through symbol analysis. The following questions guided this investigation: **What is the symbolism of seasons in the selected poems? How does the seasonal symbolism in these poems differ from the more common seasonal symbolism?**

The contents of this study consist of five parts. Part 1 (Introduction) provides context for the investigation and identifies a knowledge gap. Part 2 (Literature Review) presents prior research on the significance of symbolism, nature/seasons as a major source of symbolism, nature and the human psyche, and seasons and the human psyche. Part 3 (Research Method) described the procedures of analysis, credibility, and trustworthiness. Part 4 (Results of the Study) presents the findings of the analysis. Part 5 (Conclusion, Discussion, Limitation, Implication of the Study, and Suggestions for Future Study) concludes the research study, discusses the findings in comparison with the prior study, presents limitations of the study, provides suggestions for future inquiries, and highlights the research and its social and practical implications.

## **2. Literature Review**

### ***2.1 Significance of Symbolism***

Symbolism is a literary technique that goes beyond literal meanings to convey a message. This message makes a literary work more significant and more powerful. Symbols can be words, characters, marks, locations, or abstract ideas. Symbolism in poetry has drawn the attention of a number of literary scholars all over the world who are pursuing various aspects of an interdisciplinary approach. In a socio-cultural and political approach, Arianto (2022) examined how Renda's poetry "Nyanyian Angsa" uses the swan to criticize society. Mansouri and Omidbakhsh (2022) studied symbolism in Fereidoon Tavallali's Nafeh. Jadoua (2022) explored the social, political, and literary independence of mind that signifies Western influence in Arabic literature.

Using a psychological approach, Keshavarz (2022) examines the relationship between Sohrab Sepehri and Walter de la Mare through Freud's "Psychological Defense Mechanisms." This deviation from the intellectual norm could be an unconscious "psychological protective

mechanism." Chirico (2022) investigated how poetry could elicit two contradictory desires (John Clare and John Keats): a passionate (and dissident) immersion in a serene moment and a submission. Sandy (2022) investigated the conclusion of Keats' poetry. Death is reconciled by Keats' creative self-awareness with the nightingale, the urn, and indolence. Yousuf (2022) argued that John Keats' poetry had therapeutic potential comparable to other literary works with the themes of hope, acceptance, and redemption.

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Qaid and Kanouni (2022) examined Muhammad Ahmed Mansour's semiotic symbols using a semiotic approach. Their analysis revealed that the use of symbols in his poem addresses the semiotic approach that contributes to the growth of texts, the expansion of their meanings and functions, and the construction of poetic images, including mystical, historical, literary, and natural symbols. Its texts broaden implications, thrill readers, and promote reading. Mussaly et al. (2022) also examined the influence of symbolism in world literature on Kazakh poets by analyzing the trends in the study of symbolism in foreign and domestic literary studies, its direction, and the artistic and aesthetic function of the symbol in the works of Zhumabayev and Kuleyev, representatives of the first symbolist movement in Kazakh poetry. This study also assessed Kazakh poetry topics pertaining to national vision, thinking, singing, and nomadism. Through symbol analysis, the poet's worldview and attitude toward inner emotions are disclosed, and the aesthetic value of literary symbols is emphasized. Typically, symbol recognition requires global thinkers.

## ***2.2 Nature/Seasons as an Important Symbolic Inspiration***

Nature is one of the key sources of symbolism in poetry. Poets use symbolism in their poems to express their contentious perspectives on life. James Thomson, William Wordsworth, and Percy Bysshe Shelley are notable nature poets. Numerous academics (e.g., Stibbe, 2007; Johnson, 1991; Parker, 1962) have investigated nature-based symbols in both classical and modern nature poetry.

In nature's symbolism, seasons are prominent recurring symbols. The development of seasons (Cohen, 1970), the personification in James Thomson's "The Seasons" (Keenleyside, 2009), the seasons and locations in the landscape and poetry of Yamato (Shimizu, 1981), script therapy and traumatic memory in Malawian poetry in the case of Bright Molande's seasons (Tembo, 2014), intertextual allusion in the seasons in James Thomson's defense of poetry (Lethbridge, 2011), haiku seasons, poetry of the natural world (Higginson, 2009), poems, forms, and genres of poetry for all seasons (Hengreaves, 2007), radical empiricism, place, and season in John Kinsella's "Jam Tree Gully" (Bristow, 2013), and how Kenneth Koch's "Seasons on Earth" illustrate the intersection of simulation, mass culture, and the postmodern long poem (Moffett, 2007).

Topics of seasonal symbols in poetry include, in particular, the interaction of the natural world and the human mind in summer poetry (Nusratilloevna, 2021), the auroras of autumn

(Doggett & Emerson, 1989; Benamou, 1978), autumnal precipitation and autumnal tears-between music and poetry (Sokoowicz, 2012), red autumn in Valvins in Christopher Brennan's *The Higher Self* (Barnes, 2006), and the metaphorical interpretation of the image (Madrakhimova, 2022).

It is significant to highlight that the previous study employed normal and accepted symbols for the seasons. Spring is a season of renewal, growth, happiness, pregnancy, and fertility in many civilizations. As a metaphor for growing up, summer is a time of exhilaration, emancipation, and love. Autumn represents the stages of life that include development, maturation, loss, decay, and change. Winter is a metaphor for all these things: death, loss, misery, and adversity. The shifting of the seasons could serve as a metaphor for subtle and profound ideas.

