Allusion: (n) a reference to a well-known piece of literature, art, song, event, or person in a work of literature.

Example: His Goliath frame seemed to dwarf the other football players.

“Goliath” is a reference to the character in the Bible named Goliath. He was a giant who was defeated by a small boy named David wielding a sling shot and a few stones. This allusion tells the readers that the boy in the sentence above is a large boy—larger than those around him.

Copy the following sentences. Underline the allusions in the following sentences, determine to what the writer is referring, and determine a possible meaning for the allusion.

1. The kindergarteners were frightened of the new principal who reminded them of Cruella DeVille.
   Reference to: ______________________________________________________
   Possible meaning: __________________________________________________

2. I hoped to sign the birthday card our team bout for Coach, but I couldn’t find a spot to sign my name because someone went all John Hancock on it and signed his name across the whole card.
   Reference to: ______________________________________________________
   Possible meaning: __________________________________________________

3. Although the earthquake did a great deal of damage, it was nothing like the disaster of 9/11.
   Reference to: ______________________________________________________
   Possible meaning: __________________________________________________

4. When I taught kindergarten, I often felt a bit like Bo Peep as I tried to herd the five year olds down the hall each morning.
   Reference to: ______________________________________________________
   Possible meaning: __________________________________________________

5. My students misbehaved in the assembly, so when we returned to the classroom I became Hitler, and they understood that I meant business.
   Reference to: ______________________________________________________
   Possible meaning: __________________________________________________

   Reference to: ______________________________________________________
   Possible meaning: __________________________________________________