



Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Verbal Irony

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Verbal irony is a literary device in which the speaker's words contrast with what he or she means. Verbal irony is often expressed as sarcasm.

Examples:

The water in the building will be turned off for the next six hours. How wonderful!
(Having the water off is the opposite of wonderful.)

You got straight A's on your report card? I'm so disappointed!
(The speaker feels the opposite of disappointed.)

Verbal irony can also be expressed as overstatement or understatement.

Examples:

If my computer freezes again, I'm going to throw it out the window!
(The speaker is frustrated but overstates what he or she will actually do.)

I suppose that a seven-foot basketball player is rather tall.
(“Rather tall” understates the idea that the player is very tall.)

Directions: In the space provided, explain the literal meaning of each sentence.

1. I'm so glad the elevator is stuck; it's been a lifelong dream that this would happen.

2. I hope there won't be any major protests to eating in the park today instead of the school cafeteria.

3. I seriously fainted when I saw that I got the lead in the school play!

4. It's such a thrill to find out that I'll be spending the summer with a cast on my leg.

5. The chicken just came out of a 500-degree broiler, so you can assume it's a bit warm.

Now, use verbal irony to write your own sentences about the following topics:

Homework _____

Pizza _____

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