

Name: _____ Date: _____ Per: _____

“The Lottery” by Shirley Jackson-----Reading Guide

Post Reading – complete the following based on the information found in the story

Plot structure: (draw and label with parts and details from the story) -

Setting:

Symbols:

Point of View (narration):

Conflict in the story:

Foreshadowing: Shirley Jackson foreshadows the ending when.....

A List of Horrors

Some first-time readers of "The Lottery" tend to cite the ending, describing the commencement of the stoning of Tessie Hutchinson, as the only disturbing part of the story. But those who have studied the story know otherwise. Consider the following; **what makes them especially disturbing?** Use complete sentences with thorough explanations.

- "[T]he whole lottery took less than two hours, so it could begin at ten o'clock in the morning and still be through in time to allow the villagers to get home for noon dinner."
- "Guess we better get started, get this over with, so's we can go back to work."
- The villagers do not excuse children from the lottery. Even Nancy Hutchinson, 12, and her little brother, Davy, must draw from the black box. If a child draws the slip of paper with the black dot, he or she will be stoned.
- Children take part in the stoning. Little Davy is so small that he throws pebbles.
- Nancy Hutchinson and her brother Bill laugh when they draw blank lots. Only two people remain to draw, their father and mother. How could Nancy and Bill laugh when they know that their father or mother will draw the lot with the black spot and die?
- Mr. Hutchinson pulls from his wife's hand the slip of paper she has drawn--the losing lot--and holds it up for all to see. He does not plead for his wife; he does not exhibit any sympathy. Instead, he becomes one of the executioners. ...

Irony

These are all bits of irony. **Explain what makes them irony.** You will need to do research and critical thinking to answer these. Hints have been provided. Complete sentences with thorough explanations.

- The word lottery implies:
.
- The sunny day suggests:
- Old Man Warner (the connotation of the name):
- Mr. Summers (the connotation of the name):
- When Old Man Warner hears that the north village is considering ending the lottery, he says, "Next thing you know, they'll be wanting to go back to living in caves." How is this statement ironic:

Study Questions - in complete sentences with thorough explanations.

1. How do the commonplace details of life and the folksy language contribute to the impact of the story?
2. What seems to have been the original purpose of the lottery?
3. What do the people believe it does for them?
4. What aspect of the lottery does she challenge; what aspect goes unquestioned?
5. Is the lottery a collective act of murder? Is it morally justified? Is tradition sufficient justification for such actions?