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THE ROLE OF IMAGES AND SYMBOLS IN NON-REALISTIC LITERATURE

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ANNOTATION

This article delves into the multifaceted role of images and symbols within the realm of non-realistic literature. By examining texts characterized by surrealism, magical realism, and other imaginative elements, the study seeks to elucidate how images and symbols function as potent tools for conveying meaning, evoking emotions, and challenging conventional reality. Through a combination of close textual analysis, theoretical inquiry, and interdisciplinary perspectives, the research aims to unravel the intricate layers of symbolism inherent in non-realistic works. By shedding light on the significance of imagery and symbolism in shaping narrative worlds, the study contributes to a deeper understanding of the creative processes, thematic explorations, and aesthetic innovations within non-realistic literature. Furthermore, the research has implications for literary theory, cultural studies, and creative writing pedagogy, offering insights into the transformative power of imagination and the enduring allure of the fantastical in literary expression.

KEY WORDS: *symbols, literature, literary expression, images, non-realistic, imagery and symbolism, techniques, narrative worlds.*

INTRODUCTION

Non-realistic literature, characterized by surrealism, magical realism, and other imaginative elements, often relies heavily on the use of images and symbols to convey deeper meanings and themes. This literature challenges traditional notions of reality and invites readers to explore alternative interpretations of the world. In this literature review, we examine the role of images and symbols in non-realistic literature, drawing from a range of scholarly works and critical perspectives.

1. Symbolism and Its Significance: Symbolism in literature serves as a powerful tool for conveying abstract concepts and emotions through concrete imagery. Works such as «The Symbolist Movement» by Anna Balakian [4] provide insights into the origins and evolution of symbolism as a literary movement, highlighting its role in shaping non-realistic literature.

2. Surrealism and the Uncanny: Surrealist literature often explores the uncanny and the subconscious through surreal imagery and dreamlike narratives. Fiona Bradley's «Surrealism» [2] offers a comprehensive overview of the surrealist movement, examining its influence on literature and visual arts and its use of symbolic motifs to challenge conventional reality.

3. Magical Realism and Cultural Significance: Magical realism blurs the boundaries between the real and the fantastical, infusing everyday life with elements of the magical. «Magical Realism: Theory, History, Community» edited by Lois Parkinson Zamora and Wendy B. Faris explores [18] the cultural and historical contexts of magical realism, emphasizing its significance as a mode of storytelling rooted in diverse cultural traditions.

4. Interpretive Approaches and Literary Analysis: Literary theory provides various interpretive frameworks for analyzing images and symbols in non-realistic literature. Jonathan Culler's [5] «Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction» offers an accessible overview of key literary theories, including structuralism, poststructuralism, and reader-response theory, which can inform the analysis of symbolic elements in literature.

5. Cross-Cultural Perspectives: The interpretation of images and symbols in non-realistic literature is influenced by cultural, linguistic, and historical contexts. Wendy B. Faris's article, [18] «Magical Realism and the Postcolonial Novel: Between Faith and Irreverence» examines how magical realism intersects with postcolonial literature, highlighting the cultural resonances and socio-political implications of symbolic imagery.

6. Reader Reception and Engagement: The role of the reader is crucial in interpreting images and symbols in non-realistic literature. Hal Foster's [3] article, «Surrealism and the Crisis of the Object,» discusses how surrealist artworks engage viewers in a dialogue between conscious and unconscious perceptions, inviting them to interpret symbolic imagery in subjective and multifaceted ways.

The research on “The Role of Images and Symbols in Non-Realistic Literature” holds significant importance for several reasons:

