

Irony Tracker for “Flowers for Algernon”

Authors use irony to produce certain effects and develop meaning for the reader. There are three types of irony: verbal, situational, and dramatic. Each type of irony produces different effects on the reader from surprise to humor and impacts the way the reader understands the events and characters in a story.

- Verbal irony: When what is said is different from or the opposite of what is meant.
- Situational irony: When the opposite of what is expected happens.
- Dramatic irony: When the readers know something a character or characters do not.

EXAMPLE	METHOD		MEANING	
	Type of Irony	How is this ironic?	What is the effect?	How does it help you understand the text?
Charlie says “Their really my friends and they like me” about Joe and Frank.	Dramatic	Charlie doesn’t understand that Joe and Frank make fun of him. He thinks they are his friends. I know something Charlie doesn’t know.	It is a little humorous, but I mostly feel bad for Charlie.	Including this example helps me relate to Charlie and sympathize with him. This makes his experience more real to me, so I feel like I am going on the journey with him.
Charlie says he feels sorry for Robinson Crusoe because he’s all alone and has no friends.	Dramatic	Charlie doesn’t realize that he is just like Robinson Crusoe, but Charlie doesn’t feel sorry for himself.	I feel sorry for Charlie.	This example makes me feel sorry for Charlie. It also helps me understand Charlie better. I know now that he wants to belong and be accepted by others. This is something I can relate to.
Charlie misuses the comma and then other punctuation.	Dramatic	Charlie describes how he is using a comma correctly and then punctuation correctly, but he is not. I know something Charlie doesn’t know.	It is humorous.	This helps me like Charlie more. He is sweet and sincere, and this is evidence of his personality. I am more engaged in what I am reading because I like Charlie.

EXAMPLE	METHOD		MEANING	
	Type of Irony	How is this ironic?	What is the effect?	How does it help you understand the text?
<p>Charlie wants to be smart so he can be like those around him. Once he becomes intelligence, he isn't able to communicate or relate to those around him. Charlie says, "This intelligence has driven a wedge between me and all the people I once knew and loved."</p>	<p>Situational</p>	<p>Charlie thought (and I did, too) that if he could become smarter, he would be happy and have friends. What happens is the opposite. He is still lonely, he is driven out of his job, and, if it is possible, has fewer friends because now he can't even relate to Miss Kinnian.</p>	<p>I'm surprised.</p>	<p>This teaches me about what happens when you wish to be something you're not rather than trying to be the best person you are already. Charlie was already a good person, so I'm not sure why he needed to try to change who he was. He may become smarter, but is that really a better life for him?</p>