

Mentor Text

The Mentor Text below was written by Allistar Bedell and was awarded Finalist in the 2023 826 National Writers' Showcase.

If I were a poet

by Allistar Bedell, Grade 11

If I were a poet,
I would have a file in my phone called
poetry
But what truly is poetry other than
oxymorons and big fancy words?

So called poetry written by a self-centered
self-proclaimed
So called poet
But I don't think this is poetry
Because for it to be poetry it has to have
feeling.

I grab words from Webster's and line them
up
In hopes it becomes "up to interpretation"

And of course ignoring the idea of a rhyme
scheme
Can stir up controversy in the poetry scene
Because without one it's just words on a
screen
am I burnt out?
am I tired?
am I just not a poet?

If I were a poet I would write the most
amazing sonnets
I would write love poems to my heart's content
I would be the most famous of them all
My metaphors and similes couldn't be
matched like a lone sock
And they would analyze my poetry for years
After I'm gone

But again,
That's only if I were a poet
So for now these are words on a screen
Written by someone whos never had a passion
For anything
Written by someone who is anything but
A poet.

Types of Irony

Irony is a literary device that contrasts reality with what the audience expects will happen. There are 3 basic types of irony: dramatic, situational, and verbal. Read the definitions and answer the questions in your writing journal.

Dramatic irony occurs when the audience knows something's going to happen that the characters do not. The audience might know this because the story is based on an historical event, or the audience learned vital information in a different scene.

- **Think of an example, from media or your own life, where dramatic irony was present.**
- **What do you think dramatic irony adds to a story?**

Situational irony occurs when something happens that what the audience is expecting. Situational irony can be present in a big surprise twist, or even in a basic character trait (a successful veterinarian who doesn't like animals, for example).

- **Think of an example, from media or your own life, where situational irony was present.**
- **What do you think situational irony adds to a story?**

Verbal irony occurs when a character says something that directly contrasts with what they might be thinking or feeling, so it's very reliant on an interesting narrator. Don't confuse verbal irony with sarcasm though! Sarcasm is rooted in negativity, since it is usually used to make fun of someone in a witty way.

- **Think of an example, from media or your own life, where verbal irony was present.**
- **What do you think verbal irony adds to a story?**

Which type of irony do you think the Mentor Text uses? How do you know?

Situational Irony: Example

Below is an example of how to complete your brainstorming sheet.

What situation do you want to surprise your audience with: an unexpected character trait or a shocking ending?

Unexpected character trait

If a character trait: choose a basic character (an athlete, a chef, a student, etc.)

Veterinarian

If a shocking ending: How do you want your scene to end?

Based on the character you chose, think of an unusual trait for that character. Why is it unusual?

The veterinarian will dislike cats. This is unusual because you expect vets to love all animals.

Based on the ending you chose, what is one way you could twist that ending to be surprising?

Situational Irony

The questions below will help you develop a scene using **situational irony**. Answer the question in the top box and then only answer the remaining questions that match the choice you made. If you need help remembering what situational irony is, revisit page 2.

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Dramatic Irony

Answer the questions below to brainstorm the details of your imaginary scene, featuring **dramatic irony**. If you need help remembering what dramatic irony is, revisit the definition on page 2.

What information will the audience know that the character(s) does not?

How will the characters find out this information?

What is the setting of your scene?

Dramatic Irony

Answer the questions below to brainstorm the details of your imaginary scene, featuring **verbal irony**. If you need help remembering what situational irony is, revisit the definition on page 2.

Who is your protagonist? List at least 3 sensory words or concrete details that describe this character.

**Based on the basic character you just created, think of a situation you can write them in, below.
(Hint: It will be helpful to create a situation with other characters present)**

**Imagine how your character feels in this situation.
Describe what they're thinking below.**

**Describe how your character acts, in this situation,
around the other characters. Remember that their
actions should contrast how they're feeling.**

Example Scene: Situational Irony

Below is an example scene, using the narrative technique called **situational irony**. The scene matches the details found on page 3.

7:30am

Dr. Stilt walks up to the doors of her animal hospital, Universal Animal Hospital. She pulls out her keys, unlocks the big glass door, and walks inside. She drops her backpack in the employee break room and finds her dark blue scrubs hanging in her locker. They're clean, but there's still a stray cat hair present on the shoulder. *Cats*, she thought. *I'm always covered in their hair*. She scowls and plucks the hair off the top, dropping it on the floor.

11:00am

"Dr. Stilt, your next patient is here," the vet tech calls out. Dr. Stilt turns toward the door, and sees a large, grey tabby in a carrier. *Oh, great, a cat*. Dr. Stilt takes a breath and puts on her best welcoming smile. "Hello! Come on back." They walk back to the exam room and the cat is let out of the carrier. Dr. Stilt washes her hands and puts on gloves, while the cat wanders around the exam room. She speaks softly and tries to pet the cat gently to earn its trust. The cat ignores her efforts and continues climbing on the counter, almost knocking the tools to the floor. *Why would anyone want a cat*, she thinks. *They're such nuisances*.

3:00pm

"Yes, of course. You're very welcome!" Dr. Stilt scratches Winne's head and then waves goodbye to her and her owner. Winne is an 8-week-old Golden Retriever puppy, with sleepy eyes and giant paws. Winnie came in for a check-up with her new, forever family, and Dr. Stilt couldn't resist one more pat before they left. Dr. Stilt loves puppies—*how could you not love a puppy?*