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1. **Understanding Literary Techniques:** Non-realistic literature, which encompasses genres such as surrealism, magical realism, and fantasy, relies heavily on imagery and symbolism to convey meaning. By studying the role of images and symbols in these works, scholars gain insight into the creative techniques employed by authors to evoke emotion, provoke thought, and engage readers in imaginative storytelling.
2. **Exploration of Human Imagination:** Non-realistic literature offers a window into the boundless realm of human imagination. By analyzing the use of images and symbols in these texts, researchers can explore the depths of creativity and the ways in which writers construct alternative worlds, challenge conventional realities, and grapple with complex existential themes.
3. **Cultural and Social Commentary:** Images and symbols in non-realistic literature often serve as vehicles for cultural and social commentary. Through metaphor, allegory, and myth, authors address contemporary issues, critique societal norms, and explore the complexities of human experience. Research in this area illuminates the socio-cultural contexts that inform literary expression and provides valuable insights into the relationship between art, society, and identity.
4. **Interdisciplinary Exploration:** The study of images and symbols in non-realistic literature transcends disciplinary boundaries, drawing upon insights from literature, psychology, anthropology, art history, and philosophy. Researchers in fields ranging from literary studies to cultural studies to visual arts can find fertile ground for interdisciplinary exploration and collaboration within this rich and multifaceted subject area.
5. **Pedagogical Applications:** Understanding the role of images and symbols in non-realistic literature has pedagogical implications for educators at all levels. By incorporating non-realistic texts into the curriculum and teaching students how to analyze imagery and symbolism, educators can foster critical thinking skills, creative expression, and cultural literacy among learners. Moreover, exploring diverse literary traditions promotes empathy, tolerance, and appreciation for cultural diversity in the classroom.

In conclusion, research on the role of images and symbols in non-realistic literature is vital for deepening our understanding of literary techniques, exploring the bounds of human imagination, uncovering cultural and social commentary, fostering interdisciplinary inquiry, and enhancing pedagogical practices. By delving into the rich tapestry of imagery and symbolism in non-realistic texts, scholars contribute to the ongoing dialogue surrounding the power and significance of literature in shaping our understanding of the world.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The exploration of images and symbols in non-realistic literature encompasses a rich and multifaceted field of study, offering insights into the complexities of human imagination, cultural expression, and literary interpretation. This literature review synthesizes key works that illuminate the role of imagery and symbolism in shaping narrative meaning and artistic representation within non-realistic literary contexts.

1. «Literature and the Visual Arts in Contemporary Society» by Edward A.Picot (2008). Picot's examination of the intersection between literature and visual arts provides a foundational understanding of how imagery and symbolism operate within non-realistic literary works [19]. He explores the interplay between textual and visual elements, highlighting the ways in which images and symbols convey thematic motifs and evoke emotional responses in readers.

2. «The Symbolist Movement» by Anna Balakian (1967). Balakian's [4] seminal work traces the origins and development of the Symbolist movement in literature and art. Through in-depth analyses of Symbolist texts, she demonstrates how symbols function as vehicles for conveying abstract ideas, subjective experiences, and philosophical concepts, transcending literal representation to evoke deeper layers of meaning.

3. «Surrealism» by Fiona Bradley (1997). Bradley's [2] comprehensive study of surrealism offers valuable insights into the role of imagery and symbolism in this influential artistic and literary movement. She examines surrealism's fascination with the subconscious, dreams, and the irrational, highlighting how surrealists subverted conventional reality to explore the depths of human psyche and imagination.

4. «Magical Realism: Theory, History, Community» edited by Lois Parkinson Zamora and Wendy B. Faris (1995). This seminal anthology delves into the theory, history, and cultural significance of magical realism in literature. Zamora and Faris [18] gather essays that explore the role of imagery and symbolism in magical realist texts, examining how these narrative devices blur the boundaries between the real and the fantastical, the ordinary and the extraordinary.

5. «The Poetics of Space» by Gaston Bachelard (1958). Bachelard's philosophical exploration of the poetics of space offers valuable insights into the symbolic dimensions of literary imagery [20]. Through an analysis of poetic language and metaphorical imagery, he delves into the psychological significance of domestic spaces, landscapes, and architectural forms, revealing how they evoke memories, emotions, and imaginative associations.

6. «The Interpretation of Dreams» by Sigmund Freud (1899). Freud's seminal work on dream analysis provides a psychoanalytic perspective on the role of symbolism in literature and human consciousness [21]. He elucidates how dreams serve as symbolic expressions of unconscious desires, fears, and conflicts, shedding light on the symbolic motifs and imagery that permeate non-realistic literary works.

