



Torch of Meaning

Directions: Read the passage carefully. Identify any **symbols** (objects, actions, or images) in the text that carry cultural or historical meaning. Use the context of the passage and your knowledge of history or culture to interpret what these symbols represent. Then, answer the questions in complete sentences, supporting your answers with evidence.

The Torch of Freedom

In 1886, crowds gathered at New York Harbor to witness the unveiling of the Statue of Liberty. Ships filled the waters, and people cheered as the massive figure came into view. The statue's raised torch glowed, even on a cloudy day, signaling hope to the immigrants who sailed past on their way to Ellis Island. For many, the broken chains at the statue's feet went unnoticed, yet they carried deep meaning about the end of oppression. The crown with seven rays seemed to stretch toward every continent, suggesting that liberty was not only for America but for the entire world. Newspapers of the time declared the monument a "beacon of democracy," while critics questioned whether freedom truly reached all who lived in the nation. Still, the statue quickly became a cultural icon, its symbols resonating differently with each generation.

1. What does the **torch** symbolize in the passage's context?
2. What meaning do the **broken chains** at the statue's feet carry?
3. How does the **crown with seven rays** expand the meaning of the statue beyond just the United States?
4. Why might newspapers call the statue a "beacon of democracy"?
5. How does recognizing these symbols help deepen your understanding of the passage and its historical context?