

Background: Signs communicate fairly elaborate concepts using only a character, almost like the pictograms used by some cultures prior to the development of the alphabet system. Consider some of these signs:



Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914), the American founder of semiotics, defined a sign as:

"Something which stands to somebody for something in some respect or capacity"

Your Task (should you choose to accept it):

Design a street sign to go with **any four** of the following the following words:

education	love	industry	confusion
hospitality	cheer	health	resistance
agriculture	jealousy	security	panic
technology	relief	arts	anger

Guidelines:

I. You must not use any currently existing symbols in the creation of your new one, unless you alter them heavily. Letters, for example, can be the building blocks of your

new sign but when it's finished I shouldn't be able to see obvious letters in it, but rather a new shape. No tear drops, no human shapes, no faces, no un-altered punctuation.

2. Symbols/signs can be simple (enough S's in that sentence for you?) as long as they feel complete. Imagine your symbol being reproduced in many different places in many different sizes- from tiny little versions on the backs of electronics to the sides of wastebaskets to billboards and trucks and stationary. If a symbol is too complex it won't be easily adopted.

3. The best symbols are non-literal. In other words, they should feel like what they represent, but be open to interpretation as to why they represent it. So, an angry looking eye is probably too obvious.

4. Try to go from emotion → symbol rather than from emotion → something that I think of when I think of that emotion → symbol.

Or, if you do the latter, try not to make it obvious!

5. Consider looking the words up in the dictionary, even if you feel like you know their meaning. (dictionary.com; m-w.com)

Example: (not actual size)



Project Specs:

1. You must sketch out ideas for each in your design book or your grade will be negatively affected. These must be shown to me in your meeting with me.

2. Files can be Photoshop, Illustrator, or whatever other program you wish to use. Each sign must be 400x400 pixels, though within that file size, it can be round, polygonal, square, whatever you choose. Illustrator is highly recommended for this project.

Illustrator tip : Select a letter with the selection tool (black arrow.) Go to the Type menu and choose "Create Outlines". Use the direct selection tool to distort the letter.

*Please note: I will be using the school machines to grade your work, and these do not have Adobe CS2 software yet. Please save your work in CS or earlier format.

3. Symbols should be black and white only, though you may display additional color variations within the same file.

4. Please type the name of the emotion they represent somewhere in the file.

When we present these to the class **please have the symbol name layer hidden** so we can try and guess which word from the list each symbol represents.

Please do not name that layer anything that will give away the word.

Please name your files "symbol1 – symbol4" so as not to give away the word.

5. You are encouraged to draw and scan, use Wacom tablets, use letterforms as your jumping off point, and look at as many symbols and signs as you can to get an idea.

6. You can turn these in printed, or give them to me on a CD (with your name printed clearly on top, and IN A CASE OR SLEEVE.) We will look at everyone's signs on Dec. 7th so please be prepared to show them to the class.

For more information, you might find useful 1000 Symbols by Rowena and Rupert Shepherd.