Understanding Irony
Call Me Cheesy...

- What is irony?
- A term used to describe contradictory statements or situations.
- Alanis Morissette sang about it in the 90s.
- Some of my favorite t.v. shows are full of it (The Simpsons and South Park are two that pop into my mind).
- Learn about three types of irony that you may encounter in your readings (and in life!)...
Verbal Irony

• Statements that have more than one possible meaning or interpretation.
• Sarcasm and exaggeration are two ways to use verbal irony.
• Another example: "Aren't you lucky?!" to a friend who just got a ticket...or something not so lucky...

Oh, very good... Yes, it is easy to see that nearly six years of magical education have not been wasted on you, Potter...
Situational Irony

- Expectations of ending are reversed.
- Often related to cosmic irony, which stems from the power of chance and fate.
- Humans are caught in a web of adverse circumstances from which there is no escape.
- Example: Think Antigone...once the events are set in motion, there is no changing it.
Dramatic Irony

• The reader knows more than the characters do.

• Classic example: Romeo & Juliet!!

Romeo finds Juliet “dead”, but we know that she is alive!
Why Use Irony?

- To get readers to think more deeply.
- To cause social, political, or other type of change.
- To keep the readers on their toes with unexpected twists.
- Jonathan Swift’s "A Modest Proposal"
  - Proposes that babies be cooked and eaten.
  - Some readers take him literally and are horrified.
  - Swift was actually using irony to make his readers feel the cruelty of landlords toward the poor in Ireland.

Anne Geddes has made a living off of her edible baby photographs!
SUPER QUIZ TIME!
A Little Quiz

1. You pour yourself a bowl of cereal, then you open up the fridge. NO MILK!! This is an example of...

   a. Situational Irony
   b. Verbal Irony
   c. Dramatic Irony
A Little Quiz

2. You walk outside and the temperature reads 115 degrees. You exclaim, “Oh, isn’t it lovely out today!” while sweat drips down your face and you find yourself melting. This is an example of...

a. Situational Irony
b. Verbal Irony
c. Dramatic Irony
A Little Quiz

3. Bill Gates wins a contest. His prize? A new computer! This is an example of...

a. Situational Irony

b. Verbal Irony

c. Dramatic Irony
I hope this helps you a bit as you begin to explore the irony in the short stories of the Life & Death Unit (and beyond).

And, as always, send me a message if you need a bit of extra explanation or help!
Interested in Other Ironic Twists?

Here are some of my favorites:

- "The Cask of Amontillado" by Edgar Allen Poe
- "Lamb to the Slaughter" by Roald Dahl
- "The Lottery" by Shirley Jackson
- "The Necklace" by Guy de Maupassant
- *The Sixth Sense* starring Bruce Willis
- *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding