

Lesson Title: Using Dramatic Irony

Level: This lesson is designed for a group of tenth graders.

Objectives: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- a) identify dramatic irony and how it is used in different genres
- b) create scenarios (skits, short stories, cartoons, etc.) that demonstrate understanding of dramatic irony.

Anticipatory Set:

1. At the beginning of class, as students walk in, there is a handout containing a page of cartoons and memes.
2. Once the bell rings, I open up the class with a “good morning,” ask if anyone has any good news to share.
3. After a minute or so, I tell the students that we are continuing a discussion of irony, and ask the class “what kind of irony did we talk about yesterday?” If there is some muttering of the correct answer, I have them all say it together, “verbal irony.”
4. I ask them to share an example of verbal irony. It can be an example from the previous day or something that they come up with.
5. Then, I have them work with a partner to find an example of verbal irony in the memes and cartoons page they have. After a few minutes, I have a few groups choose to share what they found.
6. I tell them to hang on to that handout because we will be using it later on in class.

Objective/Purpose: I list off the learning objectives for the day, and then reiterate them in simpler terms (“Today, we’re going to look at dramatic irony and how it is used in different kinds of media.”). I explain that it is important to be able to not only see dramatic irony, but also see how the same literary device can be used in vastly different ways.

Input: We start the day with the irony powerpoint we began from the day before. I have a different student read each definition of irony, and after each reads, I ask another student to paraphrase that definition, reminding them that paraphrasing is just saying it in their own words. Since I don’t want to spend a ton of time on this slide, I paraphrase it if needed. Then we move through the powerpoint and define dramatic irony in a little more detail, asking them to try to think of examples of this. Again, not spending a ton of time here since we will be going through examples in a moment. I show a short TED ED clip about dramatic irony,

Model:

1. I ask them to take a look at the handout I gave them and look through the memes and cartoons. Are there any instances where we can see something that a character or person in the meme/cartoon cannot see? I give the example from the Simpsons meme, in which one character doesn’t see another character coming up from behind them.

2. I tell them to take out a piece of paper then give them a few minutes to look at the handout with a partner, and have them write down the example they think of.
3. After we come back together, I instruct them to take out their notes from the day before, where they have the definitions of different irony written and a three-column table with the headings “Verbal Irony,” “Dramatic Irony,” and “Dramatic Irony” and remind them that today, we’re only talking about dramatic irony.
4. I randomly call on three of the pairs to share what they wrote down, letting them know that it’s okay if they thought of the same example.
5. After each one, I talk through it a little bit, asking if other people had similar thoughts. If the example is incorrect, I try to guide them to think a little bit deeper about it, asking clarifying questions like “so what is it that we know that the character in the image doesn’t know?” After each one, I tell the class to write that example down in their three-column notes.
6. I open it up to other pairs to share, again always reminding students to write down these examples in their notes.
7. Then I pose the question, “So what effect do you think this has? Why would the artist use this dramatic irony?” If there’s silence, I ask another question: “We’re looking at memes and cartoons, right? So what genre is that? What are they trying to make us do?” helping them understand how dramatic irony, in this case, is designed to make us laugh.

Check for Understanding: I ask on a scale of one to five if this makes sense, and have all students display on their hand their level of understanding. If several students are at 3 or less, I continue to go through more examples with them, going back through that modeling practice.

Guided Practice:

1. I introduce that we’re gonna move on to looking for dramatic irony in bigger scene.
2. I show a clip from *The Office*, the fire drill scene, and I tell them to pay attention to the dramatic irony in the scene.
3. We watch through the clip, and at the end I pose the question to them, “where is the dramatic irony in this scene?” Again, using pair share if the students seem to be struggling.
4. After a few students have answered in the all-class discussion (ideally, I take volunteers instead of cold calling), we move on to the second question of “what’s the effect?” We discuss both the effect on us as the viewers and the characters themselves, talking through what makes it funny that the characters don’t know it’s just a drill.
5. Now we move on to another scene, and I indicate that this may be a little bit harder. I recap, “so we’ve already seen how dramatic irony can add humor, and now we’re gonna see how it can have a very different effect. This might be a little bit harder to pinpoint as you watch, but pay attention. Try to pay attention to the timeframe, and what the characters know and don’t know.”
6. I show the trailer for the movie *Antlers*, an upcoming horror film.

7. Talk through what makes this so different, and give them a little background on the movie, how it's based on a short story that we will read later on.
8. I ask them to talk with their partners about where there might be dramatic irony in this trailer. Think about the characters that they saw. What did we see that the characters at the beginning of the trailer don't see?
9. If there seem to be issues, we watch the trailer one more time, specifically paying attention to those details then come back together to pair-share and discuss.
10. Once we come back as a whole class, we talk through that question again: what is the dramatic irony, and what effect does this have? I have them look back at their 3-column notes, and write down any of the examples shared in the "Dramatic Irony" column.

Homework/Assessment: I ask them to divide into groups, or they have the option to do this on their own, but groups should not exceed three people. They must create either a short story, a short film, a cartoon, or another medium of their choosing in which they use dramatic irony. We will have time in class later on, but I just want them to begin thinking about it and submit a paper with their group members' names, or just their own name, at the end of class. If there is extra time at the end of class, they can start on the assignment.

Closure: As we close up, I ask them to share out "what is dramatic irony" and "what are its different effects." Each time a student responds to a question, I reiterate it. After we've gone through both questions, I ask for them to display on their hands their level of understanding. I once again recap explain how they've now seen how dramatic irony be used to create two very different effects: laughter and horror. I remind them how it's important to remember that they can use literary devices for many effects, in many different media. Today, we saw it in film and cartoons, and we'll see it later on when we read "The Quiet Boy" short story.