

# The lottery

[Linguistics](#), [English](#)



The Lottery by Shirley Jackson Reading The Lottery by Shirley Jackson brings to my mind the recent Hollywood blockbuster movie The Hunger Games, only Ms. Jackson's novel is darker and more violent in nature than The Hunger Games, which could have very well been based on The Lottery. The theme of the story is all about tradition and being a blind follower of traditions. Traditions that people do long after the people who started it have passed on to the next life. People don't remember much about the "lottery" except that it happens every year on June 27, it has to be done or their crops will fail that year, and that everyone in the village must participate.

I can't help but wonder about how primitive these townspeople were during the 1940s to think that sacrificing a member of the town to the "Rain Gods" will help them with their farming problems. I am further disturbed by the murderous instinct that seems to proliferate within the townspeople. There is no sense in the lottery that they perform every year. Unless they only do it to keep the population of their town down to a manageable level. It would seem to me that everyone in the town is resigned to their fate of eventually winning the lottery to lose their lives. There is nothing magnanimous about this forced personal sacrifice. As Tessie Hutchinson put it before the first stone hit her on the head, "It's not fair!"

I found it truly disturbing to read a story that considers murdering a town member to be a yearly ritual and way of life for everyone involved. That is why the date itself, June 27, is just a normal day for everyone involved but brings panic to whomever gets the black dot during the lottery draw. In the case of Mrs. Hutchinson, that was one day in particular when she should have just stayed in bed.

Although Mrs. Hutchinson thought of the lottery as a regular part of life, she never truly imagined that she would ever become an unwilling participant in the ritual. Hence her distraught screams when her family was drawn and she ended up receiving the black dot. The fact that the towns people considered the act of murder that they were just about to accomplish as something normal in their lives begs one to wonder if these people had a conscience at all.

The Lottery in all is not a short story for the faint of heart. It is a heart wrenching story that has strong elements of suspense. Almost like a modern slasher flick. Mrs. Hutchinson never saw her demise coming. Her death is truly senseless because the townspeople did not even have a solid idea as to why they had to kill her except that it had something to do with their crops and their forebears did it before them so they needed to carry on the tradition less some negative effects begin to show itself to the townspeople. In the end, when Mrs. Hutchinson cries out in pain as her life is taken away from her in the most painful way possible, one can only wonder if the new generation of townspeople as Old Man Warner predicted, would eventually stop participating in this blood thirsty ritual and come to the realization that the human sacrifice was for naught because the harvest and the life of a person can never be directly related. It is only the new generation of townspeople who will be able to stop the senseless blood thirst and bloodshed that The Lottery brings out once a year in them.