

ALLUSION vs. ILLUSION

High School English Language Arts Worksheet

Know the Difference

ALLUSION - an indirect reference to a well-known person, place, event, character, story, work of literature, mythology, history, religion, or popular culture.

An allusion assumes the reader will recognize the reference & understand the additional meaning it creates.

Examples:

- *"He was a Romeo with the ladies."* - Refers to Romeo from Romeo and Juliet.
- *"She had the Midas touch."* - Refers to King Midas from Greek mythology.
- *"This assignment is my Achilles' heel."* - Refers to Achilles from Greek mythology and his vulnerable heel.

Remember: ALLUSION = A reference

ILLUSION - a false appearance, mistaken perception, or something that seems real but is not.

Examples:

- *The magician created the illusion that the woman disappeared.*
- *The desert heat created the illusion of water in the distance.*
- *The character realized that his perfect life had been an illusion.*

Remember: ILLUSION = Imaginary or deceptive appearance

Part I: Choose Allusion or Illusion

- _____ The author makes an indirect reference to a famous historical event.
- _____ The magician created the appearance that he could make a coin disappear.
- _____ The character compares his difficult journey to the journey of Odysseus.
- _____ The speaker makes an _____ to George Washington.
- _____ The image in the mirror was only an _____.
- _____ The fog created the _____ that someone was standing in the distance.
- _____ The poem contains an _____ to Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*.
- _____ The character's belief that everyone liked him turned out to be an _____.
- _____ The magician's trick created an _____ of a floating object.
- _____ The author uses an _____ to the story of David and Goliath.

Part II: Multiple Choice

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>11. What is an allusion?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. A false or misleading appearanceB. An indirect reference to something familiarC. A type of metaphorD. A character's mistaken belief | <p>12. What is an illusion?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. An indirect reference to literatureB. A reference to historyC. Something that appears real but is notD. A comparison between two characters |
|---|---|

13. Which sentence contains an allusion?

- A. The magician created an illusion of a floating ball.
- B. The bright lights made an illusion on the stage.
- C. He was as brave as Hercules.
- D. The fog made the road difficult to see.

14. Which sentence uses illusion correctly?

- A. The author made an illusion to Greek mythology.
- B. The character believed the oasis was real, but it was an illusion.
- C. The poem contained an illusion to Shakespeare.
- D. The writer used an illusion to Abraham Lincoln.

15. Which sentence uses allusion correctly?

- A. The magician performed an allusion with cards.
- B. The mirror created an allusion of a 2nd person.
- C. The author made an allusion to the American Revolution.
- D. The character discovered his dream was an allusion.

16. Which word best completes the sentence?

"The author makes an _____ to the biblical story of Noah."

- A. illusion
- B. allusion
- C. elusive
- D. imaginary

17. Which word best completes the sentence?

"The strange lights created the _____ that the house was floating."

- A. allusion
- B. illusion
- C. reference
- D. comparison

18. Which sentence demonstrates an allusion?

- A. "She thought she saw a ghost, but it was only an illusion."
- B. "He was no Einstein, but he solved the difficult problem."
- C. "The mirror made the room look larger."
- D. "The magician made the rabbit disappear."

Part III: Context Clues

Read each sentence carefully. Determine whether the correct word is **allusion** or **illusion**.

19. The writer's reference to the Garden of Eden was an _____ to the Bible.

Answer: _____

20. The dark shadows created the _____ that someone was standing behind the tree.

Answer: _____

21. The magician's greatest trick was creating the _____ that he could read people's minds.

Answer: _____

22. Calling the new student a "Sherlock Holmes" was an _____ to the famous detective.

Answer: _____

23. The novel contains an _____ to the Trojan War.

Answer: _____

24. The character eventually realized that his idea of a perfect world was only an _____.

Answer: _____

25. The phrase "Big Brother is watching" is an _____ to George Orwell's *1984*.

Answer: _____

26. The heat rising from the road created the _____ of water.

Answer: _____

Part IV: Explain Your Answer

Read each sentence and explain why the word is allusion or illusion.

27. "The coach called the new player a Hercules."

Answer: _____

Explanation:

"Hercules" refers to the famous hero from Greek _____. The coach is indirectly comparing the _____ to Hercules.

28. "The shadow looked like a person, but it was only an illusion."

Answer: _____

Explanation:

The shadow appears to be a _____, but it is not actually a person. It is a _____ or mistaken appearance.

29. "The author makes an allusion to Cinderella when describing the character's transformation."

Answer: _____

Explanation:

"Cinderella" refers to the well-known _____. The author indirectly connects the character's transformation to _____ transformation.

30. "The treasure turned out to be an illusion created by the magician."

Answer: _____

Explanation:

The treasure appears to be real, but it is actually a deceptive or _____ appearance created by the magician.

Part V: Identify the Allusion

Read each sentence. Identify what the underlined reference alludes to.

31. "After winning the competition, Maya felt like David defeating Goliath."

Allusion: _____

32. "The young couple's love story was a modern-day Romeo and Juliet."

Allusion: _____

33. "The scientist's invention was so impressive that people called him Einstein."

Allusion: _____

34. "He treated his new car like it was his precious."

Allusion: _____

35. "The student's long journey home was like Odysseus's journey."

Allusion: _____

Part VI: Fill-in-the-blank

Complete each sentence using the correct form or allusion or illusion.

36. "The author made an _____ to Greek mythology."

37. "The magician created an _____ that the woman had disappeared."

38. "The writer used an _____ to Abraham Lincoln."

39. "The character discovered that the mysterious figure was only an _____."

40. "The novel contains an _____ to the story of Cinderella."
