

Allusions Worth Knowing

6th Grade

Six references that turn up constantly in books, films and headlines.

An allusion is a reference to a well-known story. It borrows that story's meaning in one word.

Allusion	The story	What it now means
Achilles heel	hero invulnerable but for his heel	one fatal weakness
Pandora's box	a box releasing all the world's troubles	an action with unstoppable consequences
Midas touch	a king who turned all he touched to gold	a knack for making money
Herculean task	twelve near-impossible labours	an enormous undertaking
Trojan horse	soldiers hidden in a gift	a trick disguised as a gift
Odyssey	a ten-year journey home	a long, eventful journey

Allusions save a writer a paragraph. They only work if the reader knows the story.