

A sign is a visible  
stand in  
for invisible ideas.

*For example:*

In our contemporary culture,  
a baseball cap worn with its bill backwards  
(which we can see)

stands for

many invisible ideas  
(which we can't see)  
such as

"rebelliousness,"  
"resistance to conformity,"  
"edginess,"  
"toughness,"  
"a laid back, devil-may-care attitude,"  
etc.

As an analyst of cultural signs,  
you zero-in on a specific sign that is visible,  
then make persuasive claims about the invisible  
ideas that underlie that sign.

Courtesy of Profs. Greg Fraser & Chad Davidson