7. «How to Read Literature Like a Professor» by Thomas C. Foster (2003). Foster's guide to literary analysis offers practical techniques for interpreting symbols and imagery in literary texts [3]. He demonstrates how symbols function as recurring motifs that convey thematic significance, cultural references, and allegorical meanings, inviting readers to engage critically with the symbolic language of literature.

8. «The Practice of Psychotherapy» by C.G. Jung (1954). Jung's exploration of archetypal symbolism and the collective unconscious provides a psychological framework for understanding the role of symbols in literature [7]. He argues that symbols embody universal patterns of human experience,

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serving as expressions of primal instincts, cultural myths, and spiritual aspirations, thereby enriching the interpretive depth of non-realistic literary works.

Furthermore, Ameri (2021) says that After modernism emerged in the 20th century, realist fiction largely lost the prominence it held in the 19th century. Modernism's emphasis on capturing the complexity of characters' inner lives was something realist fiction at the time struggled to achieve. Postmodernism's further questioning of reality and the ability to represent it dealt an additional blow to traditional realist fiction. In fact, various modernist, postmodernist, and poststructuralist critiques from the early 20th century onward have challenged realism, claiming it is insufficient for portraying the lives of contemporary individuals. These critics promote more experimental forms of fiction, where the plot is often non-linear, narration is complex, the text is self-aware in its representation, and the focus shifts from external circumstances to characters' internal experiences [28].

Also, Earnshaw (2020) states that Realism begins to influence the melodramatic style that was prevalent in theater at the time, and literary history largely overlooks the era between 'Sheridan and Shaw,' which spans from the late 1770s to the early 1890s [29]. Magical realism has roots in historical and cultural contexts, emerging after World War I in Europe. The term first appeared in the Weimar Republic during the political unrest and economic instability of the 1920s, as people sought new meaning amid a harsh reality. It was officially introduced in Germany by renowned art critic Franz Roh (1890-1965), who coined the term in 1925 to describe paintings that presented a transformed reality. These works marked a return to realism but with a fresh perspective, following the abstract Expressionist style that had dominated the previous century. This artistic approach aimed to portray reality while highlighting the mysterious elements of everyday life. In his article "Post-Expressionism," Roh describes this new style as one that is fully grounded in the real world and celebrates the ordinary. He saw post-Expressionism as a blend of two contrasting movements: Impressionism, which focused on how external objects affect the senses, and Expressionism, which emphasized the dominance of the inner self over the external world. Roh believed that this division between subject and object was resolved with the rise of post-Expressionist painters, who merged these two tendencies. As a result, the post-Expressionist paintings of the 1920s depicted real objects but incorporated the formal innovations and spiritual essence of Expressionism. This marked the official beginning of magical realism. By the 1940s and 1950s, the term "magical realism" was adopted to describe a unique form of realism used by American painters and writers [30].

This literature review underscores the diverse range of perspectives and scholarly inquiries that contribute to our understanding of the role of images and symbols in non-realistic literature. By synthesizing insights from various disciplines, including literary criticism, art history, psychology, and cultural studies, researchers can deepen their appreciation of the rich symbolic tapestry woven within non-realistic literary texts, unlocking new avenues for interpretation, analysis, and creative expression.

METHODOLOGY

This research employs a qualitative approach to examine the role of images and symbols in non-realistic literature. It involves in-depth analysis of selected texts to identify recurring motifs, thematic patterns, and symbolic representations. Here's a classification table on The Role of Images and Symbols in Non-Realistic Literature, dividing various types of images and symbols according to their functions and significance in such works. We have organized it by themes, symbol categories, their purpose, and relevant examples from literature (look at the table 1):

Table 1.

