Satire Writing Tips

Are you going to try your hand at satirical writing? Satire is the use of irony, sarcasm and humor to critize or show the ignorance of people. To learn about satire, a good method is to find satire examples and gather some satire writing tips.

Examples of Satire

Satire is found in many places; literature, songs, television shows, to name a few. Satire is used to show foolishness or corruption in people, organizations, or governments, by using sarcasm or irony. Satire can be seen in anything from an entire work that uses satire throughout, like a parody, to a single sentence. Satire is often used as an attempt to bring about social or political change or to prevent it.

Satire can be achieved by using irony, sarcasm, juxtaposition, double entendres, and exaggeration. Examples of satire can be found in:

- Songs - like the songs of Weird Al Yankovic
- Television shows - like The Colbert Report or South Park
- Comic strips - like "Doonesbury"
- Movies - like M*A*S*H or Airplane

Irony

In irony, the words are used to show the opposite of the actual meaning. With verbal irony, you say one thing and mean another. Situational irony occurs when what actually happens is not what was expected. When a narrative is used in a drama to give the audience more information, then that can supply dramatic irony.

A great example of irony comes from the plot of the movie *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*. Dorothy searches for the wizard so she can get home only to find she could have done it herself. The Scarecrow and Tin Woodsman had desires for things and found out they actually had them. The Lion thought he was a coward, but discovered he had courage. Finally, the Wizard was thought to be powerful and magical, turned out to be an average man.

Sarcasm

Sarcasm is a bitter remark, jibe, or taunt. It is like a verbal knife that cuts and drives a point home. Sometimes it is humorous in the way it makes its point; other times it is serious and painful. You will understand sarcasm better after reading the following quotes:

- "We didn't lose the game; we just ran out of time." - Vince Lombardi
- "A modest little person, with much to be modest about."- Winston Churchill
- Oscar Wilde wrote, "I am not young enough to know everything."
- "I never forget a face, but in your case I'll be glad to make an exception." - Grouch Marx

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If you don't know what topic to pick for your satirical writing, here are some tips on picking one.

- You could write about yourself. Pick some funny habits or quirks you have and write away. Readers can often identify with your problems or reactions and that will be entertaining to them.

- You could also write about a person you know or someone famous. It's even better if you know someone famous. Don't act like a tabloid reporter; stick to general things, like the way they dress or things they have said.
- Politicians are great to satirize because they often make blunders in speeches. You might also consider major events that have recently happened.
- Sometimes fact is stranger than fiction. If you decide to write about unusual or weird facts, be sure and do your research and ake sure the fact is true.

Now that you have selected a topic, here are a few more satire writing tips:

- Your satire does not need to be vicious or obscene. It can be driving and sharp, but the best satire is literate.
- Another thing that works well is to appear to be serious while delivering satire, as it can be really funny. It is subtle, but effective, when at first glance it looks like you are actually reporting on a real event.
- Another trick is to take things farther than they have already gone. If there is a trend in a story, you could play it out to suggest what might happen down the line.
- Another funny tactic is to turn things around. This would be like advising someone to do the exact opposite of what they should do. This would be like in the Addams Family movies and TV shows, where the house was dusted by spreading out actual dust and the children were told to play with their food.