



Recognizing Allusions

An allusion is when a person or author makes an indirect reference to a (usually past) event or figure. An allusion does not give much detail about the reference or describe things in detail, as the event or figure is typically of momentous-significance historically, culturally, or politically, so the author has a reasonable expectation that people will understand the allusion without explanation. Allusions are often used within a metaphor or simile. In these cases, the comparison alludes to an event or person of significance that should be widely recognized. Allusions often make reference to previous works of literature, especially references to the Bible and Greek or Roman mythology.

DIRECTIONS: Read each of the sentences below. Underline the allusion. Then identify whether it alludes to literature, mythology, or the Bible. Explain.

1. As my sister told us this story, I expected her nose to start growing.

2. They were delighted to be chosen to receive a free sample, but it turned out to be a Trojan Horse. Before they knew it they were cajoled into purchasing and subscribing to things that they never wanted in the first place.

3. We all admire John because he is such a good Samaritan.

4. The project got larger and larger in scope, and I got more and more frustrated. eventually my parents started referring to me as Jonah.

5. If Jennie weren't so narcissistic, she might actually be fun to hang out with.