### ***2.3 Nature and Human Mind***

Many academics have tried to interpret nature as a representation of the human mind. For instance, Iroda (2022) looked into the poetry of Aydin Khodjieva and discovered that nature symbolizes painful memories in a person's heart. Similar to this, Dash (2022) discovered that natural symbols in Yeats' works are unconscious mind manifestations and so indicate nuances of fundamental archetypes that have their origins in early literature and societies. Nourbalin et al. (2022) investigated Tagore's allegories of nature. The symbols in his poetry have positive implications because of his fascination with nature, and they frequently stand in for human thoughts and ideas, mystical and philosophical views, and poetic images. In the winter, according to Nusratilloeyevna (2022), nature and psychological processes coexist. According to Nuralieva (2022), the romanticism of Alexander Sergeevich Pushkin's "Autumn" and "Winter Morning" is due to the poet's love of romantic ideals. Pushkin accurately captures the Mikhailovsky era Russian landscape. His later poems make use of geography to express his distinctive philosophical viewpoint. In 2022, poetry for the dying is introduced in Thomson's "To Autumn." In Wallace Stevens' post-romantic imagined conversations with Keats, Sandy (2022) is aware of the romantic poet's ode to the seasonal changes of fall. W. H. Auden's "Autumn Song" (1936) was examined by Lind (2020), who discovered the limitations of human language in portraying objective reality. Reviewing "Twelve Songs" (1935–38), "Five Songs" (1948–53), and "Two Don Quijote Lyrics" (1963), Altunsoy (2020) discovered that Auden's songs from his various periods demonstrate his persistent pessimism. Auden more subtly admits a broken relationship with love and nature in his later writings. The poems chosen all have a similar perspective on love, loneliness, and capitalism ideals. According to Farmer (2021), lyrics can be used to express praise, love, conflict, unfinished business, feasts, wishes, and vows.

### ***2.4 Seasons and Emotions***

The relationship between seasons and the human mind has been supported by a number of studies (Jung, 2014; Padel, 2016; Midgley, 2013; Armstrong, 2013; Mize, 2013; Floriani et al., 2020; Zwikstra, 2011). In Bratman et al. (2012), for example, researchers from a range of academic fields have looked at the potential effects that exposure to the outdoors may have on human health.

Similar to this, Aras (2015) found that literature and art can help people comprehend their personalities and differences, as well as raise crucial psychological questions about life and existence. Literature and psychology are closely related since they both deal with people and their feelings, sufferings, desires, and personal and societal issues.

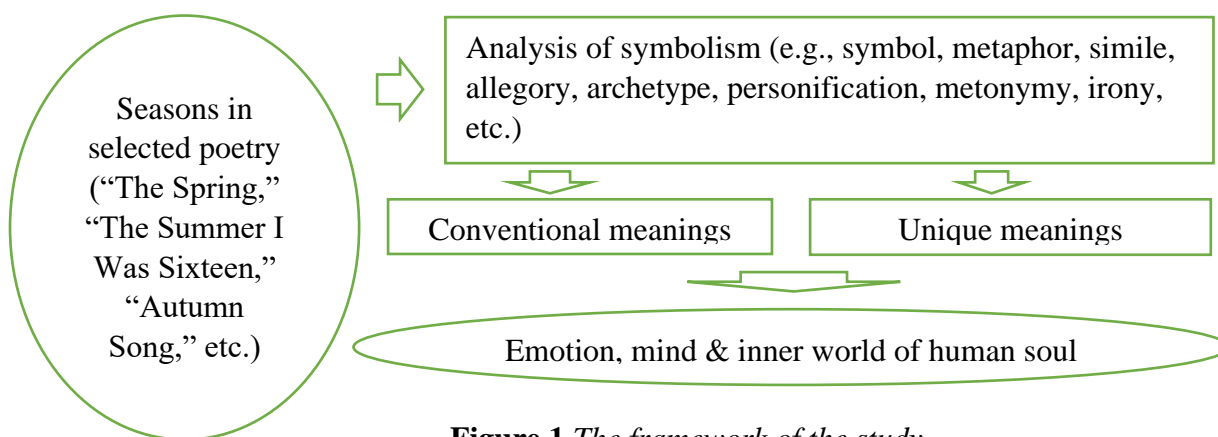
Growing evidence (such as that provided by Kaptein et al., 2018) points to the fact that symbols are also unique and that they each serve specific functions and have distinctive meanings that give them significance in people's minds. Literature does satiate and open our minds, according to a number of academics (e.g., Bate & Schuman, 2016; Johnston, 2012). Additionally, poetry and the poet's life psychologically benefit the reader. For instance, Stuart (2000) examined Ogden Nash's poetry and biography, similar to Steele (2001), who noted that studying Ogden Nash had taught him valuable lessons in life and who illustrated this with his own poetry. By following this journey through the various stages of life, the reader may discover strategies for discovering the gold in our own experience. Similar effects on the mind were discovered in studies of WH Auden's "Autumn Song" (e.g., Warner, 1964; Lind, 2020). According to Tileubayeva et al. (2015), the poetry of Mukhagali Makhatayev has a good effect on one's perception of oneself. In particular, some studies (e.g., Elbir, 2018; Shimizu, 1981) discovered cognitive and affective impacts of seasonal symbols in poetry on the mind, while others (Bedford, 2016; Hardy, 2022; Farmer, 2021; Hühn, 2016; Veerasingam & Dananjaya, 2019; Elbir, 2018) revealed impacts on various inner experiences.

