



Analyzing and Identifying Types of Irony

Directions: Read the following examples of irony. Determine which of the three types of irony are being used and then explain your answer.

Dramatic irony – This occurs when the reader or audience understands more about the events of a story than a character.

Situational irony – This occurs when what actually happens is the opposite of what is expected or appropriate.

Verbal irony – A person or character says one thing but really means the opposite.

1. When Mr. Goodenwell saw his baby boy Vince for the first time, he swore that he'd do anything to protect the little guy. This was easy at first. All Vince did was lie in a pillow and drink milk. But soon little Vince grew bigger, and then he started walking. Now little Vince got into everything. Vince's curiosity was becoming a serious threat to himself. So Mr. Goodenwell went to the store and bought \$150 worth of equipment to childproof his home. He put covers on the outlets, bumpers on the table corners, and a sliding lock on the toilet lid. As Mr. Goodenwell was adjusting the covers on the door knobs, Vince pulled the cap off an outlet and chewed on it. It got lodged in his throat and Vince began to choke. Mr. Goodenwell found him just in time.

Which type of irony is used?

Explain your answer:

2. One bright Easter morning, Timmy Holloway woke up to the smell of eggs, but not breakfast eggs, Easter eggs. That's right Timmy had a craving for Easter eggs, and today was the day to get them, boy howdy. There was only one thing standing in his way, well two really: the Solomon brothers. The Solomon brothers got more eggs than Timmy every year. Timmy reasoned that this was because there were two of them and they counted their eggs as one. He suspected that this was cheating but couldn't articulate the notion. Timmy clutched his sack behind his back as the Solomon brothers approached him. The taller brother distracted Timmy. The shorter one snuck behind him and clipped the corner of Timmy's egg sack, making quite a big hole. Timmy failed to notice this. When the whistle blew, Timmy was off. He wasn't surprised to see the Solomon brothers behind him. Timmy was much faster than they. He was surprised that they chose to follow him. Timmy beat them to every egg, and raced on to the next, never noticing that his sack wasn't getting heavier. As he approached the end of the course, Timmy was elated to be the first to finish. The Solomon brothers were right behind him. "Maybe next year, loser twins," Timmy chuckled, right before he noticed that his sack was empty.

Which type of irony is used?

Explain your answer:

3. Making friends isn't easy. Ask Juan Guerrero, who moved to New High School High three months ago but he still eats lunch by himself. Nobody picks on him really, but they pretty much ignore him, at least since the incident. You see, Juan had his chance. We almost adopted him into our crew, the skaters, after Juan said he could skate. "Oh yeah?" asked my boy Romeo, "well, where's your board?" Juan replied shakily, "Uh, my mom ran over it with her car, but I do flips and grinds and all that stuff." Romeo didn't believe him. "Why don't you use my board? Show me one of those flips," Romeo challenged. Juan gulped and grabbed the board. "Uh... Ok," he replied. When you see a good skater on TV or in a video game, skateboarding may look easy. In real life though, just moving without falling, let alone doing any tricks, takes a lot of practice. So I wasn't too surprised when Juan landed flat on his can before he even made it across a single sidewalk square. "Wow! What an awesome flip, Tony Hawk. You'll have to teach me that," Romeo sneered. Now Juan eats lunch alone.

Which type of irony is used?

Explain your answer:

4. "Oh, a sweater! That was nice Bobby," said Janet after opening the present. Janet thought the sweater was hideous, but she appreciated her boyfriend's effort. Still, she exchanged it for some boots the first chance she got. She figured that Bobby would want her to be happy. A week later Bobby made reservations for two at the nicest restaurant in town. "Janet, I want to take you somewhere special," He said. "I have good news to tell you. Wear that sweater that I got you. It'll be perfect." Janet didn't know how to react, "Um... I don't think that sweater quite matches these boots I want to wear. Is it cool if I just wear it another time?" Bobby huffed, "You know, Janet,

that sweater was expensive. The least you could do is act like you appreciate it." Janet saw no other option but to agree to wear the sweater, so she did. Now she was in a pickle.

Which type of irony is used?

Explain your answer:

5. As the holiday season ended, Bertha Berger struggled to put on her blue jeans. They seemed much tighter than usual, so she stepped on the bathroom scale and received the bad news. She had never seen such a high number on the little scale, so she resolved to change. That day she threw out all the junk food in her fridge and went grocery shopping. Determined to lose weight, she bought low-fat versions of all her favorite foods. She had a low-sodium bacon sandwich with a diet soda for lunch. The sandwich contained over 1,200 calories but had very little salt. For dinner she ate two turkey burgers with reduced-fat cheese. Though she had consumed over 2,000 calories, Bertha felt like she deserved a reward. So for dessert she ate two low-calorie ice-cream sandwiches. And before bed she ate a bag of baked potato chips, which are healthier than normal chips. She dipped them in low-fat cream cheese. Bertha had consumed around 6,500 calories that day, but she felt skinny. When she woke up the next morning, she stepped on the scale. She couldn't wait to see how successful her diet had been.

