# Dear incoming English 12 IB students for the 2019-2020 school year:

# The required reading for IB 12th grade demands a good background in cultural literacy. A way to acquire this background is to concentrate on common allusions that arise in literature (as well as in everyday media).

Allusion- (noun) - an implied or indirect reference to another literary work or event in history or in literature. [Webster's Collegiate] Two basic sources from which writers, especially poets, draw allusions and metaphors, are the Bible and the ancient classical writings (mainly Greek and Roman, but Indian and South American Latin, as well). Knowledge of the characters and stories contained in the Bible and in the body of myths and legends will add appreciably to the enjoyment of good literature of all kinds. From the very beginning of the literary canon, writers have borrowed characters, plots, and themes from these sources.

**Allusion workshop:** We are asking you to research some common allusions. **THESE NOTECARDS WILL BE DUE THE THIRD DAY OF CLASS (August 27th for A-Day, and August 28th for B-Day.)**

# Note Requirements: Handwritten, on index cards.

## Part one: STORIES: Take notes as you research these stories. Include the following:

1. Name of Story (Choose 10 from list on page 2 of this file)
2. Source or origin of the story (Biblical, Greek mythology, Mexican folklore, etc.)
3. 50 word summary of the story
4. 50-100 word concise **commentary** on themes and sources of conflict and their significance (man vs. man, vs. god, vs. nature, vs. himself, etc.) Focus. You cannot write everything but focus on something.
5. Source you used to read and research the story (Website and URL, for example)

Be an **articulate critic.** Identify and explain literary elements you notice being used and what they contribute to the piece. Draw apt connections to other pieces of literature or other genres where warranted.

**Part two: OTHER ALLUSIONS. For these, your cards will contain:**

1. Line, word or phrase (Choose 20 from list on page 2 of this file)
2. Source of the original allusion (Title of poem, Biblical, Greek mythology, Hindu, etc.)
3. Approximately 50-100 words explaining the meaning.
4. Source you used to research the allusion (Website and URL, for example)

## Grading Rubric for Allusion Cards

A= Excellent in every way, filled with thoughtful commentary using extensive evidence. Satisfies all the requirements and more.   
B= A good card. Satisfies all requirements. Effective and thoughtful commentary on content or meaning.  
C= An adequate card: perhaps thin on word requirements and/or depth. Over-simplified analysis and commentary on content, theme, or meaning.   
D= Little evidence of effort and thought. A “lazy card.”  
F= No card or does not meet requirements in any way.

## Sources for Allusion Workshop Readings

## *Wikipedia* is an excellent beginning source for the stories we have assigned, as this is informal research. Please note, however, that good research involves consideration of multiple sources, and multiple versions of any story may be found (especially on less-than-scholarly websites).

## Many excellent online sources exist on mythologies from various places, and the Bible is an obvious source for the biblical allusions.

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| **Part One: The Stories – Choose 10**   1. The Garden of Eden (Genesis chapters 1-3) 2. The Legend of Popocatepetl and Iztaccihuatl (Mexican folk tale) 3. Cain and Abel (Genesis chapter 4) 4. The Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32) 5. Pygmalion and Galatea (Greek mythology) 6. Echo and Narcissus (Greek mythology) 7. Cupid and Psyche (Greek mythology) 8. The Parable of the Sowers (Bible) 9. The Birth of Christ (Luke 1-2) 10. David and Goliath (1 Samuel 17:1-51) 11. Persephone (Greek mythology) 12. Odysseus and Penelope (Greek mythology) 13. Daedalus and Icarus (Greek mythology) 14. Orpheus and Eurydice (Greek mythology) 15. The Story of Job (The book of Job, Bible) 16. Mary & Martha (Luke 10:38-42, Bible) 17. La Llorona & La Planchada (Mexican folk tale) 18. Ramayana (Hindu story) 19. Vishnu (Hinduism) | **Part Two: Other Allusions – Choose 20**   1. Arabian Nights 2. asceticism 3. avatar 4. Brahmins 5. Chosen people 6. nirvana 7. original sin 8. Seven deadly sins/Seven heavenly virtues 9. purgatory 10. Alexander the Great 11. Big Brother is watching you 12. “They also serve who only stand and wait.” 13. “A Modest Proposal” -- what is being proposed? 14. There’s a divinity that shapes our ends 15. Pyrrhic Victory 16. Untouchables 17. For whom the bell tolls 18. Gather ye rosebuds while ye may 19. Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde 20. Invictus 21. Iago 22. Lilliputian 23. “The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars, but in ourselves, that we are underlings.” 24. Jezebel 25. *In the desert there is no sign that says, Thou shalt not eat stones*. 26. Things fall apart; the center cannot hold; mere anarchy is loosed upon the world. 27. Yahoos 28. Armageddon / Apocalypse 29. Sisyphus 30. Gilead 31. Catch-22 32. “All things fall and are built again, and those that build them again are gay.” 33. “Too long a sacrifice / can make a stone of the heart.” 34. “Some are born to sweet delight, some are born to endless night.” 35. “The beautiful things we shall write if we have talent, are inside us…” |

## We study *Hamlet*, *The Handmaid’s Tale* by Margaret Atwood, *A Fine Balance* by Rohinton Mistry, Juan Rulfo’s *Pedro Paramo*, as well as selections from *Jump and Other Stories* by Nadine Gordimer and Eavan Boland’s body of poetry, in addition to supplemental articles, essays, and other texts. Students’ understanding and ability to recognize these allusions in the text will provide a richer reading and critical thinking experience.

## *A Fine Balance* is a 600-page text, and some students opt to read this over summer break. This is NOT required, and all students should be aware that ample time during December and January will be given for students to successfully complete a scholarly reading of this text that will be critical for the in-depth seminars that follow.

## We look forward to our classes next year! ☺

## The 12 IB English Language and Literature Team