The claim that seasons could be metaphors for the human mind was reinforced by this investigation. However, there is little research on this particular unusual symbolism. Investigating this matter is essential given the distinct seasonal symbolism in poetry and the reader's perception of the seasons. Insights into this subject can benefit society as a whole as well as literary studies. This research was guided by the following inquiries as a result: What is the unique symbolism of the seasons in the chosen poetry, and what does it mean to the reader?

## 2.5 The framework of the study and research questions

### 2.5.1 The framework of the study

The framework of the study could be presented as shown in Figure 1.



**Figure 1** The framework of the study

**Figure 1** presents the framework of the study. The symbolism of seasons (namely, symbol, metaphor, simile, allegory, archetype, personification, metonymy, irony, etc.) in selected poems (namely, "The Spring," "The Summer I Was Sixteen," "Autumn Song," etc.) were analyzed to draw out meanings. All meanings were classified into two groups, i.e., conventional and unique. The meanings involve emotion, mind, and the inner world of the human soul.



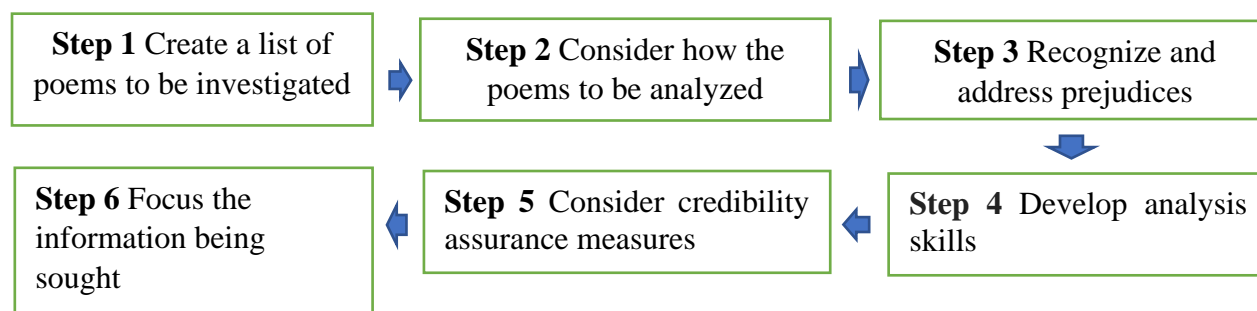
### 2.5.2 Research questions

The following research questions were determined to guide this analysis: What is the unique symbolism of seasons in the selected poems, and what is its significance to the reader?

## 3. Method Of Study

### 3.1 Data collection

This study was a qualitative document analysis. The analysis process adopted the planning process proposed by O'Leary (2014). The process was practically adjusted to this analysis and summarized as shown in Figure 2.



**Figure 2** The analysis process of the study

**Figure 2** shows the study's analysis procedure. It consists of six processes, including making a list of poems to look into, deciding how to analyze them, identifying and addressing biases, honing analysis skills, taking credibility assurance methods into account, and narrowing the scope of the information being sought. Below are the specifics for each phase:

#### **Step 1: Create a list of poems to be investigated.**

Six poems were purposefully selected. These poems use seasons as subjects. All share

conventional ideas of seasons, but the poets' unique ideas of seasons that they express through themes and symbolism. The details of the six selected poems are as follows:

First, the great English poet Thomas Carew's poem "The Spring," written in the heroic couplet, is a superb work on the goodness of nature and unrequited love. This poem first appeared in his collection, *Spring in London*, which was published in 1640. This poem stands out because of its thematic thread of love that is braided across the seasonal cycles.

Second, "The Summer I Was Sixteen" by American poet and author Geraldine Connolly initially appeared in Connolly's *Province of Fire* collection, which was published in 1998. The poet eloquently describes her fond memories of swimming and sunbathing in the past. The poem's appeal stems from its use of flowery language to depict the young era.

Third, Wystan Hugh Auden, a well-known Anglo-American poet, wrote the descriptive poem "Autumn Song." It originally debuted in 1936. The changing of the seasons from summer to fall is the subject of this poetry. It brilliantly illuminates the dramatic shift in perspective that occurs when this season arrives. The poet has infused the poem with a number of literary devices and recurring themes that will appeal to a wide audience.

Fourth, Ogden Nash, a well-known American poet, wrote the brief and straightforward poem "Winter Morning," which is a piece of descriptive poetry. It must have been composed in the mid-20th century. This intriguing poem uses a metaphor of a snowman to depict

the surroundings during the weather. The poem's popularity is due in part to its simplicity, its tempting rhyme scheme, and the poet's contribution to the final line.

Fifth, "Those Winter Sundays" was written by Robert Hayden, a well-known American poet. Its themes of love and ingratitude have made it a hit. The poem made its debut in 1962.

The speaker's love for his late father is shown in the poem, and the realities of the father-son connection are presented. Nonetheless, the poem's widespread acclaim might be attributed to its central theme—the hardships endured by parents on behalf of their offspring.

Sixth and lastly, a lyrical poem on life and ignorance titled "Blow, Blow, thou Winter

Wind" was written by the great English poet and playwright William Shakespeare in 1623. The poem discusses human beings' bad traits. In addition, it illustrates the striking contrast between human nature and the biting reality of life.

### ***Step 2: Consider how the poems are to be analyzed.***

The contents of the selected poems were read, reread, examined, and analyzed with the objective of discovering the themes, concepts, and linguistic and cultural features of the poems. Elo and Kyngäs' (2008) qualitative content analysis process was modified for the text analysis. The analysis process includes these steps: 1) collecting crucial data from all selected poems, such as seasonal themes, ideas, and concepts; 2) sorting data items; 3) coding and grouping codes under suitable nodes; 4) recoding to ensure accuracy; and 5) reasoning and conceptualizing the data.

