

# The lottery by shirley jackson essay sample

[Psychology](#), [Behaviorism](#)



'The Lottery' is a luminous piece of literary work by Shirley Jackson. When this short story was published by the New Yorker in the year 1948, it attracted huge controversy and criticism. Jackson, with the help of irony as well as comedy, draws attention towards hypocritical behavior and flaws of the human beings. The story also talks about illogical practices as well as underlying evils of the society. This paper intends to discuss 'The Lottery' and several other related aspects.

In the journey, after its first appearance, the story has got huge acclamations by the critics as well as readers and it is one of the most liked and famous short stories of American literature. The story revolves around people of a small town who used to gather in the months of June participate in an annual event, "The Lottery". They used to select one person to be stoned to death as they believed this would help them in getting good harvest (Jackson). The name of Tessie Hutchinson was chosen this year and Jackson has highlighted weaknesses of human behavior through this character.

I like the way, Jackson uses appropriate words to portray the atmosphere and feelings of participants in the event. Jackson portrays how Tessie was excited as well as happy about the event but at the moment this event began, she appeared very nervous and confused. Not only Tessie but other natives and their behavior have been portrayed in an excellent manner by the Jackson. Selection and use of appropriate words, by the author is, remarkable.

Jackson portrays how Tessie reacted when her name was chosen this year. When Tessie realized that she is going to be dead, she became angry and

started shouting. She started raising question on the relevance of such customs and also she questioned the method and fairness of selecting names. Jackson portrays the weakness and hypocrisy of human being as well as the society. The same Tessie, who was excited before this event, became nervous and angry once her own name was declared (Jackson).

Jackson portrays that Tessie, who never raised the question about the relevance and fairness of this custom, was alleging that there is some mistake in this method of selecting names and there is no need of such rubbish customs (Jackson). It has been portrayed beautifully, by the help of words, that how the character of Tessie was converted into a rebellion from a mute spectator. Once her name was declared, she forgot even basic etiquettes and started alleging elders to be unfair.

It has been portrayed how selfish a human being can be. When the name of Tessie was chosen, she, in order to save her own life, offered names of her daughter and son in law to be given an opportunity in lieu of her life. Tessie did everything in order to save her life and she was ready to do anything for the same purpose. Through the character of Tessie, Jackson portrays flaws of human behavior and describes how the same person seeks treatment for others and how he starts behaving when his or her own interest is concerned.

Jackson also hints towards the social evils that exist in our society since time immemorial. The author takes help of characters, allegory, irony and comedy to highlight these social evils and question the relevance of their existence. Incidents of the story are so interesting that it becomes difficult for a reader to leave the story once he starts reading it. Traits of characters and events

are so common that story connects to readers in an easy way and readers find the events and characters very close to them.

There is a lot in the story for readers to interpret and they can interpret it, the way they think. Some may like it while some may dislike it for the events as well as characters of the story but it does not diminish the importance of the story. The story connects to a variety of readers due to various interesting things that it has. People, who want to eradicate social evils, may see it differently while people, who are interested in human behavior, may find the events of the story in a different perspective (Jackson).

Having observed, the above mentioned analysis of Shirley Jackson's story, "The Lottery", it can be concluded that why this story is one of the most famous stories of the history of American literature. The author addresses social evil as well as weaknesses of human behavior in a very remarkable manner. Jackson also mocks the hypocrisy of the society that pretends to be civilized but in actual it is very cruel and rarely cares about happiness or sorrow of others. Irony, comedy, and allegories are used by the author, adequately throughout the story that keeps readers, interested in the story. Taken as a whole, "The Lottery" is worth reading and also it educates several precious things to readers about Human behavior, traditions, social evils and the society.

## **Work Cited**

Jackson, Shirley. *The Lottery*. USA: The Creative Company, 2008.