I think Odysseus is not lying completely to the Phaeacians, but is stretching the truth. He wants to be known as a hero and have stories told about him so he stretches the truth. When he is telling his adventure and stories, ultimately he can say whatever he wants and no one can really question him. He might not be stretching the truth but possible leaving bits and pieces out to make him seem stronger and more god-like.

"Cyclopes, if anyone, any mortal man, asks you how you got your eye put out, tell him that Odysseus the marauder did it, son of Laertes, whose home is on Ithaca." (Book 9).

This shows that Odysseus wants everyone to know his name and want to be remembered, even if it puts him and his companions in danger. This makes it seem that Odysseus would stretch the truth for fame.

This post has a decent thesis (Odysseus stretches the truth to bolster his fame), but does not develop that thesis in any meaningful way; note the repetition of the phrase “stretches the truth.” The quotation gives decent evidence for this core point, but fails to account for the fact that Odysseus tells his audience about his desire for fame – which would seem to undermine their trust in his stories. The quotation, furthermore, is incompletely cited, with only a book number and not a line number.
Odysseus travels far and wide throughout his journey in *The Odyssey* by Homer. He meets many people along the way and tells his stories to many. When Odysseus meets the Phaiacians, he tells stories of his travels and enjoys sharing these tales. The telling of his stories also helps him build bonds between who he meets and the pleasure within himself: “A man who has been through bitter experiences and traveled far enjoys even his sufferings after a time.” He wants to be remembered as a hero so he wants everyone to hear what he has been through and about his journey. Odysseus generates much pleasure by retelling his journey to the Phaiacians and showing how much he went through on his journey.

Odysseus recreates his journey by telling the stories of his travels to the Phaiacians. Phaeacia was the last destination before Odysseus returned back to Ithaca after his 10-year long journey. When Odysseus retells his journey, he starts with the city of Cicones. After Cicones, him and his men end up at the Lotus Eaters. They then run into Polyphemus, Aeolus, the Laestrygonians, Circe, Tiresias and the underworld, the Sirens, Scylla and Charybdis, the Cattle of the Sun, then Calypso. Odysseus loves to retell his stories because he is proud of his accomplishments and wants everyone to know how he was successful. He wants to be remembered for overcoming the hardships on his journey and show how much of a hero he is. Odysseus talks about the griefs on his journey and how they are “a joy long after to one that remembers all that he wrought and endured.” He went through a lot on his journey so Odysseus should be proud about what he did and what he accomplished before coming back home.

This essay is underdeveloped. After a promising start in which the student makes an argument (“Odysseus tells stories for pleasure) and an appropriate piece of evidence (a quotation about that pleasure), the paper devolves into a plot summary and asserts Odysseus gets pleasure because he is proud and wants fame AND wants to be remembered; this sounds more like 3 further theses rather than support for the first. The student ends with another quotation that supports the joy theme, but without proper citation, or even
putting them in a specific context (where exactly does Odysseus mention the joy?) they cannot support his argument.
Assignment 3.3

The Killing of Agamemnon

Images of the killing of Agamemnon take a totally different perspective from that in literary sources. There are many different representations of the killing of Agamemnon in different forms of art, such as sculptures, paintings, and vase paintings. The many different representations are due to the author’s perspective and interpretation on the death of Agamemnon in literature. These authors produce artwork to show what they think about the death, and that is what makes the interpretations and artwork so diverse and different.

The scene on the Dokimasia Vase painting shows the actual murder of Agamemnon. The scene shows Aegisthos, Agamemnon’s cousin and lover of his wife, getting ready to plunge a sword into Agamemnon. Klytemnestra is carrying an ax in this scene to assist Aegisthos in the murder. The author chose to depict this scene because he wanted to show the actual scene of the murder. They chose to depict what was happening at the time and how he interpreted this murder scene. Many readers would be able to say what scene this was just by the vase painting.

“Dokimasia Vase”, 460 B.C., Ceramic, Greek Classical Gallery 215C
This scene shows Aegisthos and Clytemnestra standing outside of Agamemnon’s quarters with a knife. It shows them plotting to kill Agamemnon in his sleep. They are getting ready to sneak into his room ready to murder Agamemnon. The author wanted to show more of the plotting of Agamemnon’s murder than the actual scene. This shows the sneaky side of Aegisthos and Clytemnestra rather than the violent side of them murdering Agamemnon. The author is not just focusing on the murder of Agamemnon, but the build-up to it.