### ***Step 3: Identify prejudices and deal with them.***

The study of the documents and the researchers both had significant prejudices. Bowen (2009) suggested two aspects, namely, quality and quantity, should be taken into consideration in order to decrease prejudices in the qualitative document analysis. To ensure the caliber of the documents being analyzed, all of the poems included in this study were specifically chosen and pertinent to the research questions. They were composed by poets from various backgrounds and at various times. Six poems on the same issue were triangulated in order to ensure the study's amount. The words were precisely specified, and coding procedures were thoughtfully designed to prevent bias among the researcher and assistants.

### ***Step 4: Develop appropriate analysis skills.***

Identify the poet's motivation for using the symbols. Look for any themes that stand out, are frequently brought up, or are frequently associated with the seasons. Consider both the relevance of the qualities and the prospective thoughts that the seasons and the things that symbolize them might normally signify. The thoughts were divided into two groups, namely, traditional and non-traditional symbols. They were then contrasted and compared. The process was followed by the researcher and two research assistants. Their coding findings were compared, and the conclusions about the data were reached after discussion and consensus.

### ***Step 5: Consider credibility assurance measures.***

To ensure the analysis's objectivity, triangulation was used in this document analysis. Theoretically, the researcher should use a minimum of two data sources and approaches to achieve convergence and corroboration in the analysis of the same phenomenon (Bowen, 2009). In order to establish a convergence of reliable evidence, various poems were used in this study to investigate the same phenomenon, namely the representation of seasons in chosen poems covering all four seasons.

### ***Step 6: Focus on the information being sought.***

The following topics were the main emphasis of the information sought: First, a metaphor, or indirect comparison, in which one thing is used to imply another and show a relationship between apparently unrelated concepts; second, a simile, which, in contrast to a metaphor, blatantly compares two things to one another using the conjunctions "like" and "as"; third, in an allegory, a fictional character, scenario, or location acts as a means of communicating a deeper point about a prevalent issue or topic in real life; fourth, an archetypal or recurring figure, theme, or type that represents a more general truth or principle; fifth, personification, a symbology in which inanimate objects are endowed with human characteristics; sixth, the use of exaggeration or hyperbole to highlight a point or improve a phrase; seventh, a metonymy, or a word that is closely associated with something else is used in place of the actual name of that something else; finally, an irony, or figure of speech, in which the intended meaning conflicts with the literal meaning of the words employed, occurs when a word that is strongly linked with something else is used in place of that something else's actual name.

### ***3.2 Credibility and trustworthiness***

This study used qualitative document analysis. To reduce subjectivity and bias, this study was designed to assess the credibility and trustworthiness of the entire research process, from the beginning to the end, as follows: All selected poems must be relevant to the research questions. As primary sources to build qualitative credibility, the six selected poems were triangulated and compared for reliability. Symbolic terms were defined to focus the information to be sought. These thorough operational definitions helped the researcher and two research assistants code, recode, and compare coding findings. Genuine research data minimized researcher prejudice. Clearly stated terms boosted the research's trustworthiness. Data, concepts, and categories from one paper were confirmed in six poems.

To ensure the credibility of qualitative research, the coding technique in this investigation was meticulously prepared. In order to compare the consistency of the outcomes, the data were coded and recoded. Based on triangulation, the researcher's and two research assistants' coded and recoded data were compared and discussed. A conclusion was drawn based on consensus.

## **4. Results of The Study**

The results of this study are presented in response to the research questions: What is the unique symbolism of the seasons in the chosen poetry, and what does it mean to the reader?

### ***4.1 The unique symbolism of seasons in the selected poems***

#### ***4.1.1 Spring***

##### ***4.1.1.1 Conventional symbols of spring***

In the spring, a lot of creatures and plants give birth and start their lives. Poetry typically celebrates rebirth by using spring as its subject. With the approach of spring, this poem introduces the reader to a new story and new people. The first flowers will have emerged by this time, signaling the end of winter's more depressing elements like snow and icy weather. The revival of life and the shifting of the seasons are metaphors for new beginnings in literature, just as they are in nature. Your life could be entering an exciting new era as a result of this. Joy and hope are typical reactions to new beginnings. Many homes and fictional characters are at



their most upbeat and enthusiastic at the beginning of this season. A character frequently feels enthusiastic about what lies ahead when they begin a new chapter in their life, whether it be a career or a family. Spring is a popular time for poets to consider new ideas and speculate about the future.

#### ***4.1.1.2 Spring as a symbol of seasonal cycles and affection***

Thomas Carew's "The Spring" contains a thread of meaning concerning seasonal cycles of nature that may have links to the meanings of more traditional spring symbols (namely, birth, new beginnings, and joy). For example,

“Now that the winter’s gone, the earth hath lost  
Her snow-white robes, and now no more the frost  
Candies the grass, or casts an icy cream  
Upon the silver lake or crystal stream;”

In the poem's opening lines, the narrator describes the annual shift from winter to spring, when the ice melts and the land returns to life as "the warm sun thaws the benumbed dirt" and gives birth to numerous species. It also appears to promote the birds' singing and happiness. In anticipation of the much-anticipated month of May, minstrels roam the countryside singing songs of gladness, causing the hills and valleys to ring with jubilation.

