

English Language

Figurative Language: Irony

Irony is the use of words to convey meaning that is opposite to its literal meaning. There are three types of irony (definition from Englishlinx.com worksheet).

1. **Verbal irony** is used when a person wants to express something using speech which says the opposite of what they mean. E.g., If it were a very cold day, a person using verbal irony might say something like “Isn’t it warm today!”
2. **Situational Irony** is used when a situation does not have the outcome which was expected in the first instance. E.g., If a fire station were to burn down, this would be situational irony as this is the building is meant to protect from fire.
3. **Dramatic Irony** is used when something happens and the person within the situation is unaware of the true reality. E.g., If a person were to say “I am so glad that I wasn’t in that car accident,” only to be involved in a car accident moments later, this would be dramatic irony.
(Notes taken from anchor chart on esl.com)

Write an example of situation irony below (2pts). Then scroll down to complete the activity below.

Identifying 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 character says one thing but really means the opposite.

1. A mean old man ate a large meal at a restaurant. The waitress tried to provide him with excellent service, but every time she brought him a dish, he complained. First he thought that the soup was too cold when it was hot. Then he said that his steak was dry and chewy, when it was moist and succulent. Then he complained that one of her blonde hairs was in his mashed potatoes, but the hair was actually grey like his own. She remained patient and continued to try to help him until the end of the meal, when he left her a quarter for a tip. She replied on his way out, “Thank you for the generous tip, Mister.”

Which type of irony is used? _____

Explain your answer:

2. Tom has always liked Lucy, but Lucy has always thought Tom was annoying and unattractive. One day, Lucy comes home to find an eviction notice on her door. Apparently, her roommate had been spending the rent money that Lucy was giving her on other things. Lucy only has 24 hours to get all her stuff over to her mom's house, and Lucy doesn't even have a car. But Tom has a truck. So Lucy calls up Tom and asks him how he's doing. She tells him that she's always thought he was funny, and that they should hang out sometime. Tom thinks that Lucy has finally come around and is beginning to like him. He also thinks that his jokes are funny because she is laughing after everything that he says.

Which type of irony is used? _____

Explain your answer:

3. Tim Kylie is one of the world's top chefs. He is best known for his signature dish, triple-dipped chip steak. This masterpiece contains over a pound of beef braised in duck fat. Another of Chef Kylie's more celebrated dishes is the Hamslaughter Supreme. This dish features ham stuffed sausage links presented in a basket made of braided bacon. While carnivores around the world roar for Chef Kylie's creations, it is unlikely that Chef Kylie will dine with them. As a longtime vegan, Chef Kylie would never dream of devouring one of his own dishes.

Which type of irony is used? _____

Explain your answer: