

Irony Study Guide (Honors) **KEY**

**Review class notes, text annotations, and practice activities.*

**There are additional resources and examples under the "Readings" tab on my website. You may use this for additional practice and check in with me should you have questions.*

1. What is irony in literature?

-Irony is the use of words to convey a meaning that is the opposite of the literal meaning. It involves surprising, interesting, or amusing contrasts.

2. What are the three types of irony found in literature?

- Verbal irony

-Situational irony

-Dramatic irony

3. How are each of these three types used in-text? Aka- what do they mean?

-Verbal irony are dialogue/speech that suggest the opposite of their usual meaning/what's expected. This is also known as sarcasm.

-Situational irony is when the outcome of a situation contrasts expectations.

-Dramatic irony is when the reader of the story knows something the character(s) does not.

4. What is theme in literature?

-There is the lesson or underlying message that the author is teaching using the story as a tool. It is a universal idea, but should also be specific to the story.

*In a Cold Reading:

(These are not to memorize! These are examples- you may practice in your IR novels or review annotations from in-class texts)

-Students should be able to identify verbal irony in a fictional text, support that claim with textual evidence, and make inferences about the importance of the use of irony. Students should also be able to connect purposeful use of irony to developing themes in a story.

Example- In "The Monkey's Paw," Herbert White uses verbal irony during his conversations regarding the paw. Jacobs writes, "'Likely,' said Herbert, with pretended horror. 'Why, we're going to be rich, and famous, and happy'" (3). Herbert doubts the paw, and is using comedic effect to suggest that they are going to be wealthy, even though he is very skeptical and distrustful of the paw.

**Link to theme- Herbert's continuous sarcastic comments help to teach the Whites to never underestimate or doubt powers that may be beyond their control.*

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Example- In "The Story of an Hour," Chopin uses situational irony through the story, culminating in the final outcome- Louise Mallard's death. The last line of the short story reads, "When the doctors came they said she had died of heart disease- of the joy that kills" (2). Mary goes through a series of emotions in the story, from upset and distressed, to overwhelmed and overjoyed, and eventually to shock. Along with Louise Mallard, the reader does not expect Mr. Mallard to be alive at the end of the story, with this surprise ultimately resulting in Mary's surprising death.

**Link to theme- This helps to contribute to the theme in the story- that emotions can be powerful, so humans need to be mindful not to rush to their own conclusions.*

-Students should be able to identify dramatic irony in a fictional text, support that claim with textual evidence, and make inferences about the importance of the use of irony. Students should also be able to connect purposeful use of irony to developing themes in a story.

Example- In "Lamb to the Slaughter," Dahl uses dramatic irony during the final scene in the story, as the police officers end their search for the murder weapon. An officer, Charlie, says, "[the weapon is] probably right under our noses. What do you think, Jack?" as he eats the leg of lamb (8). The reader is aware that the officers are eating the murder weapon, but the officers think they are just enjoying a generous meal. This helps to develop the character foil between Mary as cunning and manipulative, and the officers as inept and unobservant.

**Link to theme- Through this irony, Dahl teaches the reader to not let anyone's innocence be deceptive, as they may be more calculated than they appear.*