

# Irony in "the lottery" assignment

[Art & Culture](#)



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Irony in "The Lottery" Shirley Jackson's "The Lottery" offers an almost classic study of irony of situation: the reader expects a celebration; she gets a stoning. Such a reversal is the work of careful planning by the author. The reader expects the lottery to be a celebration of some sort because Jackson describes the setting details the activities of the townspeople, and refers to the lottery itself in terms that belie the outcome of the event. First, Jackson establishes a setting which suggests that the lottery is, in fact, a pleasant event as she starts off describing what most would perceive as a dutiful day.

The statement " June 27th was clear and sunny, with the fresh warmth of a full-summer day; the flowers were blooming profusely and the grass was richly green" not only lets the reader know what season it is but most readers would assume that what happens next is a happy thing. Jackson also lets the reader know that this event happens in other towns too, but luckily this town is small so it won't take long and everyone one can get back to lunch, and whatever else they were doing, as if it were an election or something Simi liar.

Then she details what appear to be normal activities of citizens as they assemble for nothing more than a simple town meeting. The reader would assume that the narrator of this short story has known the characters she describes and has viewed these events several times before. She states " The children gathered first, of course" as if to say that is the way it happens every time. The boys are gathering stones and horses playing as the girls are " talking among themselves", these are normal things for children to be doing at a town meeting.

There seems to be no real level of stress or anxiety as Jackson describes the adults. By saying " Soon the men began to gather. Surveying their own children, speaking of planting and rain, tractors and taxes" reiterates that these men are from a small town and this is what they would normally talk about. After Jackson say that the women greet one another, exchange gossip, then join their husbands as they gather the children, the reader gets the vision that the event is about to begin and whatever this event may be it is obviously something that must be done as a family.

Finally, she permits references to the lottery' itself which imply that while it may be infrequent, it is also innocuous. In the way that the black box is described and the series of events, from the list of households, to the lottery official, and how things were custom during this event leads the reader to believe that is a well-kept tradition to these folks. Because the townspeople were so willing to ensure that everyone was there and the appropriate person picked the slip of paper for each household the reader would not expect that someone is about to win something.

Suspicious don't begin to arise in the reader until Testis Hutchinson shouts ' You didn't give him time enough to take any paper he wanted. Saw you. It wasn't fair! " Mrs.. Dielectric calls " Be a good sport, Testis" which makes the reader wonder what Testis is making a fuss about. That curiosity is multiplied when Mrs.. Graves says " All of us took the same chance. " When someone says ' chance' it usually means they stand to lose something. As Testis continues to resist the fact that she has the piece of paper everyone was looking for, no one bothers to argue, console, or take her place, the reader realizes that this is no ordinary town meeting.

<https://assignbuster.com/irony-inthe-lottery-assignment/>

Once everyone is sure who the "winner of the lottery" is they want to get it over with quickly. As if it were not a pleasant thing to do but something that had to be done. The setting of this story does not make the ending predictable at all. The title 'The Lottery' is very ironic because it gives the impression of winning something, when in fact the person did not win at all, she lost her life. Everyone else in the town gets to continue their lives as if nothing happened, and there will be no worries about who will draw the slip of paper with the black dot next time.