

Foreshadowing

Foreshadowing is a technique authors use to drop hints about future events in a piece of literature. A good detective picks up clues everywhere. The Greeks believed that mortals could divine the course of future events from omens. This activity demonstrates how reading carefully can help you predict future events in the story.

Directions: Read the passage below and answer the questions that follow.

Telemachus had spoken. Zeus, whose voice is heard across the wide earth, sent down to him a pair of eagles from the mountain peak. Their wings outstretched, they glided, side by side, on currents of the wind; but when they reached a point above the raucous suitors, each wheeled round and – furiously – flapped its wings. They stared at those below; their gaze spelled death. Then, having clawed each other’s cheeks and neck, they flew off to the right, across the roofs, across the city.

1. Define the following words:
 - a. Raucous -
 - b. Suitor -
 - c. Ominous -
2. What words and images seem ominous in this passage?
3. If you were an *augur* (a person who predicts the future from the signs of birds), what would you say this sign suggests?
4. Why does Zeus send this particular omen at this particular moment?