However, the reader will comprehend the unique seasonal connotations, namely the evolving bond between lovers. Because winter and spring are connected, the poet uses spring as a metaphor for love. Seasonal changes are an excellent sign of whether or not love is strengthening. Both he and his Valentine possess a distinct spring. If the poet's love does not embrace this happiness, then she is as cold and aloof as ever. She does not return his feelings, despite the fact that all of the animals are making love in Amyntas and Chloris-like hues. In contrast to this cheerful atmosphere, her sweetheart still has June in her eyes and January in her heart. For example,

“Amyntas now doth with his Chloris sleep  
Under a sycamore, and all things keep  
Time with the season; only she doth carry  
June in her eyes, in her heart January.”

In addition, the poet used the following symbols, metaphors, and personifications to help the reader comprehend the unique connotations. Seasons, natural objects, and plants represent seasonal transitions. Metaphorically, he compared the earth to a person, the sun to a source of life, and the valleys, hills, and forests to individuals. Lastly, he imbued the earth, sun, hills, valleys, and forests with individual lives and feelings. All of these literary strategies serve to emphasize his individual meanings.

In this poem, spring shows how two lovers feel, while summer, which is usually associated with love, shows a feeling of sadness. This is shown in "The Summer I Was Sixteen."

#### ***4.1.2 Summer***

##### ***4.1.2.1 Conventional symbols of summer***

If spring symbolizes a new beginning, summer marks the passage from childhood to adulthood. Summer is also linked to ardor and young love. Since Shakespeare's time, this

season has been referred to as the "summer of love." Several new relationships begin during the balmy summer months. Because summer is the hottest season of the year in many parts of the world, it is frequently used as a metaphor. Many people are in the midst of passionate romantic relationships, and growing up is stressful. Summertime is a reoccurring theme, too. The pleasant sunshine of the weather is a symbol of good times, happiness, and independence. Over the summer, a lot of people have plenty of free time. The main characters in many stories embark on thrilling excursions over the summer.

#### ***4.1.2.2 Summer as a symbol of youth and nostalgia***

Geraldine Connolly gives the "turquoise pool" in "The Summer I Was Sixteen" a personality and feelings of its own in the poem's opening lines. Those lads used to watch them as they did things like dive, scream, and blow bubbles in the pool. Before, they would sit on the edge of the pool and enjoy shaking off the water. They used to take evening strolls on the concrete sidewalk, where they would often lie in the warm rays of the setting sun. They used to drink beer out of cups, eat hot dogs, and dance to "Duke of Earl" while drowning in the pool. Some of these include engaging in adolescent behaviors such as lounging in the grass, listening to a radio, and kissing under the cover of a tree. As they gazed out over the world beyond the pool, the girls would traditionally anoint themselves in their bikinis, pouring oil on their scorched shoulders and dreaming of a bright future.

The title of the poem suggests that Geraldine Connolly has produced this poem about her own experience, even though the poet has tried to make summer a season of youth through the theme of the enthusiasm of youth and the use of flowery words to convey the youth period. The poet does a fantastic job of evoking her fond memories of times past spent swimming and basking in the sun. The times when she and her girlfriends would sunbathe and explore "the improbable world" of summer when she was sixteen bring back fond memories. The experience helped Summer develop her own personal iconography. For instance,

“mouthing the old words, then loosened  
thin bikini straps and rubbed baby oil with iodine  
across sunburned shoulders, tossing a glance  
through the chain link at an improbable world”

Symbolism in "The Summer I Was Sixteen" includes metaphors, personifications, and symbols. Metaphorically, the poem employs analogies such as pool, lip, and bees. Each of the three has been compared to something else. Literally, the poet has used personifications of the pool as if it has its own life and emotions. Symbolically, the poem depicts the realm of youthful love through the use of religious symbols such as gazing, kissing, and tossing.

Summer in this poem represents the poet's nostalgia for the past, while autumn, which has traditionally been associated with joy, prosperity, and new life, signifies grief, loss, and death as shown in "Autumn Song."

#### ***4.1.3 Autumn***

##### ***4.1.3.1 Conventional symbols of autumn***

In literature, autumn can represent a number of ideas, some of which may be at odds with one another. On one hand, it stands for prosperity and new life. Because there are so many harvests in the autumn, this season is associated with fertility. Poets can find figurative joy in this harvest. You might get the most out of life if you wait until autumn. On the other hand, autumn symbolizes change, conflict, and loss or decay, as this is the time of year when plants

cease growing and instead begin to die. Whether or not it is desired, this season is a time of transition. This is the season that sees the most dramatic shifts from one year to the next, and it is also a crucial time for getting ready for the harsher conditions of winter. Dying plants are a metaphor for deteriorating relationships. Death, love, and friendship are often depicted as occurring in the fall in literary works. The protagonists, for better or worse, may soon be faced with conflict or significant decisions and events symbolized by the transformation.

#### ***4.1.3.2 Autumn as symbols of grief, loss and death***

While most poets see autumn as a time of joy, Wystan Hugh Auden, in "Autumn Song," takes a different perspective, using the season as a metaphor for loss and death. In the first lines of the poem, the reader is treated to a glimpse of the world's first perceptible transformation as a result of the season. Fallen leaves and wilted flowers herald its approach. The negative effects on the environment are laid forth, and then we learn how they also affect our daily lives. Even while children are being born and loved ones like nurses keep passing away, it seems clear that life and death are perpetual cycles. For instance,

“Now the leaves are falling fast,  
Nurse’s flowers will not last,  
Nurses to their graves are gone,  
But the prams go rolling on.”

