



The Oxford Dictionary of Allusions (Oxford Quick Reference)

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Allusions form a colourful extension to the English language, drawing on our collective knowledge of literature, mythology, and the Bible to give us a literary shorthand for describing people, places, and events. So a miser is a Scrooge, a strong man is a Samson or a Hercules, a beautiful woman is a Venus or a modern-day Helen of Troy- -we can suffer like Sisyphus, fail like Canute, or linger like the smile of the Cheshire Cat.

This reference work explains the meanings of the allusions in use in modern English, from Abaddon to Zorro, Tartarus to Tarzan, and Rubens to Rambo. Quotations from a range of authors and sources are included at most entries to illustrate usage--anywhere from Thomas Hardy to Ben Elton, Charles Dickens to Bridget Jones's Diary. This second edition includes completely up-to-date allusions--from Gollum to Kofi Annan--and a handy A-Z order has been adopted for extra ease of reference and usability.

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