



Us and Them

Humor & satire in nonfiction

Why satire?

1. The satirist's aim is to devise a mirror—to produce for the reader a reflection of himself or of society
2. In the process, the reader is enticed to laugh at the image or reflection he sees
3. In the end, the audience recognizes in himself or in society flaws that need fixing

Hyperbole

- Hyperbole is an exaggeration that represents something as larger, better, or worse than it really is.
- Sedaris uses hyperbole in this selection to add humor to his tale.

Highlight and note examples of hyperbole in the story.

Irony

- An ironic statement (verbal irony) is one that is contradictory.
- An ironic situation (situational irony) is when the opposite of what we expect to happen occurs.

Highlight and note examples of irony in the story.

Understatement

- Understatement is the representation of something as smaller or less significant than it really is.
- An understatement is a tool that helps develop other devices such as irony by deliberately decreasing the severity of a situation when an intense response is expected by the audience.

Highlight and note examples of understatement in the story.

What does Sedaris satirize in “Us and Them”?

Highlight passages that point out
personal or societal flaws.

Point-of-view

- How does Sedaris's perspective in this piece help develop the selection's thematic message?
- How does the selection connect with Adichie's message in "The Danger of the Single Story?"