



THE LIGHTNING THIEF:

Analyzing Characters' Dialogue

In *The Lightning Thief*, Percy Jackson's matter-of-fact statements, as well as his wit, bring humor to the novel. Not only does Percy's sense of humor show throughout the novel, but we see his friends, and even some of his enemies, use similar ways to communicate.

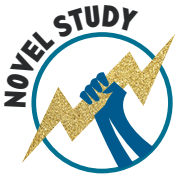
Authors use literary techniques such as verbal irony and sarcasm to develop funny and dramatic situations. These techniques help move the story forward and help readers understand the characters' personalities and motivations.

- **Verbal irony** is when a character says something that's different from what they really mean or feel.
- **Sarcasm** is also when a character says something that's different from what they really mean or feel, but it's meant to mock or ridicule. Sarcasm relies on the speaker's tone of voice, which is often negative. Sarcasm can be used to criticize someone or something, show disapproval, or poke fun at something.



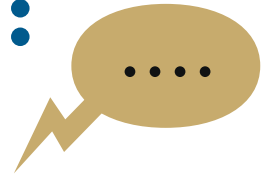
Consider the dialogue in *The Lightning Thief*. Record humorous examples and their context, and explain their impact. An example has been done for you.

<p>Example: (Chapter 16)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Why can't you place a blessing like that on us?" I asked. • "It only works on wild animals." • "So it would only affect Percy," Annabeth reasoned. 	
<p>Context: Grover places a satyr's sanctuary on the animals being smuggled in the truck to ensure they'll get to safety. Percy, Grover, and Annabeth are figuring out how they can leave and continue their quest.</p>	<p>Impact: Annabeth's response brings humor to a stressful event in the book. By poking fun at Percy, she lightens the mood. It also demonstrates the "playful" relationship between Annabeth and Percy.</p>
<p>Example: (Chapter 5)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Chocolate-chip cookies," I said. "My mom's. Homemade." • He sighed. "And how do you feel?" • "Like I could throw Nancy Bobofit a hundred yards." 	
<p>Context: Grover is checking on Percy after he recovers from the fight with the Minotaur.</p>	<p>Impact: Percy's comment is a sarcastic way to poke fun at Nancy Bobofit as he describes how strong and energetic he feels after his recovery.</p>



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Keep going! Record two more examples and their context, and explain their impact. Then, respond to the prompt.

<p>Example: (Chapter 12)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “How does Gladiola know about the reward?” I asked. • “He read the signs,” Grover said. “Duh.” • “Of course,” I said. “Silly me.” 	
<p>Context: After the incident with Medusa, the friends are in the woods overnight. Grover meets Gladiola, the pink poodle, who’s willing to help the friends get money for travel on their quest.</p>	<p>Impact: Percy’s response pokes fun at the assumption that he should have known that a pink poodle could read signs. This shows the reader that he thinks the notion of a reading poodle is ridiculous.</p>
<p>Example: (Chapter 15)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “We need to have a little talk with Ares.” 	
<p>Context: After Percy and Annabeth safely exit the Thrill Ride of Love at the water park, the three friends want answers from Ares about his trick to set them up.</p>	<p>Impact: Percy suggests they have a “little talk” even though it’s much more serious than that, given the dangerous situation Ares puts them in. This comment lightens up the tense mood.</p>

How did Rick Riordan’s use of verbal irony and sarcasm throughout the novel impact your experience as a reader? Consider how it shaped your opinion of the characters. Did it help you enjoy the novel more? Explain.

Student answers will vary.