“Clytemnestra”, 1943-44, Silk, Brooklyn Museum

“Guerin painting”, 1817, oil painting, Louvre 5185
The artwork is a dress made out of silk titled “Clytemnestra.” Clytemnestra was Agamemnon’s wife and also plotted to kill him. The black on this dress represents death just like she plotted to kill her husband. The author uses the length of the dress symbolizes her guilt and how she wants to cover it up. The gold trimming on the dress represents her greed, and how she killed her husband for her own benefits. The author made this artwork to show the perspective of Agamemnon’s wife and how the murder affected her. This shows Clytemnestra as more important than Agamemnon in this artwork.

This work suffers from weak interpretation. For the first two artworks, the student noted that the scenes were different (one was the act of murder, the other the moments before), but without interpreting the difference; indeed, he ascribes the meaning in both cases to “the artist wanted to depict it that way.” In neither case does the student note any details, such as the dark background to the would-be murderers in the painting or the inferior posture of the victim on the vase.

His response to the third artwork shows a bit more interpretation; Student B uses details such as the length of the dress, its trim, and its material to suggest something about the motives and mindset of the murderer.

But for the third work (the dress), the student uses almost no evidence, nor does he consider context or use of the object.
In Greek Mythology, the play *Medea*, written by Euripides, is about a sorceress whose husband leaves her, and the story of her avenging her husband’s betrayal. The scholar Douglas Cairns writes a statement regarding the play *Medea*: “Euripedes’ *Medea* does not subvert Athenian male stereotypes. It revels in them.” I agree with this statement because Medea alters the view on Athenian women in Ancient Greece at that time period, and also shows some qualities of male stereotypes.

She is not typical of a woman in that time period because she avenges her husband’s betrayal instead of laying low. When her husband, Jason, leaves her for another woman, she wants to make him pay: “I’ll kill the children... Then, when all Jason’s hopes, his palace hopes, are gone I’ll leave this land” (p.27). This shows that she is taking action instead of sitting back like the stereotype of a typical Athenian woman. Woman are typically seen to listen to their husbands, not avenge their husband’s betrayal and go after them. Medea evens says, “Of all creatures that can feel and think, we women are the worst treated things alive” (p. 31). This says that women were not treated right in that time period and how Medea breaks these stereotypes. Women are just treated like objects and not like real people. Cairns’ statement says that the play revels in Athenian male stereotypes and Medea possesses them. As a woman, she does not sit back but acts like a stereotypical male. She acts violently and passionately when she goes after her husband, something that is not typical of an Athenian woman.

Medea breaks the female stereotypes when she kills her children. Females are typically seen for their motherhood and nurturing qualities but Medea completely disregards these when she kills her children. The chorus even sees this and stops sympathizing with her: “On our knees we beg you- thing again. Your children must not die” (p. 29). This shows Medea as sort of more
masculine than feminine because women are seen as nurturing and kind instead of violent. Medea possesses many qualities of masculinity and alters the view of Athenian women at the time.

Student B misunderstood the quotation that is at the heart of the prompt, but he wrote a cogent essay and used evidence well. This work is proficient bordering on very strong. His core thesis is that the play breaks the stereotypes of women by having Medea embrace and enact masculine values while eschewing woman’s traditional role as wife and mother.

Student B also uses a diverse set of evidence to support his thesis; the quotations are spoken by different characters, revealing different reactions to the heroine and her role of the woman. Medea voices two of Student B’s quotations, giving an important self-assessment about the role of women, and the chorus then reacts to her decisions when she steps outside the bounds of her motherhood.

I note also that the quotations include page numbers.
Assignment 6.3

In Virgil’s *Aeneid*, Aeneas is one of the few Trojans to not die or become enslaved when Troy fell, and leads a group of survivors in search of a new home. On the journey, Aeneas tells the story of how Troy was captured and how he escaped carrying his father, Anchises, on his back and leading his son, Ascanius. They then encounter several challenges on their journey with Anchises ultimately dying in the end. This image of Aeneas carrying his father is a very popular depiction of Aeneas because is a Trojan warrior and also putting others in front of himself.

