

## Teacher Notes



# Elements of Satire

## Activity 2 Collaborating to Evaluate Satirical Devices

### Activity at a Glance

- ◆ **Subject:** English
- ◆ **Subject Area:** English/Language Arts
- ◆ **Category:** Literary Types
- ◆ **Topic:** Satire
- ◆ **Grade Level:** 10 – 12
- ◆ **Prerequisites:** None
- ◆ **Total Teaching Time:** 60+ minutes

### Materials

- ◆ **Student Data Sheet:** Identifying Satirical Devices
- ◆ **Elements of Satire** edc resource files: Directions – Collaborating, Probable Audience 1 – 3
- ◆ TI-83 Plus and TI-92 Plus Devices
- ◆ TI-GRAPH LINK™ Cable, USB Cable, or TI-Navigator™
- ◆ TI External Keyboard

### *Activity Overview*

In this collaborative activity, students work in groups of four to read and analyze satirical articles in an online newspaper. They also create Venn diagrams, comparing and contrasting satirical descriptions with real life. The groups consider probable audiences of the website and determine what satirical devices are used and whether they are effective. Once students compile this information about their articles, each group presents their findings to the class and participates in a brief question and answer period.

### *Tip*

Venn diagrams provide students the opportunity to clearly identify differences and similarities in a visual manner. By creating these diagrams about satirical articles, students learn to appreciate the overlap between reality and satire, as well as the disconnect between the two, enhancing their overall understanding of satire. By discussing intended audiences and determining satirical devices together, students can rely on one another's understanding of each, learning from one another as they complete the activity.

## Directions

Prior to beginning this activity, review with students the various forms of satirical devices. Ensure that students have the **Student Data Sheet: Identifying Satirical Devices** or create another activity that includes a lecture and activities about satire and its devices. The activity relies on satirical articles, which are in constant supply at theonion.com, but can be adapted to include any satirical writing.

## Before the Activity Begins

Review lesson objectives with students. Have students form groups of four. Ensure that each group has access to definitions and examples of satirical devices, as well as the **Elements of Satire** edc resource file: *Analyzing Satire*. Discuss briefly with students the elements of truth that are present in all forms of satire, as well as the exaggerations and other devices used that make a work satirical. Discuss the **Student Data Sheet: Identifying Satirical Devices** as a classroom example.

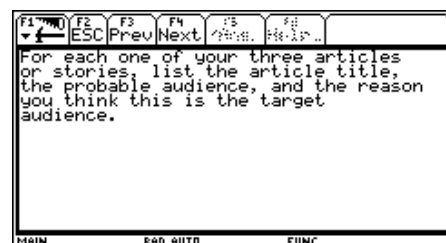
## During the Activity

The **Elements of Satire** edc resource file: *Analyzing Satire* provides an excerpt of a satirical article that you may choose to discuss as a class or ask students to read and discuss it within their groups. During this activity, students choose at least three satirical articles to read and analyze, first by creating Venn diagrams that compare the satire to real life as they understand it. Students then identify probable audiences for the satirical piece, and finally identify the satirical devices used in the piece and evaluate their effectiveness. Monitor student progress.

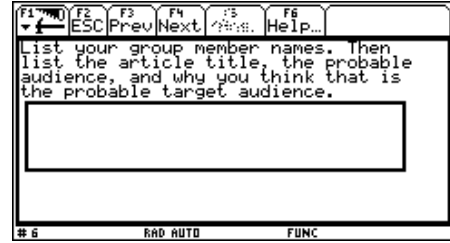
Use the following instructions to access and use the **Elements of Satire** edc resource file: *Analyzing Satire* on the devices. Each step indicates the action students need to perform to obtain the files and use the exercises on their devices. Additional information for the teacher appears in shaded boxes, where necessary.

### Voyage™ 200 PLT (or TI-92 Plus)

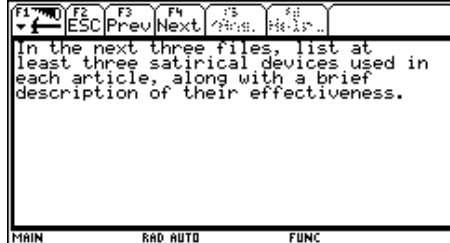
1. If necessary, press **F2: ESC** to exit the previous file. Use  $\leftarrow$   $\rightarrow$  to highlight the **Directions – Collaborating 1** file.
2. Press **[ENTER]**. Review the instructions prior to beginning the assignment.



