

Irony Detectives Activity

Directions: Read the following crime related ironic passages. Using the irony detectives answer sheet, determine which type of irony is used each passage based on clues that you find, then make your case.

1. Assault and Battery

Annie Allen loved her fiancé Scott. Annie loved him so much that he was all that she thought about all day. Feeling particularly in love with Scott, Annie thought that she'd surprise him with romance, so she snuck into his house using the spare key under his doormat and waited in his room for him to come home from a business trip. While waiting for him to come home, she thought the surprise might be even better if she hid in his closet. So she did. Twenty minutes later, she heard keys rustling in the lock. The door slammed, and then she heard the sound of feet walking up the stairs and Scott's voice. "You know I can't wait to see you, Baby," she thought she heard Scott say. *He must be leaving me a message,* Annie pleasantly thought to herself. Then she heard Scott continue to talk. "No, she's nothing serious. And besides, you know you're the one I love, Katie." Annie's heart dropped. She grabbed the pepper spray from out of her purse, unlatched the safety, and felt her hand tense on the release button. Scott walked into the room, smiling and laughing as he flirted with Katie on the phone.

2. Reckless Endangerment

Swanson Wisconsin was a famous child star. She had several platinum selling albums, her own TV sitcom, and a series of straight-to-DVD films that received terrible reviews but sold really well. Swanson Wisconsin was extremely wealthy and had the respect and admiration of millions of boys and girls around the world. She was everywhere. She was even the face of the antidrug movement. Swanson Wisconsin appeared on several commercials, billboards, and bus advertisements telling young people not to use drugs. All over the country the message was heard: "Be like Swanson Wisconsin. Think up. Don't get high." One fateful December evening, Swanson Wisconsin crashed her Bentley into hotdog stand. No one was injured, but Swanson Wisconsin was extremely disorientated. At the hospital, blood tests revealed that Swanson Wisconsin had enough crystal meth, cocaine, and tranquilizers in her system to murder an elephant.

3. Breaking and Entering

Jimmy the Lock was a master safecracker. He could bust open any safe in the world in under an hour using a crow bar, stethoscope, drill, and sledgehammer. No lock could hold Jimmy and that's why they called him the Lock. Jimmy was scheduled to do a six-year stretch in the can for a bank job that got messy. But he checked himself out before they could slam the cell door. Now that he was on the lamb, Jimmy set up the score of his life. He had the blueprints all laid out to do a job on an armored diamond delivery car. Jimmy gathered all his tools and headed out the door to meet his contact, Bobby the Rat. When he got to his car, Jimmy couldn't find his keys. He patted his pockets before he realized that he must have left them in his other thieving-pants. So Jimmy went back to get his keys, but the door wouldn't open. Jimmy the Lock had locked himself out of his house.

4. Grand Theft Auto

Jack was on his way home from work when his wife Jill called him. He was in a hurry to get home and watch his favorite show, COPS, but Jill said that he needed to stop at the minimart to get some bread for dinner. Jack replied dutifully to his wife, "Yes, Dear." When he got to the minimart, Jack was in such a hurry that he didn't even pull into a parking spot. He just pulled up right next to the door. It was 6:58, and COPS was starting in two minutes, so Jack just left his car running and ran into the store. He grabbed the bread from the middle aisle and got in the line behind a skinny guy wearing a leather jacket. Jack tapped his foot impatiently as the man purchased lottery tickets. Finally, the clerk rang up Jack right as Jack's watch read 6:59. Jack hurriedly completed the transaction and ran outside. As he went to jump into his car, he noticed that it was gone. He looked around a bit, but it was no where in sight. "Great," Jack sighed. His watch read 7:01. "How wonderful," he said to himself, as he reached in his pocket to call his wife.