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1. While walking home from work, Lake Park Mall security guard Scott Thornton thought about his day. A shoplifter had outrun him, he had lost the keys to his golf cart, and a group of skateboarders had made fun of his weight. Things had not gone so well. Scott was so deep in thought that he did not even notice that he had stumbled on a movie set. Lost in thought, he passed by trailers, cameras, and stagehands, yet he was unaware of the scene around him. When he came out of his daze, he looked up and saw a ski mask wearing man waving a knife at an old lady. Figuring that the masked man was robbing the old woman, Scott bolted into action. His adrenaline was flowing. He didn't even notice the cameraman filming him as he jump kicked the actor wearing the ski mask.

Which type of irony is used?

Explain your answer:

2. As soon as Bobby heard that the math test was going to be worth 30% of his grade, he began studying. He studied in class. He studied on the bus ride home. He even tried to study while walking home from the bus but stopped after bumping into a lamppost. When he got home, he didn't watch any TV because he was studying so intensely. He completed the study guide that Mr. Morris gave him and then he completed one that he had made himself. Bobby refused to quit. He stayed awake all night finding and completing extra problems on the Internet. By the time the sun rose, Bobby had mastered the content. As he entered the classroom, he felt prepared. He sharpened his pencil, sat at his desk, put his head down, fell asleep, and failed his test.

Which type of irony is used?

Explain your answer:

3. I thought that my mother was going to flip when Perry came over to eat at our house. To my surprise she just ignored him, even though he wore his hat, put his elbows on the table, and rocked back in his chair. I thought that she would go crazy while we ate. Perry pulled bones out of his mouth and put them on his plate instead of spitting them into a napkin. To my astonishment Mom looked past this too. But when Perry slammed a glass of root beer and burped the ABCs, she could no longer restrain herself. "What a wonderful rendition of the alphabet,

Perry, and how age appropriate? I'm impressed." Perry wore a confused look, unsure of what her reaction had meant.

Which type of irony is used?

Explain your answer:

4. When the first English settlers arrived at Jamestown, hygiene was not a priority. The settlers faced many challenges. Food was scarce and the land was unsuitable for farming. Worse still, relations with Native Americans were uneasy and violence loomed. Yet even in these conditions, some settlers found time to care for their teeth. They did this by brushing their teeth with rags and abrasive tooth powders. Archaeologists have examined the remains of these colonists. They discovered that many of the settlers were missing the enamel on their teeth. By using these tooth powders, the settlers had striped this protective layer from their teeth. This caused their teeth to decay and fall out prematurely.

Which type of irony is used?

Explain your answer:

5. Kathy had never considered herself to be good with animals until she got a goldfish. *Taking care of fish is easy. You only have to feed them once a day.* Kathy thought to herself, as she put the bottle of goldfish food down by a bottle of rat poison. Kathy went on to have a productive day. When Kathy woke up the next day, she went to grab the bottle of fish food when her cell phone rang. Wondering who it could be, Kathy grabbed the bottle of rat poison instead of the fish food and did not notice it. The phone call turned out to be from her friend Mary. Kathy loved to talk with Mary. As she was chit-chatting away, she unscrewed the top of the rat poison bottle. It was about the same size as the bottle of fish food. "Oh, Mary, that's outrageous," Kathy said as she shook the bottle of rat poison into the fish tank. "He did?" She asked, as she put the top back on the rat poison bottle and put it down next to the fish food. "How could she?" She asked before going about with her day.

Which type of irony is used?

Explain your answer:

6. As Harold carried his lunch tray passed Chuck, the school bully, Chuck stuck his foot into the aisle and attempted to trip Harold. Harold expected such an obstruction. He sidestepped around Chuck's leg saying, "Excuse me, Chuck, my fault entirely." Harold then continued back to his table and began eating his lunch. Chuck felt offended that Harold had not tripped and fallen on his food, so he marched back to Harold's table to put him in his place. Dipping his finger into Harold's school lunch, Chuck said, "What are you eating, puke?" Harold replied nervously, "Yes, well, I think that's what they serve here. Only the best for us students, right? Anyway, you're welcome to it." Chuck sneered and stuck his finger into Harold's chest, "I don't want any of your puke, Puke. Next time you fall when I trip you." He removed his finger from Harold's chest, grabbed Harold's cupcake from off of his lunch tray, and walked back to his table. "Good bye,

Chuck. It's always a pleasure seeing you." He then released a sigh and ate around the fingerprint that Chuck had left in his casserole.

Which type of irony is used?

Explain your answer: