**English Instruction Plan – 9-10, Allusions and Figurative Language**

**Primary Strands: Reading 9.3, 10.3**

9.3 - Figurative language to extend vocabulary development in authentic texts.

**Integrated Strands: Writing 9.6, 10.6**

**Essential Understanding:**

* Understand that an allusion is a reference to a person, place, thing, or idea within a passage of text.
* Understand and then explain why an allusion is being placed in a passage of text at a particular moment.
* Understand allusions are used across multiple texts and art forms to explain common ideas, characteristics, or points.

**Essential Knowledge, Skills, and Processes:**

* Identify a reference to a person, place, thing, or idea within a passage of text.
* Understand and then explain why an allusion is being placed in that passage at that particular moment.
* Compare and contrast allusions across multiple texts to explain common ideas addressed in those allusions.

**Primary SOL:**

9.3, 10.3 Explain the meaning of literary and classical allusions and figurative language in text.

**Reinforced (Related Standard) SOL:** 9.6, 10.6 Using textual evidence to compare and contrast across multiple texts.

9.1, 10.1 Participate in, collaborate, and make multimodal presentations both independently and in small groups.

9.4, 10.4 Explain the relationships between and among elements of literature

**Academic Background/Language:** throughout the course of the academic school year, students should be studying and analyzing William Shakespeare’s *Romeo & Juliet* (9th) as well as *The Odyssey* in full context or highlighted excerpts. Having prior knowledge/knowledge of these classical texts will enrich the connections between the following instructional segments.

If students have not read these texts, introduce the concept of an allusion through modern day poetry, music, or text. You may also do this with texts that are commensurate with English 10 or higher grade levels to adapt the strategies according to your need. The short story, “Harrison Bergeron” by Kurt Vonnegut features an easy-to-understand allusion. The instructional plan below contains popular songs that feature allusions.

**Materials**

* Pens/Pencils
* Internet access/laptops or iPads. Access to Padlet or Popplet (free).
* Post-it notes/large poster paper (if the internet is not accessible)
* Lined notebook paper
* Copies of Romeo and Juliet and listed excerpts of songs.

**Student/Teacher Actions: What Should Students be Doing?**

* The teacher will display a verse from a modern-day song that includes an allusion. Taylor Swift’s “Love Song”, One Direction’s “One Thing” and Nicki Minaj’s “Your Love” all contain verses that have allusions (selecting on student-interest/familiarity will most likely increase initial engagement).
* The teacher will facilitate a discussion with the students asking them to activate their prior knowledge on the definition of an allusion (based on the use of Romeo’s name here in Taylor Swift’s song “Love Song”, what is an allusion?)
* The teacher will provide the definition of an allusion and draw back to the example from the modern-day song, leading students to think about the context of the example (why would Taylor Swift allude to Romeo? What actions, behaviors, or characteristics are we familiar with when we think of Romeo?
* Students will then participate in a think-pair-share activity in which they will think and brainstorm additional song lyrics that contain a reference to a classical text or famous character, event, idea, or place. Students will pair with a partner and share their brainstorming ideas (if students enjoy competition, have them individually list as many examples as possible and then pair to share offering recognition to the team who brainstorms the most examples). Please remind students that they must select songs that refrain from using inappropriate language or content for the classroom.
* The teacher will then lead students to access technological platform such as Padlet or Popplet and add their song artist/title, the verse containing the allusion, one sentence briefly explaining the reference in the allusion, and then an explanation as to why that allusion is being specifically used in the context of that song.
* The teacher will then facilitate a student discussion sharing their examples of their modern-day allusions.

**Additional Connection to a Classical Text.**

* If *Romeo and Juliet* has not been studied in the classroom prior to this lesson:
  + Provide a general, short background on the significance of William Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet* (discuss influence of the play on subsequent literature and pop culture)
* If Romeo and Juliet has been studied in the classroom…
  + Activate prior knowledge by asking students to recall and identify frequent literary texts or oral stories that William Shakespeare would reference in his plays.

Distribute the pdf found at the following link: <http://www.auburn.edu/allynbaconanthology/documents/EchoNarcissus.pdf> and have the students read the Greek myth of Echo and Narcissus. To engage students with the text further, provide the following writing/discussion prompts to create self-text connections prior to reading:

* What does it mean to be narcissistic? Identify and describe a character from a book, tv show, or movie that possesses this quality. How does this character interact with other characters and how does it affect his/her relationships with others?
* Have you ever known someone to be narcissistic or have you, yourself, exhibited this characteristic at some point? Reflect on your experience with this individual.

Following a class discussion, the teacher will distribute a copy of Act 2/Scene 2 of Romeo and Juliet and the students will read/act/listen to the scene. Following, the students will explain in a written response or video response (using Flipgrid of iMovie) the allusion that Juliet makes to Echo and why this reference is present in text.

**Assessment (Diagnostic, Formative, Summative)**

* Formative
  + Paired examples from research on the Padlet or Popplet platform.
  + Written explanations/responses of analysis comparing the story of Echo and Narcissus to Act 2/Scene 2 in Romeo and Juliet

**Writing Connections:**

* A Self to text connection via a writing prompt as an introductory activity to the story of *Echo and Narcissus*.
* Short written example of modern-day allusion and explanation posted to Padlet or Popplet.
* Written analysis of the original myth, Echo and Narcissus to Romeo & Juliet’s Act 2/Scene 2

**Extensions and Connections (for all students)**

* For a minor assessment, instruct the students to brainstorm a list of notable archetypes and adjectives or ideas linked to those archetypes. Then, challenge students to write a short story that contains at least two invented allusions that allude to those archetypes and their actions.
  + For example, Pinocchio is known to lie and when he does, his nose grows. Students would translate this to the following: Joe lies so much that it’s no wonder his nose doesn’t grow!
* For a post activity, have students create illustrations or posters to represent allusions. Additionally, have students write a small passage explaining their illustration.

**Strategies for Differentiation**

* As a closing analysis, replace written analysis with a Flipgrid video; students will explain their analysis of both texts in verbal form.
* As a closing analysis, replace written analysis with a completed graphic organizer that demonstrates connecting ideas and themes.
* As an additional connection, have students select an additional myth and then write a short, creative narrative that alludes to that mythological creature.
* In place of a technological platform such as Padlet or Popplet, have students write their examples of modern-day allusions from songs on post-it notes and post to a wall or large poster.