Also becoming increasingly rare is the opportunity to enjoy the merriment of one's fellow neighborhood residents. There is only one road that leads to death, and everyone else is on it. It is bad for other animals, too. Also, they become unresponsive and listless, to the point of desperation. Angels, much less the other creatures, are unwilling to visit Earth. Only in one's dreams can one find a glimpse of optimism, brightness, and contentment. Therefore, the poem uses "autumn" as a metaphor for the fleeting nature of grief and death. The poet spends much of the poem attempting to portray a picture of the grim, gloomy, and heartbreaking realities one encounters with the advent of this. For instance,

In false attitudes of love.  
Scrawny through a plundered wood,  
Trolls run scolding for their food,  
Owl and nightingale are dumb,  
And the angel will not come.

Unpredictable shifts in the earth's environment result in global catastrophes. The brilliant hues of the ground fade first, then the foliage and flowers perish, and eventually even humans perish. Humans are not the only creatures it preys on, though. Even the brightest moments of their lives become dreary and difficult for them. The speaker emphasizes the bleakness of the season by saying that even the angels vanish and that the dead seem to follow the living closely. For instance,

Clear, unscalable, ahead  
Rise the Mountains of Instead,  
From whose cold cascading streams  
None may drink except in dreams.”

W. H. Auden utilizes symbols like "Prams go rolling on" to depict life's cycle, which comes to an end with death, as well as metaphors to emphasize his griefs in this poem (for

example, "Able hands are compelled to freeze," "Dead in hundreds cry Alack," and "Nurse's flowers will not last").

Winter, which has traditionally been connected with feeling, phony friendship, and love and appreciation for parents as evidenced in "Winter Morning," "Blow, Blow, Thou Winter Wind," and "Those Winter Sundays," contrasts with autumn in this poem, which represents the poet's anguish, loss, and death.

#### **4.1.4 Winter**

##### **4.1.4.1 Conventional symbols of winter**

As a literary motif, winter is associated with death, endings, sorrow, and struggle. Many animals and plants expire during the winter, making it a universal symbol of death. Loss of love, hope, or success can all be symbolized by winter. It can both predict the end of a major character or plot element and allude to an actual death. The coming of winter is often used as a metaphor for the end of the year and other things around the world. The relationship, the life, or the writing could all be coming to an end. It could also mean that winter is over and the character can finally relax and enjoy spring. Because of the harshness of winter, many plants and animals have a hard time surviving and staying cozy and safe. The literary struggle could have both literal and symbolic meanings. Extreme cold could make any effort difficult, whether mental or physical. Because of its connotations with death, suffering, and misfortune, winter is known as the "season of sadness." Many fictional characters experience grief and despair throughout the winter. It is possible for people to become indifferent and apathetic during this time until they begin to recover from their losses in the coming spring.

##### **4.1.4.2 Winter as emotional symbols**

On the other hand, Ogden Nash uses winter to represent emotion in his poem "Winter Morning." The poet has thus far begun to do so by elaborating on the splendor of winter. Nash takes a different view of winter than other poets, seeing it as a time when everyone, young and old alike, tries to recapture their youth by caressing snowflakes with the tips of their tongues. Enjoying it like a young man or an old man depends, to some extent, on the individual. Despite the season's traditional association with dormancy, Nash has made it his mission to actively engage with the public in order to lift people's spirits and give them a renewed sense of vitality. There is a rebirth of spirit depicted in the poem through usage of frost and snow symbolism. For instance,

"That's the season to be young,  
Catching snowflakes on your tongue!  
Snow is snowy when it's snowing.  
I'm sorry it's slushy when it's going."

The poet has accentuated emotions through the personification of the weather as if it has life and emotions of its own and can change things according to its will, the metaphor of a king of the snowmen, and the symbols of snow and frost bringing rejuvenation to the deadened spirits. However, winter can be used to represent a phony friendship, as seen in the next poem.

##### **4.1.4.3 Winter as a metaphor for phony friendship**

In William Shakespeare's "Blow, Blow, Thou Winter Wind," winter represents a phony friendship that ultimately hurts its recipient. A false buddy is far more hurtful than the cold winter air. The wind is venomous, but it is not as deadly as a man's ungratefulness. The poet

goes on to lament the fact that his friend had forgotten the kindness he showed him in the past. Because of this, he likens the betrayal to a chill wind that produces frostbite. But even the cold winter is not as terrible as his good friend's unthankful actions. In this poem, winter represents treachery, false friendship, and the harsh facts of human existence. The poet consistently uses imagery from winter to symbolize the dark side of human nature. For instance,

“Though thou the waters warp,  
Thy sting is not so sharp  
As friend remembered not.”

This winter's chill will only last so long for him. When compared to the emotional toll of a friend's treachery, a scrape is a minor inconvenience at best. Our hearts are broken, and our serenity in life is shattered, because of it. The positive message that we should live life to the fullest, despite the fact that other people may not be faithful, is presented as the poem draws to a close. Throughout the poem, the chilly breeze is likened to several characters. For instance,

“Thou art not so unkind  
As man's ingratitude.”  
“That dost not bite so nigh  
As benefits forgot.”

William Shakespeare used literary devices to make his meanings clear, such as personifications of inanimate objects (namely, "Thy tooth is not so keen," "Although thy breath be rude," and "Thou art not so unkind") and similes (namely, cold wind compared to human beings).

Winter in this poem represents the poet's phony friendship, while the winter below signifies love and gratitude to parents, as seen in the next poem.

