**Humor & Twain Notes**

Irony: What is said or done is opposite from the way it appears or from reality.

* Verbal Irony: When what is said is actually the opposite of what is meant; includes sarcasm (Example: Wow, I love driving in freezing rain! It’s my favorite!)
* Dramatic Irony: When the reader or other characters know something that another character does not (Example: Viewers knowing that there is a killer upstairs when the main character does not. Another example in literature is in *Romeo and Juliet* when Juliet is only faking her death, but Romeo does not know and subsequently kills himself in reality.)
* Situational Irony: When the opposite of what the reader expects actually happens (Example: When Mrs. Mallard is overcome by joy at her husband’s death in *The Story of an Hour*.)

Incongruity: The discrepancy between appearance and reality that exists to further humor or irony; arguably incongruity is what creates humor

Hyperbole: Exaggeration

Comic Use of Language: Using word choice, puns, names, and other features to create humor within the text at a word-level

Satire: A humorous method of criticizing characteristics of human society intended to poke fun at an issue and then illicit a change to correct the issue within society; draws attention to societal and political flaws (Examples: political cartoons, *The Daily Show*, *The Colbert Report*, *The Onion*, *Saturday Night Live*)

* Social Commentary: Using rhetorical means to comment on issues in a society in order to implement or promote change by informing the public about the problem and appealing to their ideas of justice. (Example: Jonathan Swift’s *A Modest Proposal* which satirically advocates eating the children of impoverished families (among other things) in order to solve the Irish famine. In reality, this gruesome essay was to show how backwards the current system of exporting food sources was when people were starving and convince people to rise up and demand change.)
* Human Foibles: Human weaknesses that are explored in literature in a positively connotated way to mirror human behavior and poke fun at our own mannerisms and stupidities.

Dialect: Language that is typical of a certain region, race, location, or social group that exhibits itself through unique word choice (i.e. “horseshoes” being a type of food in central Illinois), pronunciation (wash vs. warsh), and/or grammatical usage (“I might could do that next week.”).