Name _____ Date _____

Verbal Irony and Puns

Directions: Each question gives you its own line or short conversation, written like a script. Use the details around each line to figure out what the speaker really means.

1. A sudden thunderstorm pours rain onto the picnic table at the crowded park, soaking every sandwich and flooding the bowl of potato salad. Dad holds a soggy paper plate over his head and groans loudly.

Dad: Perfect weather for a picnic.

What kind of figurative language does Dad use?

A. Verbal irony B. Personification C. Simile D. Pun

2. When a thunderstorm soaks the family picnic and Dad groans, "Perfect weather for a picnic," what does he really mean?

A. He wants to have picnics only on rainy days.
B. He is glad that it is raining.
C. He thinks the sandwiches needed more water.
D. The weather has ruined the picnic.

3. Maya yawned through the entire hour-long assembly about the school's new parking rules and checked the clock at least twelve times. Afterward, she turned to her friend.

Maya: That was the most exciting hour of my life.

What does Maya really mean?

A. She was excited because she will be driving soon.
B. The assembly was the best part of her year.
C. The assembly was extremely boring.
D. She wants to learn more about parking rules.

4. In which of these situations does the speaker use verbal irony, saying the opposite of what he or she really means?

A. After tripping and dropping his lunch tray in front of the whole cafeteria, Marcus says: Well, that went really well.
B. On the first warm day of spring, Tyler steps outside, smiles and says: What a beautiful day.
C. When her little brother cleans his room without being asked, Mom hugs him and says: Thank you, it looks wonderful.
D. After studying all week, Lena gets an A on her test and says: That went really well.

5. A pun is a play on a word that has more than one meaning, used so that both meanings fit at the same time. Which sentence contains a pun?

A. When the classroom pencil sharpener broke for the third time this week, Ms. Patel sighed and called it pointless.
B. Stuck in traffic for two hours, Dad mutters: I just love long drives.
C. The snow fell as softly as feathers.
D. The museum is closed on Mondays.

6. When the classroom pencil sharpener broke for the third time this week, Ms. Patel sighed and called it "pointless." Which two meanings of the word does the sentence play on?

A. It is broken, and Ms. Patel is angry about it.

B. It does no good, and it cannot put a point on a pencil.

C. It does no good, and nobody wants to buy it.

D. It cannot put a point on a pencil, and it is very old.

7. Before the race, the track coach promised the team that it would be a breeze, since a steady wind would be at the runners' backs the whole way. What makes the coach's comment a pun?

A. The coach is exaggerating how fast the runners will go.

B. The coach means the opposite of what she says.

C. *Breeze* can mean something easy and also a light wind, and both meanings fit.

D. The coach is comparing the race to a summer day.

8. Which two of these sentences play on a word that has two different meanings at the same time? Select two.

☐ A. The bus was so crowded that we stood like sardines.

☐ B. The owner of the cheese shop told such cheesy jokes that customers groaned.

☐ C. The library closes at eight on Fridays.

☐ D. The gym was packed with fans, but it was still sweltering inside.

☐ E. When the teacher hands out a surprise quiz, Leo groans: Oh, great. My favorite thing.

9. Read each line carefully, then match it to the kind of language it uses: verbal irony, a pun, hyperbole or a literal statement.

Write the letter of the matching answer on each line.

1. _____ After the power goes out during the championship game, Nia says: Oh, wonderful. Just what I wanted.
2. _____ The pitcher on our softball team brought a pitcher of lemonade to the game.
3. _____ This line is so long that I'll be in high school before we reach the front.
4. _____ The school play starts at seven o'clock.

A. Verbal irony
B. Hyperbole
C. Literal statement
D. Pun

10. Jae and Priya are talking on the phone after a long, rainy afternoon. Read their conversation.

Jae: The bus broke down on the highway, so we waited an hour in the pouring rain for another one.
Priya: And then?
Jae: Then, when I finally got to the field, I found out that practice was canceled anyway.
Priya: Wow. Sounds like a great day.

How does Priya's last line fit the conversation?

A. She truly thinks Jae had a great day.

B. She is making a pun on the word great.

C. She uses verbal irony to agree that Jae's day was awful.

D. She is exaggerating how long Jae waited.