This vase painting depicts Anchises being carried by Aeneas from Troy. Aeneas is also leading his son, Ascanius, from Troy as they are escaping. This vase shows Aeneas as a big and powerful figure which relates to his stature in regards to the other figures. Aeneas is depicted as being big and strong because it not only relates to the physical ability of him carrying his father, but also his mental strength and how he deals with the situation and is a leader. There is also a man with a dog who is most likely leaving Troy as well. This can show that Aeneas can be compared to normal people and not only god-like, like his figure is showing. The artist of this painting wanted to show two sides of Aeneas, his strength and his normality as a Trojan warrior.

Beazley 316.2. Anchises being carried from Troy by Aeneas, Athenian Black-Figure vase. 550-500 BC, Wurzburg, Universitat, Martin von Wagner
This Roman silver coin shows another image of Aeneas fleeing Troy with his father and son. This is another example of how Aeneas is god-like and a powerful figure. In this coin image, he is carrying his father, Anchises, on his back, and his son in the palm of his hand. This again shows his physical strength. This also shows how big of a figure Aeneas was in Ancient Rome because he is depicted on many different items, such as coins and vase paintings. They wanted to show Aeneas has a powerful figure in Ancient Rome so they depicted him on an ancient coin.

This image of Aeneas and his family is depicted of them fleeing Troy once again. It still shows Aeneas carrying his father and leading his son, but also shows his wife in this image. In the story Aeneas tells of him fleeing Troy, he talks about his wife, Creusa, and how she perished when they were escaping. This painting depicts the chaos that ensues when they are escaping. There is fire burning and the building looks like it is collapsing on them. This also shows the physical and mental strength Aeneas possesses because he has composure as they are escaping and as there is chaos all around them.

Aeneas is shown as a powerful figure in all these images, as well as in Virgil’s *Aeneid*. Aeneas goes on a journey and tells his story which shows a lot of the challenges he went through and overcame. He dealt with a ton, especially as he is escaping Troy with his family, and how he has to protect them. As well as helping his family escape, he also leads a band of survivors in search of a new home which shows how
much of a leader he is. Aeneas is a popular figure in Roman mythology because of his accomplishments and the strengths he possesses.

This also is a relatively strong essay. Student B has identified details in all three artworks – Aeneas’ size and the dog on the vase, his size and prominence on the coin, and his calm despite the chaos in the painting. Indeed, though he does not state it directly, this essay is advanced in the attention it pays to the context of the central figure, alone or with other figures. The connection of the context (dog) with interpretation (Aeneas is a regular guy) on the vase is quite compelling.

The essay is least effective when discussing the coin, but Student B does note that this hero’s very appearance on a coin (centrally minted widely circulated as opposed to the one-off vase or painting) reveals he is an important figure. We note that in the analysis of the coin, Student B misidentifies one of the elements; Aeneas is not carrying his son in his palm, but rather a small statue.
The idea of mirroring is prevalent in Ovid's Pygmalion. This idea is shown through the mirroring of an actual relationship and the role of a woman in the sculpture Pygmalion creates. He treats the sculpture as a real woman and mirrors a real relationship between them. Pygmalion "makes sweet talk to it, and brings it gifts" (275). Ovid shows this mirroring to show how obsessed Pygmalion is about his statue and the role of woman during that time period. Woman did not really have a voice and this can be seen in Pygmalion's relationship with his sculpture. He treats the statue as property and that is how woman were seen during the time period.

Another idea that is prevalent is present absence. This is shown when Pygmalion first creates his sculpture and how he connects with it: "He kisses it and thinks that his kisses are returned" (280-281). She is present physically yet is absent at the same time because she has no life. She cannot respond to him or interact with him, so she is present and absent at the same time. Present in the physical aspect but absent in the mental. She can be real in his mind but when he stops imagining, she is just an emotionless statue.

The second paragraph of this discussion post is better than the first; overall, the post is solid but not stellar. I do note these improvements over the first assignment, though:

1) The post does not wander off course but stays focused on the core of the prompt, which was to identify two themes and find evidence for them.
2) The evidence is cited with line numbers, though Porter omitted the book number; since the assignment is all about Book 10, he might have thought that otiose, but we still prefer thoroughness.
3) He explores at least two elements of “present absence” in the story – the fact that the girlfriend is a statue (the is there but not there), and the fact that there is a present absence in the artist’s mind as well (she is there, but not really there).

