

Name _____

Date _____

Paradox

A **paradox** is a situation or statement that appears contradictory or impossible at first glance but often reveals a deeper truth or insight when analyzed. Paradoxes are used in literature, philosophy, and everyday language to provoke thought and highlight complex ideas.

Example:

"It's a curious paradox that drinking a lot of water can often make you feel thirsty."

At first, it seems impossible that drinking water could lead to thirst. However, the paradox underscores the idea that overhydration can disrupt the body's electrolyte balance, causing thirst.

Read the passages below. Identify the paradox in each and explain how the apparent contradiction reveals a deeper truth or insight.

A. "It's strange, isn't it? The more water I drink, the thirstier I seem to become. How can water, the very thing that quenches thirst, leave me wanting more?"

Questions:

1. What is the paradox in this passage?

2. How does the paradox reveal a deeper truth?

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B. “To truly be free, one must accept rules. Without rules, freedom becomes chaos.”

Questions:

1. What is the paradox in this passage?

2. What does this paradox suggest about the relationship between freedom and structure?

C. “The more I learn, the less I feel like I know. How can gaining knowledge make me feel so ignorant?”

Questions:

1. What is the paradox in this passage?

2. What does this paradox reveal about the nature of knowledge and learning?

Write your own paradox about one of the following topics.

Love	Time	Fear	Success
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Paradox – Answer Key

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Read the passages below. Identify the paradox in each and explain how the apparent contradiction reveals a deeper truth or insight.

A. “It’s strange, isn’t it? The more water I drink, the thirstier I seem to become. How can water, the very thing that quenches thirst, leave me wanting more?”

Questions:

1. What is the paradox in this passage?

Drinking water, which should quench thirst, makes the speaker feel thirstier.

2. How does the paradox reveal a deeper truth?

This paradox highlights how overhydration can disrupt the body's balance, leading to thirst despite drinking more water.

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Paradox – Answer Key

B. “To truly be free, one must accept rules. Without rules, freedom becomes chaos.”

Questions:

1. What is the paradox in this passage?

True freedom requires accepting rules, which seems contradictory since rules often limit freedom.

2. What does this paradox suggest about the relationship between freedom and structure?

This paradox highlights how overhydration can disrupt the body's balance, leading to thirst despite drinking more water.

C. “The more I learn, the less I feel like I know. How can gaining knowledge make me feel so ignorant?”

Questions:

1. What is the paradox in this passage?

Gaining knowledge makes the speaker feel more ignorant.

2. What does this paradox reveal about the nature of knowledge and learning?

This paradox reveals that as we learn more, we become aware of how vast and infinite knowledge is, making us recognize the limits of our understanding.

Write your own paradox about one of the following topics.

Love	Time	Fear	Success
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The more time I try to save, the less time I seem to have.

