**Campbell’s English – Short Story Questions**

**Hot Chocolate – by Heath Johns**

***Please answer on a separate sheet of paper. ☺***

1. At the beginning of the story, how does the narrator characterize his relationship with his mother? Explain how they get along, and include some **direct quotes** from the story to support what you’re saying and to demonstrate the nature of their relationship.

2. Why does the mother want the protagonist to have some hot chocolate? Why does he not want to drink it? At this point in the story, what could the hot chocolate **symbolize\***?

3. What is the **main conflict** of the story? What is the **climax** of the story? Explain why you think so.

4. What does the mug that says, “My mom’s from Sweden, why’d you ask?” **symbolize at first**? What could it **symbolize after the climax**?

5. How is the ending of the story **IRONIC**? Explain **which kind** of irony it is, and **WHY** it is ironic. (See irony slides on back of sheet).

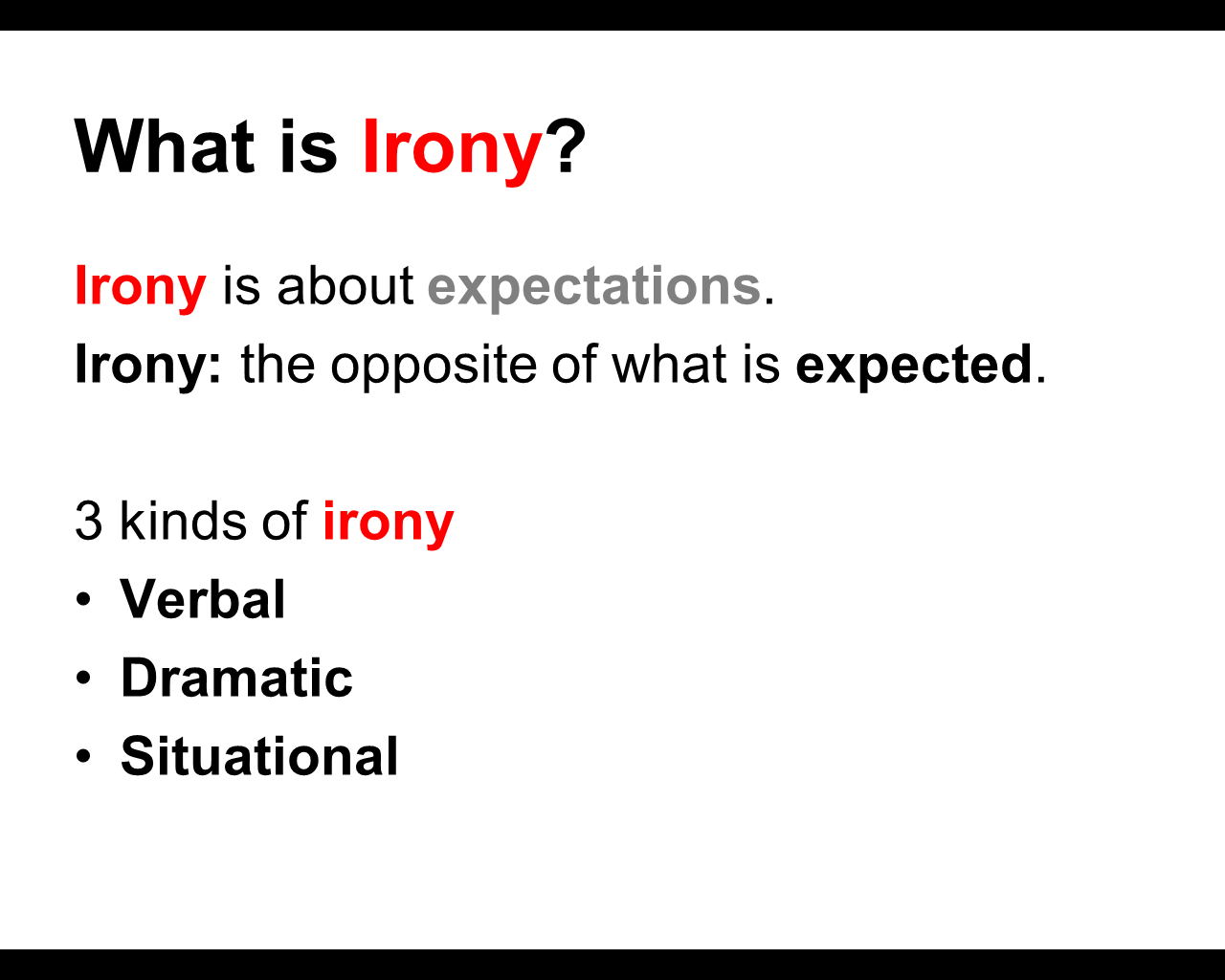
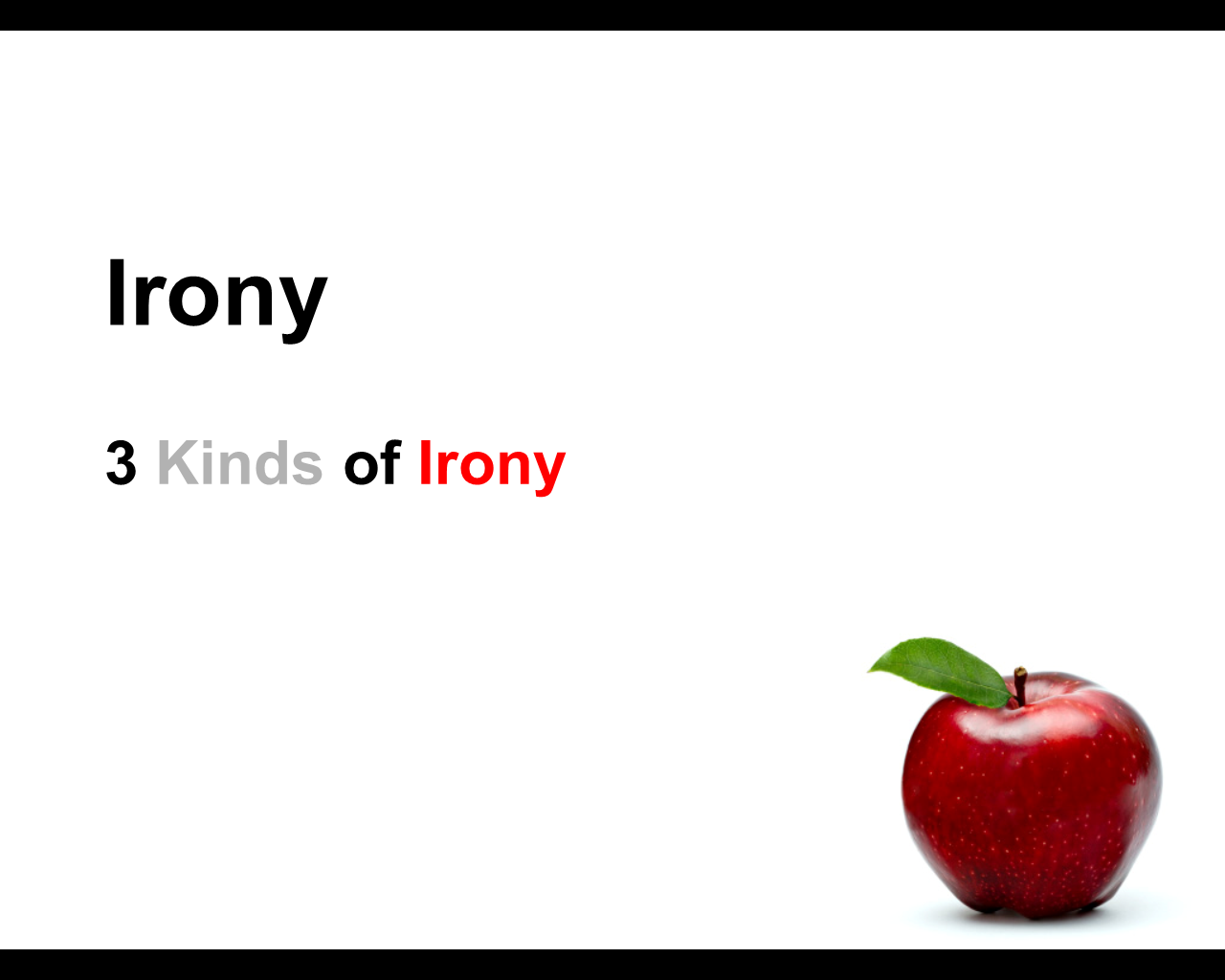
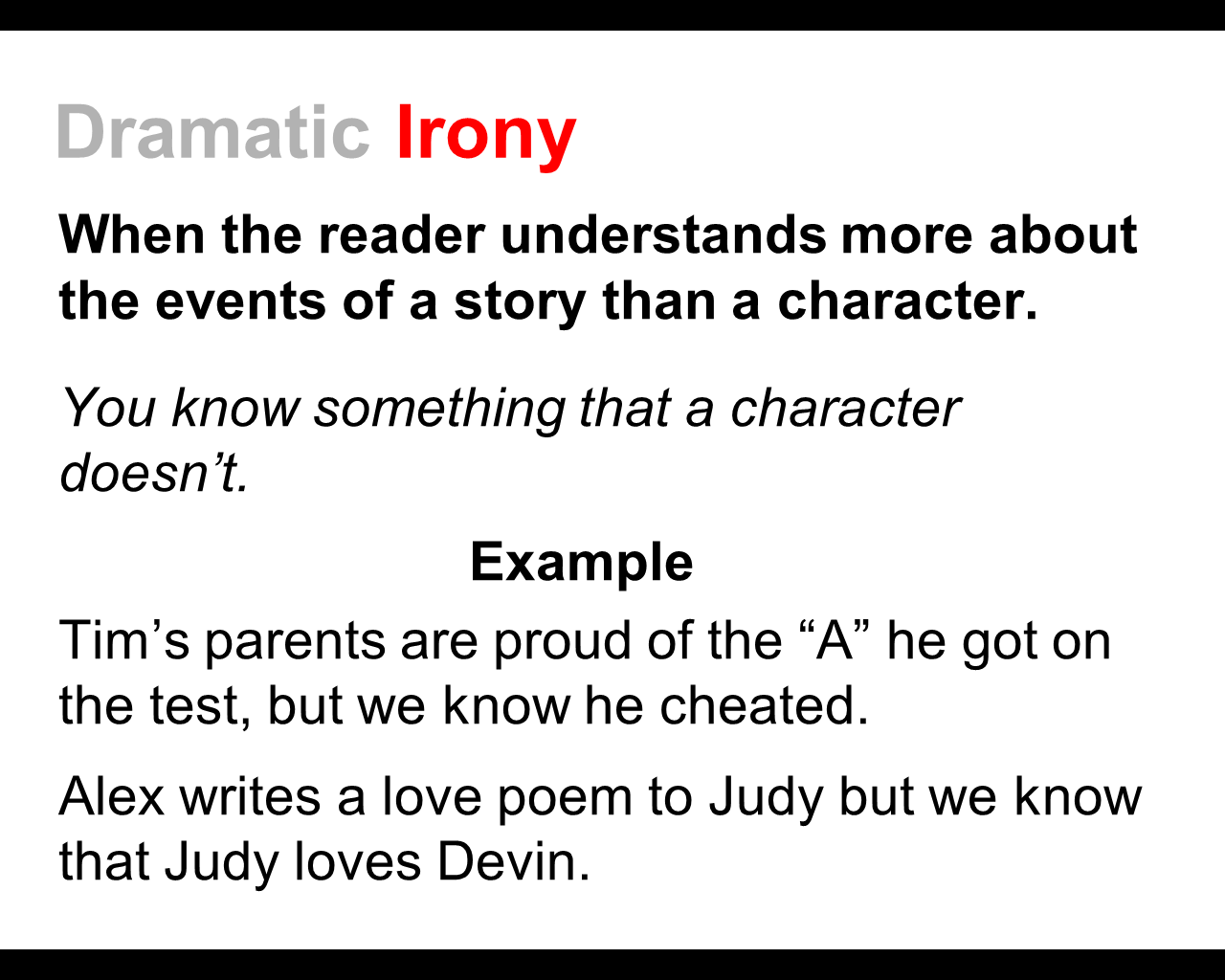
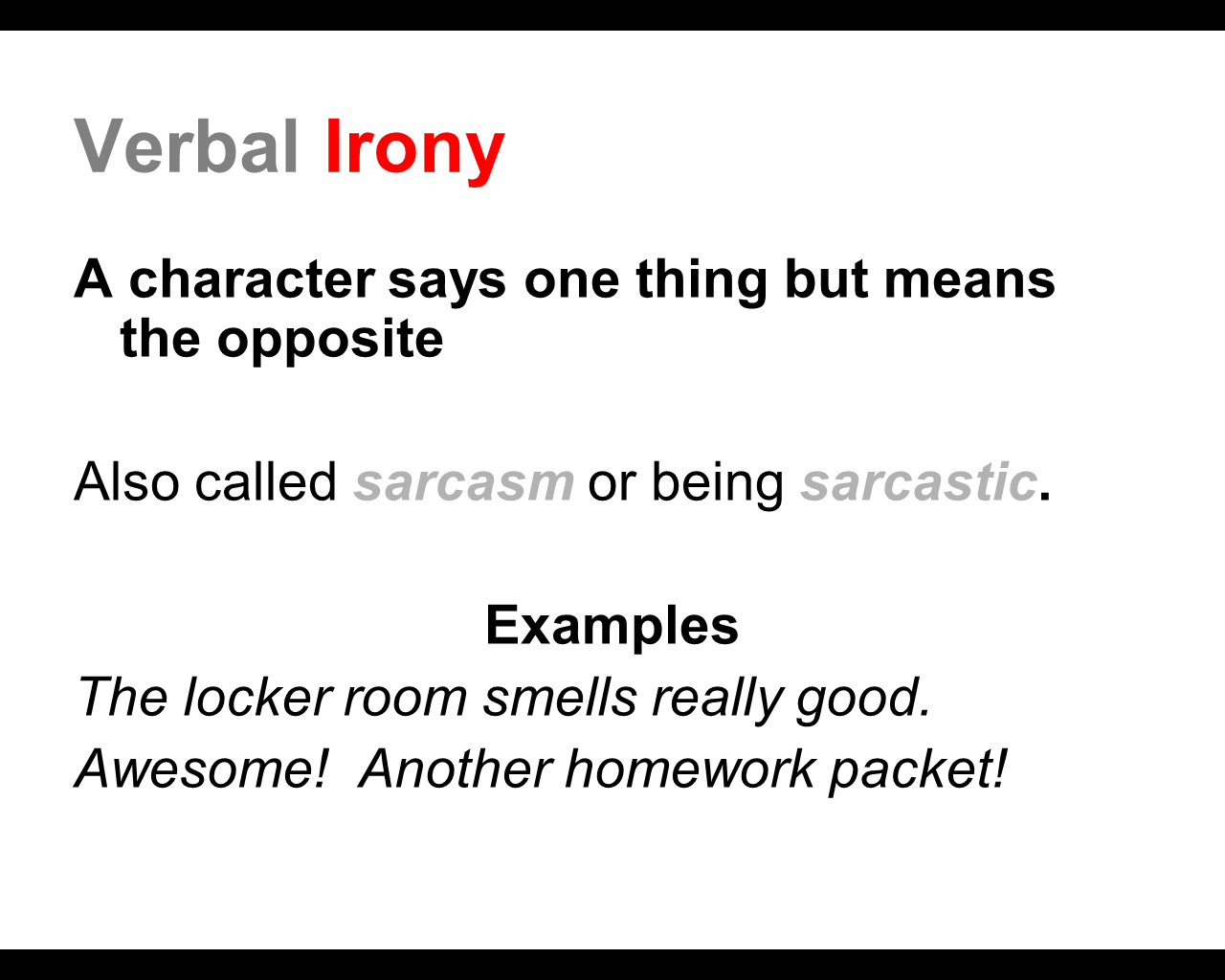
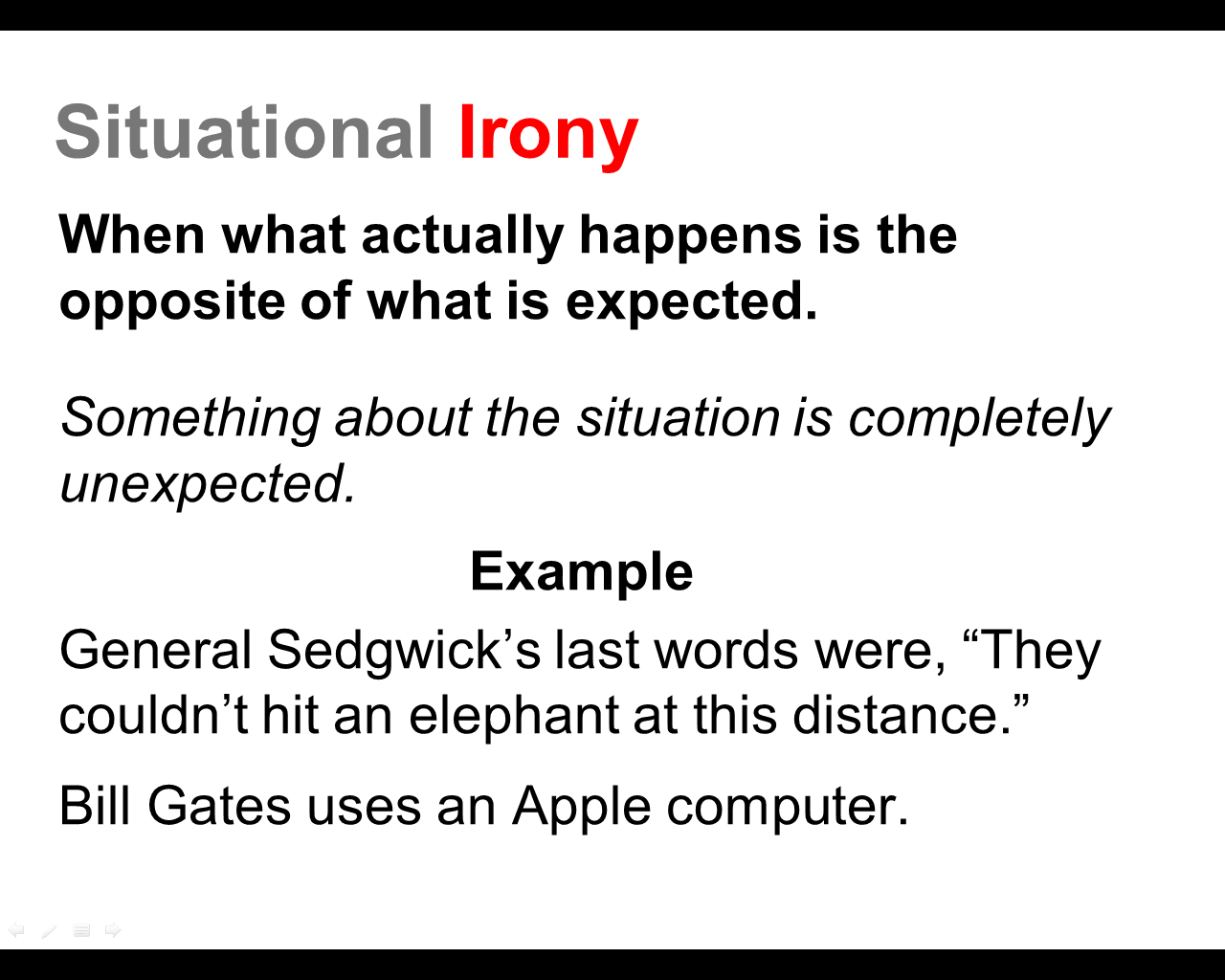
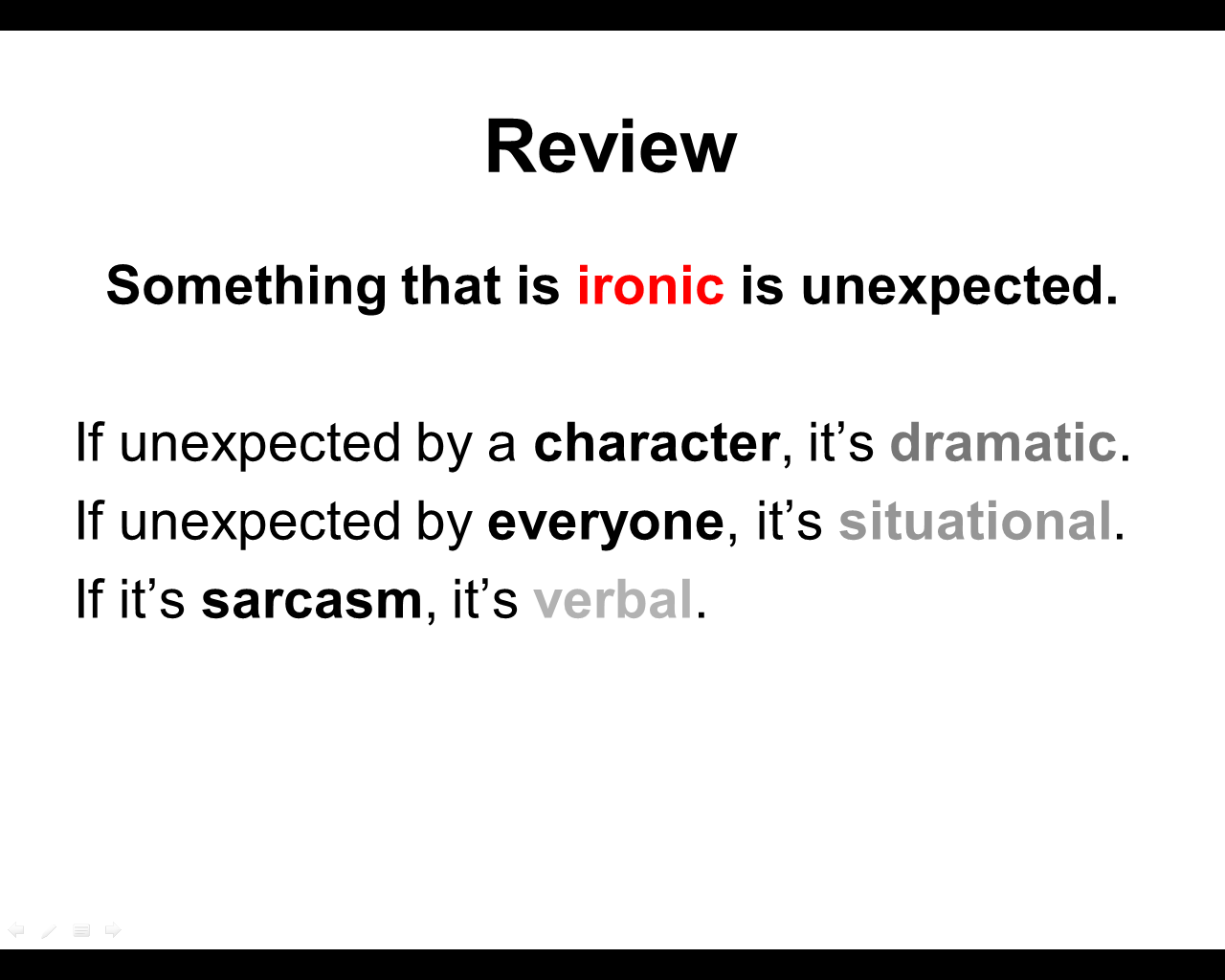
6. What does the narrator mean by the last line, “For the first time in years, I was more than her son, and she was more than my mother.” What significance does this have for their future relationship – i.e. how do you expect them to get along from now on?