- Press **F4: Next** to access the **Probable Audience 1** file. Enter responses by simply beginning to type. Continue this process until you have completed the **Probable Audience 3** file.



- Press **F4: Next** to access the **Directions – Collaborating 2** file. Review the instructions prior to beginning the assignment.



- Press **F4: Next** to access the **Devices 1** file. Enter responses by simply beginning to type. Continue this process until you have completed the **Devices 3** file.



TI-83 Plus

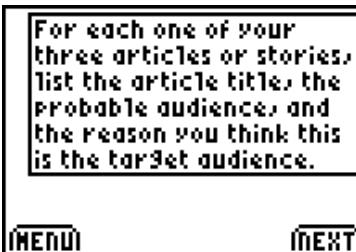
- If necessary, press **MENU** to exit the previous file. An options list displays. Use  $\uparrow$   $\downarrow$  to highlight **3: ► ITEM LIST**.



- Press **ENTER**. The Item Menu displays. Use  $\uparrow$   $\downarrow$  to highlight **Directions – Collaborating 1** file.



- Press **ENTER**. Review the instructions prior to beginning the assignment.



4. Press **NEXT** to access the **Probable Audience 1** file. Enter responses by simply beginning to type. Continue this process until you have completed the **Probable Audience 3** file.

List your group member names. Then list the article title, the probable audience, and

ANS

(MENU) (NEXT)

5. Press **NEXT** to access the **Directions – Collaborating 2** file. Review the instructions prior to beginning the assignment.

In the next three files, list at least three satirical devices used in each article, along with a brief description of their effectiveness.

ANS

(MENU) (NEXT)

6. Press **NEXT** to access the **Devices 1** file. Enter responses by simply beginning to type. Continue this process until you have completed the **Devices 3** file.

List your group member names. Then identify three examples of the authors use of devices.

ANS

(MENU) (NEXT)

### ***After the Activity***

Students present their findings to the class. Correct and discuss any errors, and provide opportunities for the class to ask questions of the presenting group.

**Student Data Sheet**  
**Identifying Satirical Devices**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Clown Sighting in Suburban Community Terrifies Residents – Plano TX**

In the 911 tape released by the police today, the terror in the voice of Alan Smith was evident and chilling. "I answered a knock on the door and saw this clown standing there. Just standing. Not saying anything. It was really creepy so I slammed the door, and now he's staring at me through the window! Please help me!" The desperation and terror in his voice told the story.

Addressing an angry and frightened group of residents carrying "Catch the Clown" placards, a police spokesperson commented that the department had created a special clown taskforce. Police Chief Matthew Diaz tried to calm the crowd. "We're working 24/7 and won't rest until we find and interrogate this clown," he declared. When asked by this reporter, he failed to confirm that copycat clowns were being reported in other north Dallas communities. "I can't comment on investigations taking place in other communities, although I can tell you that we are working closely with federal investigators to bring this ugly episode to an end. We want our citizens to remain calm and vigilant, and to report any suspicious 'clown like' behaviors to the police immediately." If you see any suspicious "clowning around," report it to the authorities at once.

The overall tone and content is a parody of newspaper articles in general. The reaction of Alan Smith to the clown standing at his door is an example of overstatement. Irony is provided by the idea that clowns are frightening (although some would disagree).

Your teacher will provide you with access to websites containing satirical content. Choose a topic (such as Health or Sports) and choose three articles to read online and analyze.

You will:

- ◆ Create Venn diagrams that show how the satire in each instance relates to reality, finding the grains of truth shared by the satire and real life, and showing where the two both connect and diverge.
- ◆ Identify probable audiences for these sites using **Elements of Satire** edc resource files: *Directions – Collaborating 1, Probable Audience 1 – 3*.
- ◆ Identify and evaluate the effectiveness of the specific devices using **Elements of Satire** edc resource files: *Directions – Collaborating 2, Devices 1 – 3*.

Once finished, each group will share their findings with the class.