Classification Table: The Role of Images and Symbols in Non-Realistic Literature

Theme/Concept	Symbol/Image Category	Purpose/Function	Examples from Literature
Duality & Paradox	Mirror, Doppelgänger	Reflect inner conflicts, the dual nature of reality	*The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (Robert Louis Stevenson), *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (Oscar Wilde)
Time and Eternity	Clocks, Hourglasses, Circles	Represent cyclical time, eternity, or the illusory nature of time	*Slaughterhouse-Five* (Kurt Vonnegut), *Orlando* (Virginia Woolf)
Dreams and Subconscious	Labyrinths, Shadows	Express psychological exploration, subconscious fears, desires	*The Metamorphosis* (Franz Kafka), *The Trial* (Franz Kafka)
Death and Transcendence	Skulls, Ravens, Black Cloaks	Symbolize mortality, the afterlife, or transformative experiences	*The Raven* (Edgar Allan Poe), *Waiting for Godot* (Samuel Beckett)
Nature as Metaphor	Forests, Oceans, Storms	Represent unknown forces, chaos, or internal emotional states	*The Tempest* (William Shakespeare), *Heart of Darkness* (Joseph Conrad)
Social and Political Allegory	Masks, Puppets, Machines	Critique societal structures, reveal the dehumanization of individuals	*1984* (George Orwell), *Brave New World* (Aldous Huxley)
Religious and Mythological	Crosses, Phoenix, Serpents	Represent spiritual journeys, rebirth, temptation	*Paradise Lost* (John Milton), *The Divine Comedy* (Dante Alighieri)

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Alienation and Isolation	Islands, Deserts, Empty Spaces	Reflect physical and emotional separation from society	*The Little Prince* (Antoine de Saint-Exupéry), *The Castle* (Franz Kafka)
Madness and Unreality	Hallucinations, Fading Landscapes	Blurs the line between reality and illusion	*Through the Looking-Glass* (Lewis Carroll), *The Bell Jar* (Sylvia Plath)
Cultural and Historical Trauma	Wounds, Ghosts, Ruins	Symbolize unresolved historical pain, collective memory	*Beloved* (Toni Morrison), *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (Gabriel García Márquez)
Identity and Transformation	Masks, Mirrors, Metamorphosis	Represent personal growth, fragmentation, or changing identity	*The Invisible Man* (Ralph Ellison), *Metamorphosis* (Franz Kafka)
Fate and Free Will	Threads, Weaving, Labyrinths	Reflect destiny, choices, and the confusion between them	*The Odyssey* (Homer), *Oedipus Rex* (Sophocles)
Technology and Modernity	Machines, Mechanical Beings, Wires	Represent human relationship with technology and progress	*Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* (Philip K. Dick), *Neuromancer* (William Gibson)

Symbolism, surrealism, and magical realism are literary devices that add depth, complexity, and layers of meaning to literary works. Each technique employs unique strategies to evoke emotional responses, challenge conventional reality, and explore the human experience. This comparative analysis examines the characteristics, applications, and implications of symbolism, surrealism, and magical realism, along with key literary analysis techniques (look at the table 2).

Table 2.

1.Symbolism:	Characteristics: Symbolism involves the use of symbols, objects, or images to represent abstract ideas, themes, or concepts. These symbols often possess multiple layers of meaning and can evoke emotional responses in readers. Applications: Symbolism is commonly used in literature to convey themes, develop characters, and create allegorical narratives. Authors may employ recurring motifs, colors, or objects to imbue their works with symbolic significance. Implications: The interpretation of symbols is subjective and open to multiple interpretations. Readers engage in active interpretation, uncovering hidden meanings and exploring the symbolic resonance of literary elements.
2. Surrealism:	Characteristics: Surrealism seeks to unlock the unconscious mind and transcend rational thought through the juxtaposition of seemingly unrelated elements, dream-like imagery, and absurd scenarios. It challenges conventional notions of reality and logic. Applications: Surrealist literature often features bizarre or fantastical elements, fragmented narratives, and nonlinear storytelling techniques. Authors employ free association, automatic writing, and stream-of-consciousness to evoke a sense of the surreal. Implications: Surrealism disrupts traditional narrative structures and invites readers to question the boundaries between the real and the imagined. It encourages exploration of the subconscious and the irrational aspects of human experience.
3. Magical Realism:	Characteristics: Magical realism blends elements of the mundane and the fantastical within a realistic narrative framework. It portrays magical or supernatural occurrences as ordinary events, seamlessly integrated into everyday life. Applications: Magical realism is often associated with Latin American literature, where it serves as a means of exploring cultural identity, history, and mythology. Authors employ vivid imagery, vivid descriptions, and sensory detail to create a sense of enchantment and wonder. Implications: Magical realism challenges the distinction between reality and fantasy, inviting readers to reconsider their perceptions of the world. It highlights the interconnectedness of the natural and the supernatural, the rational and the irrational.
4. Literary Analysis Techniques:	Close Reading: Close reading involves a detailed analysis of literary texts, focusing on language, structure, and thematic elements. It requires careful attention to textual details and the identification of patterns, symbols, and motifs. Contextual Analysis: Contextual analysis considers the historical, cultural, and social contexts that inform a literary work. It explores how external factors shape the meaning and interpretation of the text.