5. Embezzlement

Suzy works in a big sky scrapper downtown. She is the secretary for the regional manager of operations at Bork and Mork's Corks and Forks. As the secretary, she was entrusted with a large supply of loose cash called a *slush fund*. The slush fund started at around five thousand dollars, but Suzy has been dipping her hands into the slush fund. It first started when she forgot her wallet at home. She was really hungry, so she grabbed a few bucks out of the slush fund for lunch and told herself that she would pay it back tomorrow. When tomorrow came, she didn't pay it back. The next day she decided that she needed to go grocery shopping after work, but she didn't get paid until next week and she was out of money. So Suzy grabbed her grocery money out of the slush fund. Again she told herself that she would pay it back, and again she did not. This pattern went on for another week or two, and Suzy bought herself all kinds of fancy goods and services. With her freshly manicured nails, Suzy opened the slush fund box and found that it was empty. She began to panic, but was eventually able to block it out of her mind. That afternoon Suzy's boss, Mr. Meister, called Suzy into his office. "Suzy," he said sternly. "As you may know, my birthday is next Friday. I want you to throw me the biggest party this office has ever seen." Suzy gulped as Mr. Meister went on, "I want an open bar, a clown, seven swans a swimming, the whole shebang! I want a nacho cheese fountain with at least four types of cheeses. Spare no expense. Drain every penny from the slush fund." Suzy noticed the look of childlike joy and excitement in his eyes as he imagined the extravagant party that would never happen, and Suzy shuddered to think of what tomorrow would bring.

6. Larceny and Destruction of Property

Jose and his little brother Angel were always getting picked on by the older boys in his neighborhood. After Angel had his lunch money stolen from him on his way home from school, Jose decided that his family had been the victims of criminals for the last time. Jose would join the Cobras, a gang that worked on his block. Jose thought that he and his brother would have the protection that they needed to get to and from school without being harassed if Jose were a Cobra. So Jose talked to Ice, the leader of the Cobras. Ice said that they might have a spot for Jose, but he would have to pass an initiation: Jose would have to steal a bicycle. Jose told Ice, "I'll have to think about it," but Ice responded, "Cobra's don't think about doing what they're told. If you want in, you'll go steal that bike right over there at the minimart." Jose didn't want to steal. He knew it was wrong, but he thought that the only person who could give them protection was Ice. So Jose ran up to the bike. Jose hardly paid attention to anything around him. His heart was beating so fast and he was so nervous, everything was a blur. He grabbed the bike and rode it back to Ice. Ice was pleased and said, "Great. Roll the bike off the top of that abandoned building and we'll think about making you a Cobra." Jose didn't want to destroy the property, but he was sick of his brother getting picked on and being the victim of crime, so he would do it for him. Jose rolled the bike up the seven flights of stairs to the building rooftop. His heart was beating like a drum machine. Jose closed his eyes and pushed the bike off the building. He heard the sound of it smashing to pieces and then he heard Ice and his gang chuckling. When he went back to Ice, Ice told him that he had hesitated too much and that Cobra's don't hesitate, so Jose couldn't get in the gang. Jose couldn't believe he did all of that for nothing, but he was kind of relieved that he was leaving the gang life behind him. He went home to find his little brother crying. "What's wrong, Angel?" Jose asked concernedly. Angel replied in between sobs, "My... my... bike. Somebody stole my bike."

7. Vandalism

The police thought that he was a criminal. Property owners felt that he was menace. But Noodles considered himself an artist. He painted huge murals with his spray cans. Noodles' artwork was everywhere. His name blazed on water towers, billboards, overpasses, and anything else that he could reach. One day, Noodles painted his name in big block letters over the window of the local grocery store. When the storeowner arrived the next day, as he attempted to remove the paint, he was heard to utter, "Oh! Thank you. How nice of you, Noodles, to paint your name over my store window like that. I really appreciate it." He never got to thank Noodles personally, though he often wished that he had.

Name: _____

Irony Detectives Answer Sheet

1. Assault and Battery

What type of irony is used in the passage? _____

Make your case (explain your answer): _____

2. Reckless Endangerment of Human Life

What type of irony is used in the passage? _____

Make your case (explain your answer): _____

3. Breaking and Entering

What type of irony is used in the passage? _____

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4. Grand Theft Auto

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