I. Definition

satire  /*–noun*

Satireis a literary term used to ridicule or make fun of human vice or weakness, often with the intent of correcting, or changing, the subject of the satiric attack. Satire has a target, which may be a person or group of people, an idea or attitude, an institution or a social practice. It is found in many artistic forms of expression, including literature, plays, commentary, and media such as song lyrics and television. Often the target is examined by being held up for ridicule, typically in the hope of shaming it into reform.

**II. Types of Satire**

* **Horatian –** Light hearted and intended for fun. The subject of the satire is mildly made fun of and this form of satire tends to ask the audience to laugh at themselves.
* **Juvenalian –** Bitter and angry, often attacking the subject of the satire. This form of satire is more judgmental, asking the audience to respond with anger to the events it portrays.

**III. Techniques of satire**

* **Irony –** A mode of expression, through words (verbal irony) or events (situational irony) conveying a reality different from and usually opposite to appearance or expectation. \*\*All satire is ironic, but not all irony is satire!!
* **Sarcasm –** Generally it directed at someone and its intent is to hurt. Someone says something that is the opposite of what they really mean. Sometimes it seems like praise, but they are trying to make fun of the subject.
* **Hyperbole (Exaggeration)** – Enlarge, increase, or represent something beyond normal bounds, so that it becomes ridiculous and we can see its faults
* **Reversal** – Present the opposite of what is normal. Flipping things on their head.
* **Parody** – Imitate the techniques and/or style of some person, place, or thing. Typically in a humorous way.
* **Caricature –** An exaggeration or other distortion of an individual’s prominent features or characteristics to the point of making that individual appear ridiculous.

**IV. Types of Irony**

**Verbal Irony**

Irony occurs when what is said (verbal) is in contradiction to what is meant. This should not be confused with sarcasm. Irony does not need to be mocking or insulting as sarcasm.

*“I am really a very good at golf.”* When the speaker just hit the ball into a sand trap.

*“I should be in the NBA.”* When the speaker just made 10 air balls.

*“It has been a warm summer.”* When it has been cold and raining every day.

*“What a lovely day for a stroll.”* When it pouring rain outside.

**Situational Irony**

Situational Irony occurs in literature and in drama when people and events come together in improbable situations, **creating a tension between expected and real results**.

*If the president of Microsoft, Bill Gates, were to win a contest and the grand prize was a computer system, the irony would be situational because such a circumstance would appear ridiculous or "funny" for a number of reasons. Bill Gates doesn't need a computer, he runs the world's largest software company, and he's filthy rich, so winning a computer seems silly and "ironic".*

**Dramatic Irony**

Dramatic Irony is employed to heighten the suspense in a given situation. In this form of irony, **the audience knows something that the characters do not.**

*Horror films often use this as the audience sees the murderer sneak up to the protagonist, but the characters do not. A perfect example is in Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet, when Romeo commits suicide when he believes Juliet to be dead.*