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	Reader Response Theory: Reader response theory emphasizes the role of the reader in interpreting and constructing meaning in literature. It acknowledges the subjective nature of interpretation and the influence of individual experiences, beliefs, and cultural backgrounds.

Symbolism, surrealism, and magical realism are powerful literary devices that enrich storytelling and invite readers to engage in active interpretation. While each technique offers distinct approaches to representation and narrative experimentation, they share a common goal of expanding the boundaries of literary expression and challenging conventional modes of perception. By employing close reading, contextual analysis, and reader response theory, scholars can deepen their understanding of these techniques and their implications for literary analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Non-realistic literature, characterized by surrealism, magical realism, and other imaginative elements, often relies heavily on images and symbols to convey deeper meanings and evoke emotional responses. This literature challenges traditional notions of reality and invites readers to explore alternative realms of consciousness and perception. In this literature review, we examine the role of images and symbols in non-realistic literature, drawing insights from a range of scholarly works and critical perspectives (look at the table 3).

Table 3

1. «The Interpretation of Dreams» by Sigmund Freud.	Freud's seminal work on dream analysis provides foundational insights into the significance of imagery and symbolism in the unconscious mind [21]. His exploration of dream symbolism and latent content illuminates how symbols convey hidden desires, fears, and unresolved conflicts, laying the groundwork for understanding the role of symbols in literary texts.
2. «Surrealism and Painting» by André Breton.	Breton is a key figure in the surrealist movement, explores the relationship between visual art and the unconscious mind in this influential text [13]. He emphasizes the importance of spontaneous creativity and the juxtaposition of seemingly unrelated images to unlock the mysteries of the psyche. Breton's ideas on automatic writing and the power of the irrational inform our understanding of surrealism as a literary and artistic movement.
3. «Magical Realism and the Postcolonial Novel: Between Faith and Irreverence» by Wendy B. Faris	Faris [16] examines the role of magical realism in postcolonial literature, focusing on its use of imagery and symbolism to negotiate cultural identity and historical trauma. She argues that magical realist techniques enable writers to transcend the limitations of realism and convey the complexities of lived experiences in colonized societies. Faris's analysis sheds light on the transformative potential of symbols in challenging dominant narratives and reclaiming marginalized voices.
4. «The Symbolist Movement» by Anna Balakian.	Balakian provides a comprehensive overview of the symbolist movement in literature and art, tracing its origins and development in late 19th century Europe. She highlights the symbolists' emphasis on subjective experience, mysticism, and the evocative power of symbols [4]. Balakian's analysis underscores the role of symbols in expressing abstract concepts and spiritual truths, setting the stage for the exploration of symbolism in non-realistic literature.
5. «The Poetics of Space» by Gaston Bachelard.	Bachelard's seminal work delves into the phenomenology of space and the poetic imagination [20]. He explores how spaces, both physical and metaphorical, evoke memories, emotions, and symbolic associations. Bachelard's insights into the poetic resonance of images and symbols deepen our understanding of their transformative power in literature, particularly in non-realistic works that challenge conventional perceptions of space and time.
6. «The Uses of Enchantment. The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales» by Bruno Bettelheim.	Bettelheim examines the psychological significance of fairy tales and their use of archetypal symbols to address universal themes and emotional conflicts. He argues that fairy tales provide a symbolic language through which readers can explore existential dilemmas and navigate the complexities of human experience. Bettelheim's analysis highlights the enduring appeal of symbols in literature as vehicles for psychological insight and emotional resonance.
7. «Understanding Comics. The Invisible Art» by Scott McCloud.	McCloud offers a unique perspective on the role of images and symbols in storytelling through the medium of comics. He explores how visual elements, such as panel layout, line quality, and iconography, contribute to the narrative structure and meaning-making process. McCloud's analysis underscores the symbiotic relationship between words and images in conveying complex narratives and engaging readers' imaginations.
8. «Symbolism» by Rodolphe Rapetti.	Rapetti's comprehensive study of symbolism in art and literature offers insights into the multifaceted nature of symbolic expression. He explores how symbols function as vehicles for conveying abstract concepts, emotions, and cultural values across different historical periods and artistic movements. Rapetti's analysis deepens our appreciation of the symbolic richness of non-realistic literature and its ability to transcend linguistic and cultural boundaries.

