Singular propositions can be symbolized. There are two different kinds of symbols for referring to individualsand to attributes. To denote individuals (following a very widely adopted convention) small, or lowercase, letters, from 'a'to 'w' is used. These symbols are 'individualconstants'. In any particular context in which they may occur, each will designate one particular individual throughout the whole of that context. It is usually convenient to denote an individual by the first letter of its (or his or her) name. We may use the letter 's'to denote Socrates, 'a'to denote Aristotle, 'b'to denote Brazil, 'c'to denote Chicago, and so forth. Capital letters are used to symbolize attributes that individuals may have, and again it is convenient to use the first letter of the attribute referred to: 'H'for human, 'M'for mortal, 'F'for fat, 'W'for wise, and so forth.

By writing an attributesymbol immediately to the left of an individual symbol, we symbolize the singular proposition affirming that the individual named has the attribute specified. Thus the singular proposition, "Socrates is human," will be symbolized simply as 'Hs'. Of course, 'Ha'symbolizes "Aristotle is human," 'Hb'symbolizes "Brazil is human," 'Hc'symbolizes "Chicago is human," and so forth. It is important to note the pattern that is common to these terms. Each begins with the same attribute symbol, H, and is followed by a symbol for some individual, sor aor bor c, and so forth. We could write the pattern as "H_", where the dash to the right of the predicate symbol is a place marker for some individual symbol. This pattern we symbolize as 'Hx'. We use 'Hx'[sometimes written as H(x)] to symbolize the common pattern of all singular propositions that attribute "being human" to some individual. The letter 'x'is called an 'individualvariable'-it is simply a place marker, indicating where the various individual letters 'a'through 'w'(the individual constants) may be written. When one of those constants does appear in place of 'x', we have a singular proposition. The letter 'x'is available to serve as the variable because, by convention, 'a'through 'w'are the only letters we allow to serve as individual constants.