

# MALL GOTH

## Allusions

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Rather than just telling you everything there is to know about a story, authors want you to arrive at new learning yourself. They will offer a trail of breadcrumbs, but they want you play an active role in the journey. One way Kate Leth leaves a trail for readers of *Mall Goth* is by including allusions, which are references to well-known parts of culture and pop culture. For readers who share this knowledge with the author, colour and nuance are added to the story. The English teachers and librarians you see every day, for example, likely grimaced when Mr. Trent handed Liv a copy of *Lolita*.

Your task here is to engage in some informal inquiry about some of Kate Leth's other allusions in *Mall Goth*. Think about exploring one allusion that you're familiar with, and one that represents new learning for you. (And if you see allusions that aren't listed here, jump at them.)

- Liv's bedroom and locker stickers, pictures, and posters
- Beetlejuice
- Chatroom and gaming usernames (particularly Liv's)
- The literature presented and discussed in the English class
- Celebrity crushes
- Gender in dungeon crawlers and online RPG video games

What have you learned about the allusion?	How does it connect to the story and the characters?	How has my understanding of <i>Mall Goth</i> changed?

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### Discussion

Find a small group of peers and discuss allusions together. What do you think about authors' use of allusions? How might you detect in the future when an author has included an allusion in their work? Is it worth pausing to learn more if you're not already familiar with the reference?



Kate Leth is a Canadian author and illustrator working in comics, animation, design, and feelings. A grown-up goth and pop culture devotee, Kate specializes in work for kids and teens. Her comics work includes *Patsy Walker*, A.K.A. *Hellcat!*; *Girl Over Paris*; *Spell on Wheels*; and *Adventure Time*, among others.

### References

"Kate Leth." Simon & Schuster, [www.simonandschuster.com/authors/Kate-Leth/463756658](http://www.simonandschuster.com/authors/Kate-Leth/463756658).

Leth, Kate. *Mall Goth*. Simon and Schuster, 2023.