

Identifying Irony 5

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. Amy couldn't wait for the Christmas dance. She was so excited that she couldn't concentrate on anything else. The week leading up to it, she drew doodles of herself wearing her dress and a sparkling tiara instead of taking notes. The night before the dance, she noticed that she was getting a small pimple on her nose. It was just a tiny little mark, but she imagined herself with a great big pimple. She worried that she would look like Rudolph the Reindeer in all the photos. She grew gravely concerned. So she ran to the store and bought a tube of every kind of pimple fighting cream available. Then she went home and applied large globs of each of them to her nose. She went to bed that night satisfied that she had done all that she could to fight the blemish. When she woke up, she ran to mirror hoping that the pimple had vanished. As she gazed upon herself in the mirror, she screamed. The pimple had not vanished. Worse still, a bright red rash covered her entire nose.

Which type of irony is used? _____

Explain your answer:

2. Max hated Brussels sprouts, but his Dad always made him eat them. One night an idea came to Max that would allow him to escape this cruel fate. He decided that he would feed the Brussels sprouts to his dog. This went well at first. The dog hungrily consumed the sprouts. Max's dad was pleased too. He congratulated Max on eating them all. "Normally it's a pain to get you to eat those, Max," He said. "I'm glad that you stepped it up." Max basked in his father's approval and felt quite clever. Then his dog let out a yelp. Max grew concerned. The dog was walking in a circle and hacking. His Dad asked, "What's wrong, Boy?" Max attempted to distract his father as he tended to the dog, "He probably just needs some space, Dad." Max's father looked at him curiously, right as the dog vomited a stream of Brussels sprouts.

Which type of irony is used? _____

Explain your answer:

3. Axel was the toughest kid on the playground. He wore a leather jacket with cutoff sleeves and metal studs on the shoulders. He had a Mohawk hairstyle, listened to punk rock music, and hung out with the older kids. He rode his skateboard to school and did noseslides on the bike rack. He viciously beat anyone who challenged him. Yet, after a long day of being really tough, Axel's mommy tucked him into bed at night. Then he snuggled up tightly with a fluffy pink bear that he called Mr. Tickles.

Which type of irony is used? _____

Explain your answer:

4. It was the ninth inning and Bryant's team was down by two. Runners were on first and second base and Bryant was up to bat. He could tie the game, maybe even win it if he got a good hit. Bryant stared down the pitcher with a cold steel gaze as the ball floated from his hand. Everything seemed to move in slow motion. Bryant twirled awkwardly. He swung the bat and somehow hit the ball with the bottom of the handle. The ball gently bounced away from Bryant and landed directly in the third baseman's mitt. This caused a force out. The third baseman tossed it to the second basemen, causing a second force out. He threw it to first, and Bryant was responsible for a triple play. As the players lined up to exchange handshakes at the end of the game, the pitcher stared coolly at Bryant. They shook hands, and the pitcher said, "Nice hit, Champ. Way to get a hold of it." Bryant had never felt more embarrassed.

Which type of irony is used? _____

Explain your answer:

5. The two men crawled across the sun scorched sand. The wind blew the sand grains into their faces at blinding speeds as they reached their way over the dune. The man in back asked the other man to stop, but his throat was so dry that the word sounded more like "top." So the other man continued. As they reached the top of the dune, they looked over and saw a glistening pool some thirty yards down the hill. It wasn't a large pool, but it shimmered in the sun, beckoning the dehydrated men. It urged them to continue their struggle. The men summoned the will to live. They used it as strength when they had none, and the men pushed forward until the tiny pool was in reach. The man in front desperately scooped a handful of the shimmering liquid into his mouth. Instantly he began coughing and spitting out the water. The man behind him seemed confused, until the man in front said, "This is salt water..."

Which type of irony is used? _____

Explain your answer:

6. Cassie was unhappy in her relationship with Richard. There wasn't anything wrong with him. He did cut her off occasionally while she was trying to speak, but he was generally a good guy. She just wanted something different. She decided that tonight she would break up with Richard. When he arrived at her house, she wanted to talk with him about it, but he rushed her out the door. "No time to talk now, Babe," he said. "We're late for our dinner reservations." She figured that she would tell him at the restaurant, near the end of the meal. She would even offer to pay. So they enjoyed a delicious meal together. Then, right before dessert, Cassie opened her mouth to let out the fatal words. "Richard..." she began, but Richard broke in, "Oh, Babe, I got a surprise for you." He pulled a small white envelope from his pocket. "Two front row tickets to see your favorite band, The Mountain Boys!" Cassie's mouth dropped. She loved the Mountain Boys. Richard backpedaled, "I'm sorry that I cut you off again. What was it that you wanted to tell me?" Cassie looked down at the piece of cake in front of her and replied, "Oh, I forgot. Nothing important."

Which type of irony is used? _____

Explain your answer: