



Reading

Continue

This section tests your ability to comprehend academic reading passages. It consists of one passage and a set of questions about it. All of the questions are worth one point except for the last question. Special directions for the last question will tell you how many points it is worth.

You have 20 minutes in which to complete this section of the test.

In the passage, some words or phrases are underlined in blue. You can click on these words to get a definition or explanation.

As soon as you have finished one question, you may click on NEXT to move to the next question. You may skip questions and come back to them later, and you can change your answers if you wish. To return to a previous question, click on BACK.

As soon as you have read these directions, go on to the reading.



Reading

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Satire is sometimes referred to as a unique **genre** of literature, but this description is incorrect. It is actually a mode--a writing style that may be used by writers of various genres. Satire can in fact be used in poetry, drama, fiction, and nonfiction. It is designed to expose, ridicule, or denounce qualities that the satirist feels are repulsive, foolish, or immoral as those qualities are seen in people and in institutions. Depending on the author's intentions, satire may be gentle or harsh. Gentle satire takes a soft tone toward its subject. It may do nothing more than **mock** those human weaknesses that the satirist finds humorous without necessarily wishing to change them. Harsh satire, on the other hand, is often angry and critical, and motivated by the writer's desire to provoke social reform or to make people act.

A person writing satire may use a number of literary techniques, including irony, parody, reversal (or inversion), hyperbole, understatement, wit, or invective. The choice of one technique, or combination of techniques, over another, may be based on the author's intention to write gentle or harsh satire. It may also depend on personal style or whether the author expects agreement or disagreement from his or her readers.

Irony is perhaps the satirist's greatest weapon. The basic principle of irony is the use of words whose intended meanings are opposite to their literal meanings. An example of irony is when, in the midst of a terrible snowstorm, one person says to another, "Lovely weather we're having, isn't it?" The compliment paid to the weather is not literal; its true intention is to call attention to the uncomfortable situation in which the speakers find themselves. Dramatic irony arises from a situation in which the reader, or the audience, has a fuller understanding of what is happening in a drama than a character does. This kind of irony may call attention to that character's victimization, arrogance, or ignorance, depending on the writer's intention.

Parody is a form of satire that purposely copies a piece of writing in a comic or satirical way. It may be expressed as a piece of imitation so poor that it seems ridiculous. Parody is often designed to exaggerate characteristics in the original work in order to call attention to its imperfections.

Reversal, also known as inversion, is a satiric technique in which an action results in a consequence that is the opposite of the audience's expectations. A satirist may, for example, write a story involving a cat chasing a mouse, which results in the mouse capturing the cat. The writer may use this unexpected reversal to call attention to the typical expectation--in the cat and in the reader--that the strong always defeat the weak.

Hyperbole is an obvious exaggeration used for effect. An example of hyperbole is when a critic praises a current fad or fashion in an excessive and heavy-handed manner. The reader soon realizes that the fad is no better than any other popular fashion that has come and gone before it. Conversely, understatement is a way of expressing a thought that is deliberately less forceful or dramatic than the subject would seem to justify or require. A character describing his involvement in a horrific event as "inconvenient" may call attention to the character's lack of emotion, or more likely to a horror so great that no words could adequately describe it.

Wit involves an apt, clever, and often humorous association of words. Oscar Wilde's play *The Importance of Being Earnest*, for example, is satirical in its constant **wordplay** (notably on the name Earnest). The play is famous for making fun of the superficiality of the nineteenth-century upper class in England. Wilde's wit is a fine example of gentle satire. The author does not expect or desire any change in society or in the viewer; he merely wishes to amuse. Invective, on the other hand, is a severe form of satire that uses abusive language to attack or blame someone or something. Invective may be combined with wit (in which case it is referred to as "biting wit") or other satiric techniques, but its resulting tone tends to be more bitter than funny.

By exaggerating characteristics, saying the opposite of what is meant, or using cleverness to make cutting remarks at someone's expense, the satirist calls attention to the vices and follies of humankind. In expert hands, satire is a highly effective mode of literary expression.



Reading

DIRECTIONS: Read the following passage and then the questions about it. Decide which of the choices best answers each question, and mark your answers.

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Review

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- 1 The word **denounce** in the passage is closest in meaning to

- ☐ assume
☐ hide
☐ criticize
☐ correct

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Reading

DIRECTIONS: Read the following passage and then the questions about it. Decide which of the choices best answers each question, and mark your answers.

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- 2 According to the passage, satire
- ☐ is no less important than other genres such as fiction, poetry or theater
- ☐ expresses the author's opinion about some aspect of humanity
- ☐ has historically played an important role in provoking social change
- ☐ is commonly used when the writer and the readers are in agreement

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Reading

DIRECTIONS: Read the following passage and then the questions about it. Decide which of the choices best answers each question, and mark your answers.

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- 3 In paragraph 2, the author makes the point that the literary techniques used in satire

- ☐ are unique to the satirical mode
- ☐ primarily reflect the author's style
- ☐ may be used alone or in combination
- ☐ are borrowed from other artistic forms

Paragraph is indicated by an arrow ➤

➤ A person writing satire may use a number of literary techniques, including irony, parody, reversal (or inversion), hyperbole, understatement, wit, or invective. The choice of one technique, or combination of techniques, over another, may be based on the author's intention to write gentle or harsh satire. It may also depend on personal style or whether the author expects agreement or disagreement from his or her readers.

Irony is perhaps the satirist's greatest weapon. The basic principle of irony is the use of words whose intended meanings are opposite to their literal meanings. An example of irony is when, in the midst of a terrible snowstorm, one person says to another, "Lovely weather we're having, isn't it?" The compliment paid to the weather is not literal; its true intention is to call attention to the uncomfortable situation in which the speakers find themselves. Dramatic irony arises from a situation in which the reader, or the audience, has a fuller understanding of what is happening in a drama than a character does. This kind of irony may call attention to that character's victimization, arrogance, or ignorance, depending on the writer's intention.



Reading

DIRECTIONS: Read the following passage and then the questions about it. Decide which of the choices best answers each question, and mark your answers.

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- 4 The word **literal** in the passage is closest in meaning to

- ☐ most basic
- ☐ typically written
- ☐ unintended
- ☐ artistic

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Parody is a form of satire that purposely copies a piece of writing in a comic or satirical way. It may be expressed as a piece of imitation so poor that it seems ridiculous. Parody is often designed to exaggerate characteristics in the original work in order to call attention to its imperfections.

Reversal, also known as inversion, is a satiric technique in which an action results in a consequence that is the opposite of the audience's expectations. A satirist may, for example,



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DIRECTIONS: Read the following passage and then the questions about it. Decide which of the choices best answers each question, and mark your answers.

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- 5 Look at the four squares [...] that indicate where the following sentence could be added to the passage.

One form of irony that is commonly employed in literature is called dramatic irony.

Where would the sentence best fit? Click on a square [...] to add the sentence to the passage.

Paragraph is indicated by an arrow ➤

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Reading

DIRECTIONS: Read the following passage and then the questions about it. Decide which of the choices best answers each question, and mark your answers.

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- 6 According to paragraph 3, a key element of dramatic irony is that it
- ☐ depends on the audience being ignorant about the writer's intentions
 - ☐ is not usually designed to provoke social reform
 - ☐ is based on knowledge the audience has that the characters do not have
 - ☐ does not intend to be ironic

Paragraph is indicated by an arrow ➤

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Reading

DIRECTIONS: Read the following passage and then the questions about it. Decide which of the choices best answers each question, and mark your answers.

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- 7 The word **its** in the passage refers to
- ☐ the form of satire known as parody
 - ☐ the original work being parodied
 - ☐ the comic nature of the parody
 - ☐ the design of the parody

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Hyperbole is an obvious exaggeration used for effect. An example of hyperbole is when a critic praises a current fad or fashion in an excessive and heavy-handed manner. The reader soon realizes that the fad is no better than any other popular fashion that has come and gone before it. Conversely, understatement is a way of expressing a thought that is deliberately less forceful or dramatic than the subject would seem to justify or require. A character



Reading

DIRECTIONS: Read the following passage and then the questions about it. Decide which of the choices best answers each question, and mark your answers.