That said the point the student makes about the roles of women at the time, while interesting, don’t contribute to the post.
Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* is a book containing a collection of over 250 myths. Throughout each book and story, Ovid explores many themes and tones that connect with different parts of the narrative. Numerous episodes have been depicted through works of sculptures, paintings, and music. An important myth that provides connections to works of art is the story of Pygmalion and the sculpture he created and fell in love with.

Ovid’s *Pygmalion* and artist Jean-Léon Gérome provide a thematic point of intersection through the text and Gérome’s artwork. A theme that is worth talking about is mirroring. As we know, the theme of mirroring is prevalent in the Ovid’s text of *Pygmalion* when he creates the statue and forms a relationship with it. Pygmalion is mirroring a relationship but it is only the reflection because it is not real. He is trying to simulate a reflection of an actual female companion. He lays down in bed with her as if she is an actual live person. The statue is only a tangible being and has no emotions or cannot give anything in return. The relationship will only be one-sided and Pygmalion is too intrigued and blinded by it that it is too hard for him to think otherwise. He even kisses the sculpture and believes it kisses him back. He creates a woman who mirrors him in ways and is worthy of him. The theme of mirroring is also prevalent in the artwork by Jean-Léon Gérome, but is effective in similar and different ways. In the artwork, it shows Pygmalion and the sculpture having more of a real relationship. It depicts the sculpture showing affection to Pygmalion, a trait the sculpture did not have in the text. The sculpture has her arms around Pygmalion and is kissing him back. The sculpture is being brought to life by the power of Aphrodite, the Goddess of Love, but the sculpture is still seen as what it is, a sculpture. She is still on the platform where Pygmalion was sculpting her, and this makes it more relatable to the text. It is also apparent how intimate he is with the sculpture and how “he fell in love with what he had made” (272). His loneliness might also attribute to his deep affection for this sculpture because he wanted so much to have a relationship and this made him fall in love with what he created.
Another important theme in Ovid’s text and the artwork by Gérome is identity. In the text, the sculpture is represented as the perfect woman and exactly how Pygmalion wanted her to be. She does not have any sort of identity other than how she looks. Since she is a sculpture and an inanimate object, she has not emotional state and her only trait is beauty, exactly how Pygmalion wanted her to be: “He sculpted with the marvelous skill a figure in ivory, giving it a beauty no woman could be born with, and he fell in love with what he had made” (269). The identity the sculpture has is none other than what Pygmalion creates. He is constructing his own identity for this idealized woman. He created this identity to please him, and is an extension of himself because he is in love with it. Pygmalion only created this statue for it to be his lover. In the artwork by Gérome, the identity is similar but there are some differences. There are similarities in the artwork that include how intrigued and loving Pygmalion is to the sculpture. He created her to be the perfect woman and he is acting like she is the best thing in the world. Pygmalion is obviously mesmerized by his beauty because he sculpted her exactly how he wanted. Her identity is a little different from the text, her only trait is not just beauty, but she is showing emotions. It is apparent in the painting and sculpture that she is showing affection to Pygmalion and is starting to become real. The dolphin at her feet represent the Goddess of Love, Aphrodite, and how the sculpture is brought to life by her. Once Pygmalion kisses her, she becomes a real person and this also transforms her identity. She is no longer an inanimate object with only beauty on her side but she can now express emotions. She is an image of what Pygmalion created but she now has the ability to do whatever she wants and create a new identity, her real identity.

The two themes that are important in Ovid’s Pygmalion and the artwork by Jean-Léon Gérome are mirroring and identity. Mirroring is prevalent in regards to his relationship with the sculpture and how he creates her. Identity is shown as Pygmalion is creating the sculpture and then as she becomes a real person. Ovid’s Pygmalion holds many different themes and tones that combine and reflect the different aspects of the story.
This is an excellent essay and shows real growth over the initial essay. Student B has followed the prompt; discussed its aspects thoroughly; and used solid evidence. His understanding if “mirroring” is different from what we expected, and it seems to wander, but it has its own coherence.

The second paragraph is very strong indeed. Student B has understood the concept of “identity” – is it how you are treated? How you feel inside? Changeable or not? – and applied it to several dimensions of the story. He notes that the ivory girl’s identity is circumscribed by Pygmalion’s own narrow views of women. Her transformation to real and what that entails in terms of identity, and the agency of the gods (the lack of her autonomy).

I note with satisfaction also that this student chose to analyze a different theme from his discussion post, which shows stretching!