

# Analyzing Irony in Literature

Irony is the contrast between what is expected and what is real. Three primary types of irony in literature are *situational*, *verbal*, and *dramatic*.

**Situational Irony:** When what happens is the opposite of what is expected. Most of the examples in “The Lottery” fall into this category.

**Verbal Irony:** A contrast between the intended meaning of what is spoken and what the apparent meaning is to the hearer.

**Dramatic Irony:** When the audience knows something a character does not.

**Directions:** Fill in the chart below. In the left column write a specific example of irony from “Lottery.” In the middle column write the type of irony in your example. In the right column explain the significance of the example.

Specific Example	Type	Explanation
<p>“The morning of June 27th was clear and sunny, with the fresh warmth of a full-summer day; the flowers were blossoming profusely and the grass was richly green. The people of the village began to gather in the square, between the post office and the bank, around ten o’clock”</p>	<p>Situational</p>	<p>The story’s setting indicates a pleasant tale of a town gathering for its annual festival. The purpose of the gathering is anything but pleasant.</p>

## Analyzing Irony in Literature (Sample Answers)

Irony is the contrast between what is expected and what is real. Three primary types of irony in literature are *situational*, *verbal*, and *dramatic*.

**Situational Irony:** When what happens is the opposite of what is expected. Most of the examples in “The Lottery” fall into this category.

**Verbal Irony:** A contrast between the intended meaning of what is spoken and what the apparent meaning is to the hearer.

**Dramatic Irony:** When the audience knows something a character does not.

**Directions:** Fill in the chart below. In the left column write a specific example of irony from “Lottery.” In the middle column write the type of irony in your example. In the right column explain the significance of the example.

Specific Example	Type	Explanation
“The morning of June 27th was clear and sunny, with the fresh warmth of a full-summer day; the flowers were blossoming profusely and the grass was richly green. The people of the village began to gather in the square, between the post office and the bank, around ten o’clock”	Situational	The story’s setting indicates a pleasant tale of a town gathering for its annual festival. The purpose of the gathering is anything but pleasant.
“...some people believed that the official of the lottery used to stand just so when he said or sang it, others believed that he was supposed to walk among the people, but years and years ago this part of the ritual had been allowed to lapse.”	Situational	Although this is supposed to be a strict ritual, the villagers had no problem letting certain parts of the ritual go by the wayside, but “they still remembered to use stones.”
<p>Find the complete answer key and more awesome lesson plans and handouts in the <u>Teaching Guide to “The Lottery.”</u></p>		