

Name:

Period:

Allusions to *The Odyssey* in *O Brother, Where art Thou?*

Allusions are brief and indirect references to a person, place, thing or idea of historical, cultural, literary, or political significance. It does not describe it in detail, but rather is a passing reference. The writer of an allusion expects the reader to possess enough knowledge to spot the allusion and grasp its significance and connection.

The movie *O Brother Where art Thou?* is a critically-acclaimed film written by the Coen brothers in 2000. They say they loosely based it on Homer's *The Odyssey*. But rather than it being a re-telling of Homer's epic tale of Odysseus, they fill it full of allusions to poem and expect the audience to recognize and appreciate them. As you watch the film, identify all the allusions to elements of *The Odyssey* (characters, situations, lines). In the left column write the detail from the film and, in the right column, explain what part of *The Odyssey* it's alluding to.

<i>O Brother Where art Thou?</i> detail	Discuss how this movie detail alludes to something in <i>The Odyssey</i>
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“Man of Constant Sorrow”

By John Hartford from *O Brother, Where Art Thou?*

I am a man of constant sorrow
I've seen trouble all my day.
I bid farewell to old Kentucky
The place where I was born and raised.

For six long years I've been in trouble
No pleasures here on earth I found
For in this world I'm bound to ramble
I have no friends to help me now.

It's fare thee well my old lover
I never expect to see you again
For I'm bound to ride that northern railroad
Perhaps I'll die upon this train.

You can bury me in some deep valley
For many years where I may lay
Then you may learn to love another
While I am sleeping in my grave.

Maybe your friends think I'm just a stranger
My face you'll never see no more.
But there is one promise that is given
I'll meet you on God's golden shore.

Change the lyrics above so that they directly discuss Odysseus' journey. Make at least ten changes.