

Alethiometer Symbols - d66 Table

From Philip Pullman's *His Dark Materials*, referencing [this page](#)¹ and specifically [this image](#)². Roll two six-sided dice and read as tens and units (e.g., rolling 3 and 5 = 35).

d66	Symbol	Primary Meaning	Secondary and Tertiary Meanings
11	Hourglass	Time	Death, Change
12	Sun	Day	Authority, Truth
13	Alpha and Omega	Finality	Process, Inevitability
14	Marionette	Obedience	Submission, Grace
15	Serpent	Evil	Guile, Natural wisdom
16	Cauldron (Crucible)	Alchemy	Craft, Achieved wisdom
21	Anchor	Hope	Steadfastness, Prevention
22	Angel	Messenger	Hierarchy, Disobedience
23	Helmet	War	Protection, Narrow vision
24	Beehive	Productive work	Sweetness, Light
25	Moon	Chastity	Mystery, The uncanny
26	Madonna	Motherhood	The feminine, Worship
31	Apple	Sin	Knowledge, Vanity
32	Bird	The soul (dæmon)	Spring, Marriage
33	Bread	Nourishment	Christ, Sacrifice
34	Ant	Mechanical work	Diligence, Tedium
35	Bull	Earth	Power, Honesty
36	Candle	Fire	Faith, Learning

d66	Symbol	Primary Meaning	Secondary and Tertiary Meanings
41	Cornucopia	Wealth	Autumn, Hospitality
42	Chameleon	Air	Greed, Patience
43	Thunderbolt	Inspiration	Fate, Chance
44	Dolphin	Water	Resurrection, Succour
45	Walled Garden	Nature	Innocence, Order
46	Globe	Politics	Sovereignty, Fame
51	Sword	Justice	Fortitude, The Church
52	Griffin	Treasure	Watchfulness, Courage
53	Horse	Europe	Journeys, Fidelity
54	Camel	Asia	Summer, Perseverance
55	Elephant	Africa	Charity, Continence
56	Crocodile (Caiman)	America	Rapacity, Enterprise
61	Baby	The future	Malleability, Helplessness
62	Compass	Measurement	Mathematics, Science
63	Lute	Poetry	Rhetoric, Philosophy
64	Tree	Firmness	Shelter, Fertility
65	Wild Man	Wild man	The masculine, Lust
66	Owl	Wisdom	Night, Death

¹ <https://hisdarkmaterials.fandom.com/wiki/Alethiometer>

² https://hisdarkmaterials.fandom.com/wiki/Alethiometer?file=Alethiometer_meanings.jpg

[taken from *ibid.*]

How to Use

Each symbol on the alethiometer has multiple levels of meaning, with scholars traditionally requiring reference books to decipher all the possible interpretations. According to Lyra’s explanation, “The first meaning of that is hope, because hope holds you fast like an anchor so you don’t give way. The second meaning is steadfastness. The third meaning is snag, or prevention. The fourth meaning is the sea.”

Roll a d66 to randomly select a symbol for divination, worldbuilding, or storytelling inspiration. The primary meaning (in bold) is the most common interpretation, while secondary and tertiary meanings offer deeper symbolic layers for more complex readings.

More On The Alethiometer

Each symbol has one primary meaning and a range of subsidiary meanings, which is potentially infinite. However, the subsidiary meanings are all related by association to the primary meaning.

So, for instance, the sun symbolizes (1) day, because it is during the day that we see the sun. It also symbolizes (2) authority, because the sun is the most powerful thing in the sky. Another meaning is (3) truth, because by the sun’s light we can see the true forms of things.

The sun range continues:
(4) kingship (or political authority of any kind), because the king is the sun around whom the court or the state revolves;
(5) a particular king or leader in the context of a query to the alethiometer, it will be obvious which one is meant);
(6) Phoebus Apollo, and thus rationality and the intellect, as opposed to the baser emotions;
(7) archery (Apollo’s bow and arrows) and thence
(8) the power of administering punishment at a distance, including
(9) plague;

The sun range continues:
(10) the creative arts (through Apollo’s patronage of the nine Muses);
(11) the laurel (through Apollo’s love for Daphne), and thence
(12) honor, prizes, fame, through Apollo’s awarding of the laurel wreath;
(13) divination and prophecy (through the Delphic Oracle);
(14) pastoral husbandry (Apollo’s flocks and herds), and thence
(15) a particular farm, and thence
(16) a particular beast;
(17) homosexual love (Apollo’s love for Hyacinthus);
(18) gold...

And so on, infinitely. No one has ever reached the end of a symbol range, even though some have been explored to the depth of a thousand or more meanings.

Each symbol is thus capable of expressing a multitude of ideas, but each subsidiary meaning carries with it some quality of the primary one, even when it may appear to coincide with a meaning in another range. For example, the meaning ‘sea’ appears both as number seven in the dolphin’s range and number four in the anchor’s, but it signifies different things in each. In the dolphin range, it means ‘the sea as wide, nourishing home’, and in the anchor range, ‘the sea as danger and unpredictability.’ A skillful reading of the alethiometer would have to take into account not only the meaning itself, wherever it comes within the range, but also the significance lent it by the range itself.