#### ***4.1.4.4 Winter as symbols of love and appreciation for parents***

In "Those Winter Sundays" by Robert Hayden, winter represents love and gratitude to his deceased father. The poem depicts the speaker's affection for his father while also highlighting the realities of father-son relationships. The speaker of this poem recalls some great memories of his late father. In order to keep the family warm on chilly Sundays, his father would wake up early, lighting the fire with his chapped hands. He used to wake his son to get dressed once the house warmed up. For his better health, the father frequently reprimanded him. His word choice shows that he was an unappreciative child who was unable to understand his father's effort. As a result, the speaker feels bad about how he treated his father. Now that he is an adult, he reflects on the past and recalls certain special times in his father's life to show his gratitude. A few glimmers of his father's suffering are described by the poet. He describes how his father used to obediently spend his Sundays. He endures all hardships in order to provide comfort at home and carry out his fatherly duties. The poet nevertheless regrets not being able to appreciate his father's sacrifices. For instance,

“Sundays too my father got up early  
And put his clothes on in the blue black cold,  
Then with cracked hands that ached  
from labor in the weekday weather made  
banked fires blaze. No one ever thanked him.”



In this poem, cold is metaphorically compared to a solid thing that might fracture and break. In this poem, winter represents the poet's love and gratitude for his parents.

The aforementioned findings of the seasons indicate that symbolism is inextricably related to the reader's understanding. Interpreting a symbol and its meanings immediately affect the reader, as revealed in the next part to answer the latter research question: What is the significance of symbolism to the reader?

#### ***4.2 The significance of the symbolism and seasons***

The symbolism and seasons as the subjects of the poetry have social and cultural, cognitive and affective, and psychological significance.

##### ***4.2.1 Social and cultural significances***

Pedagogically, a symbol has diverse meanings depending on who interprets it. In the interpretation process, the reader needs to reflect on the meanings of a symbol that lie more deeply than the literal meanings of words, intrinsically link it with greater contexts and connections based on his or her own experiences and with a particular mood or sensation. Our world is loaded with symbols. Symbolism is everywhere. Logos, trademarks, signs, flags, crosses, political parties, colors, nature these are all symbols. We cannot avoid them. Attempts to interpret symbolism assist us in making sense of the world around us, so interpreting symbolism in poetry has social and cultural significance.

##### ***4.2.2 Cognitive and affective significances***

Cognitively and affectively, as symbols take several forms, our brains must process massive amounts of data every second of our existence. They have effects on our perception, our thoughts, our emotions, and our soul, so we need to understand them. Understanding the meanings that symbols represent requires a thinking process that involves several higher-order thinking skills. We need to react, interpret, and analyze the symbolism in a literary work. It serves as a mental trigger for recognition, comprehension, and emotion. Symbolism is not limited to literary devices, and all symbols contain meanings. The meanings are informative, emotional, intellectual, ideological, conceptual, religious, political, historical, cultural, social, and spiritual. Symbols assist us in making sense of our inner life and soul. The process of understanding the meanings of symbols is the key to the inner world of the soul.

##### ***4.2.3 Psychological significance***

Similar to how the beauty of nature makes us feel psychologically, the beauty of the seasons makes us feel good on many different levels.

On one level, experiencing each season in nature or simulating it in our minds gives us a sense of freedom, and this freedom is what enables us to take pleasure in life. Such independence promotes greater inner peace and adds value, significance, and enjoyment to life.

On another level, living in freedom and enjoying nature make life easier and more pleasant. Being in nature helps one find peace and see how this is how nature is. Wind, sunlight, and singing birds are present. When you look at what nature is, there is beauty. There will be peace within, and this peace does not push, run, or flee because we are aware that this is the way things are.

On a higher level, nature is not something we need to seek. It travels everywhere with us. We can appreciate nature's beauty simply by allowing it to enter our minds and taking time to be with it, such as observing a patch of grass. Little grasses sprang, and the breeze swayed vivaciously while blowing softly. We can see the joy there, as well as the fact that it contains life. The enjoyment derived from nature is tranquil and enduring. When we are in quiet, lovely, serene, and cool nature, we will experience a sense of sustainability. The process of life is also evident when one is in nature. We rely on the natural world. Life would not exist without nature. We coexist as a single unit. Realizing that there are other things in our body except us, such as trees, water, the wind, and the sun. Therefore, when we see a dancing flower, we understand that it also exists in our world. The care we give it reflects the care we give ourselves. We find sustainability and peace in seeing life. All living things on this planet seek pleasure. Nature includes more than simply plants, grass, fields, and rivers; it also refers to the nature of our hearts, a loving heart that cherishes and celebrates the natural world around us. Enjoyment and a love of nature are one and the same. Real or imagined, the pleasures of nature, like the pleasures that nature offers people without limitations, can create a deep-seated feeling of love on a level where the soul is joined with a love for other humans that is irreplaceable and unlimited. This kind of affection is shared by all. Therefore, poems that create a universal love through imaginative communication through letters and allow readers to feel nature have endless value since they do so by giving our souls real joy. Nature brings true pleasure to our soul.

## **5. Conclusion and Discussion**

### **5.1 Conclusion**

In response to the research questions (What is the unique symbolism of seasons in the selected poems? and what does it mean for the reader? ), the results of the analysis showed these two main points.