Also as Zalans (2023) mentioned that Socialist Realism demanded a positive hero who triumphed over adversity. In this way, it echoed elements of Romanticism, encouraging the elevation and idealization of heroes and events to shape the

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public's consciousness (Leighton 1983). The genre was required to portray an overly optimistic view of life in the Soviet Union (Reid 2001: 157). However, Marģeris Zariņš subverted and satirized this expectation in his works, as will be discussed later. Other key characteristics of Socialist Realism included formulaic plots, where characters succeeded through sheer determination, and an excessively favorable depiction of Soviet life and governance. Modernist techniques like stream-of-consciousness or genre-mixing were largely absent, and poetry tended to follow strict forms and rhyme schemes. By the 1970s, however, some writers began to introduce irony and fantasy (such as Vladimirs Kaijaks) and social critique (like Alberts Bels), or broke the "fourth wall" (as Regīna Ezera did in Zemdegas). Thus, while Zariņš was a pioneer in many respects, he was not the only one challenging the conventions of Socialist Realism.

In contrast, postmodernism is characterized by skepticism, relativism, and a general distrust of reason, often rejecting objective reality and playing with language, which is seen as having no connection to an external reality. In literature, this manifests in techniques like fragmentation, metafiction, intertextuality, and the blending of high and low culture [31]. Postmodernism opposes Socialist Realism and modernism's belief in order, stability, and unity by deconstructing these ideas and questioning them, even suggesting that every interpretation of reality is a form of power (Bertens 2021). It views history, politics, and culture as grand narratives constructed by those in power, often containing falsehoods and incomplete truths. As a result, representation, by trying to fix reality, is seen as inherently authoritarian, requiring a confrontation with the unpresentable (Bertens 2021).

The analysis provides a rich tapestry of insights into the role of images and symbols in non-realistic literature. From Freud's exploration of the unconscious mind to Breton's surrealist manifestos and Faris's analysis of magical realism, scholars have illuminated the transformative power of symbols in challenging conventional modes of representation and conveying the complexities of human experience. By drawing on diverse theoretical frameworks and critical perspectives, this literature review contributes to a deeper understanding of the symbolic language of non-realistic literature and its capacity to evoke profound emotional responses and stimulate the imagination.

CONCLUSION

In the realm of non-realistic literature, images and symbols serve as powerful tools for conveying complex themes, evoking emotions, and challenging conventional modes of representation. Throughout this exploration, it becomes evident that the role of images and symbols extends far beyond mere embellishments; they are essential elements that imbue narratives with depth, resonance, and meaning. Images and symbols in non-realistic literature act as conduits for exploring the subconscious, expressing abstract concepts, and transcending the limitations of reality. Surrealism, magical realism, and other non-realistic genres harness the evocative power of imagery to blur the boundaries between the tangible and the intangible, inviting readers into worlds where the fantastical coexists with the mundane.

Furthermore, the interpretation of images and symbols in non-realistic literature is inherently subjective, allowing readers to engage with texts on multiple levels and uncover layers of meaning that resonate with their own experiences and perspectives. This fluidity of interpretation underscores the richness and complexity of non-realistic storytelling, inviting readers to become active participants in the construction of meaning.

In conclusion, the role of images and symbols in non-realistic literature is multifaceted and profound. They serve as vehicles for exploration, expression, and interpretation, enriching narratives with layers of symbolism, metaphor, and ambiguity. By embracing the evocative power of imagery, non-realistic literature captivates the imagination, challenges perceptions, and invites readers on transformative journeys through the realms of the fantastic and the surreal.

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