

Understatement



Understatement is a literary device in which a writer intentionally uses words that suggest a situation is less important than it actually is. An understatement is usually ironic, as it is the opposite of what is expected in the circumstance. It can also be used for modesty, comedy, or politeness. Understatement is the opposite of hyperbole, which is an overstatement or exaggeration. Understatement can be found in literature, as well as in pop culture and everyday conversations.

EXAMPLES:

- I got caught in the rain, so I'm a tad bit damp.
- George was in the hospital because he had a sniffle.

DIRECTIONS: Respond to each scenario with an understatement.

1. You won first prize.
2. Your house burned down.
3. You just fell madly in love.
4. You deeply regret something that you did.