

**Introduction to**

# **Irony**

8<sup>th</sup> Grade English Language Arts

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# Learning Targets

- I can define irony.
  - I can distinguish between the three types of irony.
  - I can identify the different types of irony in context.
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**Before we get to  
what irony *is*...**


**Let's talk about what it *isn't***

Irony is **not** coincidence.

coincidence (n.) : a striking occurrence of two or more events at one time, apparently by mere chance.

Example: Our meeting in Venice, Italy  
was pure coincidence.

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**What are some  
other examples of  
coincidences?**

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# The Three Types of Irony

- Irony falls into three basic categories.
  - **Verbal irony** occurs when you say what you *don't* mean.
  - **Situational irony** occurs when the outcome of actions/events is different from the desired or expected result.
  - **Dramatic irony** occurs when the reader/audience knows something a character doesn't.
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# Verbal Irony

- **Definition:** A speaker means different than, and often the opposite of, what s/he says.
  - Saying what you *don't* mean.
  - Examples:
    1. Great, I forgot my umbrella.
    2. I can't wait to start this 15page report!
    3. My walk home was *only* 25 blocks.
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- Verbal irony is not the same thing as sarcasm, but the two are often confused.
- Sarcasm is a *form* of verbal irony, but the difference is that sarcasm is intended to hurt feelings or cause harm; irony is not.

- Examples:

Verbal irony: I love working 60 hours a week.

Sarcasm: You call this a cup of coffee?

**Verbal irony is *not*..**

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# Verbal irony is *not*..

## (cont'd)

- ✧ In the first example (I love working 60 hours a week), the speaker means the opposite of what s/he says, but the statement is not intended to hurt or offend anyone in particular.
  - ✧ In the second example (You call that a cup of coffee?), the speaker also means something different than what s/he says, but the statement is intended to offend the person who made the coffee.
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# Practice

On the lines provided, jot down one example of verbal irony and one example of sarcasm.

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# Situational Irony

- **Definition:** when the outcome of actions or events differs from the desired or expected result.
  - Examples:
    1. A man drives a COTA bus for 25 years, retires, and gets hit by a bus the next day.
    2. The Psychic Friends phone service went bankrupt due to “unforeseen circumstances.”
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# Practice

- On the lines provided, write down a couple examples of situational irony. Then, explain to your neighbor *why* it is situational irony.
  - Example:
    1. Bill died due to an allergic reaction to the antibiotics prescribed to treat his pneumonia.
  - This is an example of situational irony because Dave was already sick with a potentially deadly disease, pneumonia. The medicine that was supposed to save him ended up being the thing that killed him, not the disease itself.
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# Dramatic Irony

- **Definition:** when the reader or audience knows something that a fictional character does not.
  - This type of irony *only* applies to fictional characters in literature, movies, plays, etc.
  - When you hear someone say “that’s ironic” in conversation, they are very rarely talking about dramatic irony.
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# Dramatic Irony (cont'd)

- The most obvious example of dramatic irony is the standard horror flick scene where we see the intruder in the bathroom mirror, but the character is distracted with brushing her teeth.
  - Other examples:
    1. A character is trash talking her friend on stage, and only *we* can see that the friend is listening in on the conversation.
    2. A car in a movie is headed straight for a cliff, but the driver's vision is obstructed by a line of trees.
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# Practice

Turn to a partner and brainstorm a few examples of dramatic irony in books you've read or movies/ TV shows you've watched.

**Remember:** you know something the character doesn't.

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