7. Other than “connection”, what are some of the **theme topics** from the story? Write one **THEME STATEMENT** for“connection”, as well as one other theme. (See Short Story Terms Handout p.7-8).

\* Symbol – an object, person, event, or place that represents an IDEA or qualities. Symbols usually have special meaning in particular situations and contexts. For instance, a red rose growing in a garden is just a flower; a boy giving his girlfriend a red rose symbolizes love.

\*Symbolism – the use of symbols to represent ideas or qualities

\* Symbolize – to represent by means of symbols



**Hey You**

by Pink Floyd (Waters)   
  
Hey you, out there in the cold  
Getting lonely, getting old   
Can you feel me?  
Hey you, standing in the aisles  
With itchy feet and fading smiles   
Can you feel me?  
Hey you, don’t help them to bury the light  
Don't give in without a fight.  
  
Hey you, out there on your own  
Sitting naked by the phone   
Would you touch me?  
Hey you, with you ear against the wall  
Waiting for someone to call out   
Would you touch me?  
Hey you, would you help me to carry the stone?  
Open your heart, I'm coming home.  
  
But it was only fantasy.  
The wall was too high,   
As you can see.  
No matter how he tried,   
He could not break free.  
And the worms ate into his brain.  
  
Hey you, standing in the road  
always doing what you're told,   
Can you help me?  
Hey you, out there beyond the wall,   
Breaking bottles in the hall,   
Can you help me?  
Hey you, don't tell me there's no hope at all  
Together we stand, divided we fall.

**Tamara's Opus\***

**by Joshua Bennett**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MVvzw7d11Q8>

\* An opus is any artistic work, especially one on a large scale.

Tamara has never listened  
to hip-hop  
Never danced  
to the rhythm of raindrops  
or fallen asleep to a chorus of chirping crickets  
she has been Deaf  
for as long as I have been alive  
and ever since the day that I turned five  
My father has said:  
"Joshua. Nothing is wrong with Tamara.  
*God just makes   
some people different*."  
And at that moment  
those nine letters felt like hammers  
swung gracefully by unholy hands  
to shatter my stained-glass innocence  
into shards that could never be pieced back together  
or do anything more  
than sever the ties between my sister and I.

I waited  
was patient numberless years  
anticipating the second   
her ears would open like lotuses  
and allow my sunlight sentences to seep  
into her insides  
make her remember all those conversations  
we must have had in Heaven  
back when God hand-picked us  
to be sibling souls centuries ago

I still remember her 20th birthday  
readily recall my awestruck eleven-year old eyes  
as I watched Deaf men and women of all ages  
dance in unison to the vibrations  
of speakers booming so loud  
that I imagined angels chastising us  
for disturbing their worship  
with such beautiful blasphemy  
until you have seen  
a Deaf girl dance  
you know nothing of passion.  
There was a barricade between us  
that I never took the time to destroy  
never for even a moment  
thought to pick up a book and look up  
the signs for *sister*  
for*family*  
for*goodbye, I will see you again some day*  
*remember the face of your little brother*.  
It is only now I see  
that I was never willing  
to put in the extra effort to love her properly  
So as the only person in my family  
who is not fluent in sign language  
I have decided to take this time  
to apologize  
Tamara, *I am sorry*   
*for my silence*.

But true love knows no frequency  
So I will use these hands  
to speak volumes  
that could never be contained  
within the boundaries of sound waves  
I will shout at the top of my fingertips  
until digits dance and relay these messages  
directly to your soul  
I know   
that there is no poem  
that can make up for all the time that we have lost  
but please, if you can  
*just listen*  
as I play you a symphony   
on the strings of my heart  
made for no other ears on this Earth  
but yours.

**‘Connection’ Theme Questions**

**“Hot Chocolate” by Heath Jones**

**“Tamara’s Opus” by Joshua Bennett**

***Please answer on a separate sheet of paper. ☺***

1. What are the similarities and differences between the two pieces in terms of: (see chart to help you take notes)

* plot (circumstances / what happens),
* main characters,
* setting (including mood),
* conflict,
* point of view, and
* tone (the feeling with which the author of story, song or poem treats his subject – the attitude towards the subject).For the song and poem, discuss how the use of music and the way the spoken word poem is delivered affect the tone.

2. How does the theme topic of connection relate to the two pieces (short story, song, or poem)? Write a THEME STATEMENT for each piece that demonstrates how the theme of connection is handled. Is the THEME STATEMENT for all three pieces the same or different? Explain.

3. Explain how each piece helps DEMONSTRATE the theme through things like:

* what characters or the narrator (person or voice “telling” the story/song/poem) DOES or SAYS
* what happens
* specific lines / quotes
* word choices )(especially in poem and song)
* figurative language (usually in the form of comparisons such as metaphors, similes, personification, etc.)
* symbols
* irony

4. What other themes / theme topics do you notice in the different pieces? What are the similarities and differences between them? Be prepared to explain.

**Similarities and Differences**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Element | *Similarities* | *Differences* |
| Plot |  |  |
| Characters |  |  |
| Setting |  |  |
| Conflict |  |  |
| Point of View |  |  |
| Tone |  |  |
| Theme |  |  |