

Name _____

Date _____

Verbal Irony

Verbal irony is a figurative language device where the speaker's intended meaning contrasts with the literal meaning of their words. This literary technique is often used to create humor, express displeasure, or make a point indirectly. There are **three main types of verbal irony**:

Sarcasm: The speaker says the opposite of what they mean to express dissatisfaction or humor.

Exaggeration (Hyperbole): The speaker overstates a situation to emphasize or highlight its simplicity.

Understatement: The speaker downplays the size, importance, or severity of a situation to create irony.

Each of the scenarios below includes verbal irony. Identify the ironic part of the scenario and explain why it's ironic.

1. Ruby looked at the calendar and saw it was her week to clean the cat's litter box. Knowing that Tiger had just switched to a very smelly new food, Ruby sighed and said, "Lucky me."

Ironic part: _____

Why it's ironic: _____

2. "I'm going upstairs to read," Hallie told her brother, Sam. Five minutes later, Hallie came downstairs to grab her sweater. Sam grinned and said, "Wow, you've been up there for ages!"

Ironic part: _____

Why it's ironic: _____

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Verbal Irony

3. "It's going to be a bit nippy this week," the meteorologist said while presenting a forecast of below-freezing temperatures.

Ironical part: _____

Why it's ironical: _____

4. Glancing at the appetizers, Henry asked Alice how the vegetarian dumplings were. "They're absolutely terrible," she replied between bites. "I should probably eat them all so you don't have to."

Ironical part: _____

Why it's ironical: _____

5. "Three thousand orders overnight?" Jon remarked as he reviewed the orders for his homemade macarons. Looking at his tiny stand mixer, he said, "We might need a bigger kitchen."

Ironical part: _____

Why it's ironical: _____

6. "Let me get those groceries for you, Mom!" Dominic offered. "That's okay," she replied. "I know this bag weighs a ton, but I think I can handle it," she added, carrying a single bag filled with marshmallows and cereal.

Ironical part: _____

Why it's ironical: _____

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Verbal Irony – Answer Key

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1. Ruby looked at the calendar and saw it was her week to clean the cat's litter box. Knowing that Tiger had just switched to a very smelly new food, Ruby sighed and said, "Lucky me."

Ironic part: Ruby's phrase "Lucky me."

Why it's ironic: Ruby is clearly not feeling lucky. Instead, she uses sarcasm to express her displeasure about having to clean a particularly unpleasant litter box.

2. "I'm going upstairs to read," Hallie told her brother, Sam. Five minutes later, Hallie came downstairs to grab her sweater. Sam grinned and said, "Wow, you've been up there for ages!"

Ironic part: "You've been up there for ages."

Why it's ironic: Sam exaggerates by saying Hallie has been upstairs for a very long time when in reality, only a few minutes have passed.

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Verbal Irony – Answer Key

3. “It’s going to be a bit nippy this week,” the meteorologist said while presenting a forecast of below-freezing temperatures.

Ironical part: The phrase “a bit nippy.”

Why it’s ironic: The meteorologist downplays the severity of the cold weather by calling it “a bit nippy” when it is actually dangerously cold.

4. Glancing at the appetizers, Henry asked Alice how the vegetarian dumplings were. “They’re absolutely terrible,” she replied between bites. “I should probably eat them all so you don’t have to.”

Ironical part: Alice’s comment, “They’re absolutely terrible.”

Why it’s ironic: Alice’s words contradict her actions—she continues eating the dumplings while sarcastically stating that they’re terrible.

5. “Three thousand orders overnight?” Jon remarked as he reviewed the orders for his homemade macarons. Looking at his tiny stand mixer, he said, “We might need a bigger kitchen.”

Ironical part: Jon’s comment, “We might need a bigger kitchen.”

Why it’s ironic: Jon’s understatement downplays the challenge of filling 3,000 macaron orders with a small kitchen and limited equipment.

6. “Let me get those groceries for you, Mom!” Dominic offered. “That’s okay,” she replied. “I know this bag weighs a ton, but I think I can handle it,” she added, carrying a single bag filled with marshmallows and cereal.

Ironical part: Mom’s comment, “This bag weighs a ton.”

Why it’s ironic: Mom sarcastically exaggerates the weight of the bag to humorously show that it’s actually very light.