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- 8 The word **apt** used in the passage is closest in meaning to
- ☐ necessary
 - ☐ humorous
 - ☐ complex
 - ☐ appropriate

emotion, or more likely to a horror so great that no words could adequately describe it.

Wit involves an **apt**, clever, and often humorous association of words. Oscar Wilde's play *The Importance of Being Earnest*, for example, is satirical in its constant **wordplay** (notably on the name Earnest). The play is famous for making fun of the superficiality of the nineteenth-century upper class in England. Wilde's wit is a fine example of gentle satire. The author does not expect or desire any change in society or in the viewer; he merely wishes to amuse. Invective, on the other hand, is a severe form of satire that uses abusive language to attack or blame someone or something. Invective may be combined with wit (in which case it is referred to as "biting wit") or other satiric techniques, but its resulting tone tends to be more bitter than funny.

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Reading

DIRECTIONS: Read the following passage and then the questions about it. Decide which of the choices best answers each question, and mark your answers.

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- 9 In paragraph 6, what point does the author make about hyperbole?

- ☐ It primarily attacks current fads or fashions.
- ☐ It is the opposite of understatement.
- ☐ It is less forceful than other literary techniques.
- ☐ It imitates an original piece of writing.

Paragraph is indicated by an arrow ➤

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DIRECTIONS: Read the following passage and then the questions about it. Decide which of the choices best answers each question, and mark your answers.

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- 10 The author mentions Oscar Wilde's play *The Importance of Being Earnest* to

- ☐ demonstrate the social effects of satire
- ☐ dispute a point about English literature
- ☐ describe a particular form of satire
- ☐ distinguish between wit and invective

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Reading

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11 In paragraph 7, the author implies that invective

- ☐ may be harder to use correctly than other satiric techniques
- ☐ is more likely to appear in harsh satire than in gentle satire
- ☐ may mock human weaknesses without wanting to change them
- ☐ is most frequently expressed as biting wit in satirical writing

Paragraph is indicated by an arrow ➤

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- Wit involves an apt, clever, and often humorous association of words. Oscar Wilde's play *The Importance of Being Earnest*, for example, is satirical in its constant **wordplay** (notably on the name Earnest). The play is famous for making fun of the superficiality of the nineteenth-century upper class in England. Wilde's wit is a fine example of gentle satire. The author does not expect or desire any change in society or in the viewer; he merely wishes to amuse. Invective, on the other hand, is a severe form of satire that uses abusive language to attack or blame someone or something. Invective may be combined with wit (in which case it is referred to as "biting wit") or other satiric techniques, but its resulting tone tends to be more bitter than funny.

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Reading

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12 All of the following are given as examples of satire EXCEPT

- ☐ ending a story in a manner that is contrary to audience expectations
- ☐ exaggerating some characteristics in either a person or an institution
- ☐ making a statement that is the opposite of the intended meaning
- ☐ having characters use gestures to communicate their intentions

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DIRECTIONS: An introductory sentence for a brief summary of the passage is provided below. Complete the summary by selecting the **THREE** answer choices that express the most important ideas in the passage. Some sentences do not belong in the summary because they express ideas that are not presented in the passage or are minor ideas from the passage. *This question is worth two points.*



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DIRECTIONS: Drag your answer choices to the spaces where they belong. To remove an answer choice, click on it. To review the passage, click on **View Text**.

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View Text

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13 Satire is a mode often employed by writers of English literature.

●

Satire may express itself in any of a number of literary genres, including poetry, nonfiction, and drama.

●

Satire is a distinctive genre of literature, marked by a unique style, form, and content.

●

Satire may be designed to make fun of people, or it may be designed to provoke social change.

The works of Oscar Wilde are considered by many to be the finest examples of nineteenth-century satire.

Satire first appears as an English literary mode in the late nineteenth century.

Several literary techniques may be used in satire, depending on the writer's intentions.