The selected poems' symbols indicated the following distinct meanings: Spring is often associated with rebirth, a fresh start, optimism, and joy. In "The Spring" by Thomas Carew, it signifies seasonal cycles and love. Summer is often associated with love. In "The Summer I Was Sixteen" by Geraldine Connolly, it signifies a nostalgic past. Autumn is often associated with prosperity and new life. In "Autumn Song" by Wystan Hugh Auden, it signifies grief, loss, and death. Winter is often associated with death, endings, sorrow, and struggle. In the selected poems, it represents various ideas. In "Winter Morning" by "Winter Morning", it signifies emotion. In "Blow, Blow, Thou Winter Wind" by William Shakespeare, it signifies phony friendship. Lastly, in "Those Winter Sundays" by Robert Hayden, it signifies love and gratitude to parents.

The meanings of the symbolism and seasons to the reader are manifold. The symbolism and seasons as the subjects of the poetry have social and cultural, cognitive and affective, and psychological significance. Socially and culturally, understanding symbolism requires an interpretation process and an intrinsic reaction, which promote the learning of circumstances. Cognitively and affectively, interpreting symbolism requires a thinking process that involves several higher-order thinking skills that help us make sense of our inner life and soul. Psychologically, the beauty of seasons brings pleasure to the one who sees the pleasure of imaginary nature. This imagination makes us feel free and enjoy life. Freedom and pleasure from nature make life lighter and more comfortable. The pleasure obtained from nature is peaceful and sustainable, so nature brings true pleasure to our soul.

### **5.2 Discussion**

The findings of this study lend support to the prior study (Stibbe, 2007; Johnson, 1991; Parker, 1962; Cohen, 1970; Keenleyside, 2009; Shimizu, 1981; Tembo, 2014; Lethbridge, 2011; Higginson, 2009; Hengreaves, 2007; Bristow, 2013; Moffett, 2007) that nature and seasons are sources of symbolism. All of the poems chosen for this study are about the natural world of the seasons. However, the seasons in this study convey profound meanings through symbolism.

In "The Spring," Thomas Carew used symbols, metaphors, and personifications to convey meaning. Seasons, nature, and vegetation symbolize seasonal variations. He equated the earth, the sun, and the valleys, hills, and woodlands with mankind. He gave the earth, sun, hills, valleys, and forests lives and emotions. These literary devices enable him to express himself. Metaphors, personifications, and symbols are used in "The Summer I Was Sixteen." Pool, mouth/lip, and bees are used as metaphors. Each has a comparison. The poet personifies the pool as though it had life and emotions. The poem symbolizes young love through looking, kissing, and tossing. In "Autumn Song," W. H. Auden utilizes metaphors ("Able hands are compelled to freeze," "Dead in hundreds cry Alack," and "Nurse's flowers will not last") to emphasize his anguish in this poem and symbols such as "Prms go rolling on" to depict life's cycle, which ends with death. Ogden Nash uses winter to represent emotion in his poem "Winter Morning" to accentuate emotions through the personification of the weather as if it had life and feelings of its own and could change things at whim, the metaphor of a king of the snowmen, and the symbols of snow and frost rejuvenating deadened spirits. In "Blow, Blow, Thou Winter Wind," William Shakespeare employed personifications of inanimate objects ("Thy teeth is not so keen," "Although thy breath be nasty," and "Thou art not so unkind") and similes to clarify his concepts (namely, the cold wind compared to human beings).

The findings of this study are consistent with those of the prior studies (Arianto, 2022; Mansouri & Omidbakhsh, 2022; Jadoua, 2022) that symbolism conveys messages beyond literal interpretation. The messages involve psychology. Similar to other research studies of literary works (Keshavarz, 2022; Chirico, 2022; Sandy, 2022; Yousuf, 2022), symbolism has a mental connection. The findings of this present study revealed that symbolism is associated with the mind. Spring in "The Spring" represents seasonal cycles and love. Summer in "The Summer I Was Sixteen" represents a nostalgic past. Autumn in "Autumn Song" represents grief, loss, and death. Winter in "Winter Morning" represents emotion; "Blow, Blow, Thou Winter Wind" represents phony friendship, and "Those Winter Sundays" represents love and gratitude to parents. These profound messages conveyed through symbolism in this present study share some similarities with prior studies (Nusratilloevna, 2021; Doggett & Emerson, 1989; Benamou, 1978; Sokołowicz, 2012; Barnes, 2006; Madrakhimova, 2022).

Like the prior study that revealed the relationship between seasons and mind in various aspects, such as sad memories in a person's heart (Iroda, 2022), this present study found that autumn in "Autumn Song" by W. H. Auden represents the poet's grief, loss, and death. This finding was consistent with pessimism in Altunsoy's study (2020), deaths in Thomson's finding (2022), and a lost relationship with love in Farmer's study (2021). Unlike Nuralieva (2022), who found that the poet's romanticism makes "Winter Morning" lovely, winter symbolizes emotion and a rebirth of spirit in this present study.

### **5.3 Limitations of the Study**

Only the textual analysis of the poems was the subject of this study. This focus was both a strength and a drawback. The poets' personal and societal circumstances were disregarded.

#### **5.4 Suggestions for future study**

The future inquiry should include the poets' personal and societal circumstances and relevance in the analysis.

#### **5.5 Implications of the Study**

Practically, this study highlights the history and use of symbolism in poetry. The findings shed light on the symbolism in the selected poems. Understanding symbolism socially and culturally needs interpretation and an inherent reaction, which promotes learning about symbolism that is everywhere. Also, interpreting symbols cognitively and emotionally demands higher-order thinking skills that help us understand our inner life and soul. Psychologically, imagining the beauty of the poetry itself and the natural and seasonal topics in the poetry creates joy. Imagination makes us free and happy. Freedom and pleasure brighten our lives and provide true soul fulfillment.

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