

# Analysis of "the lottery"

Business



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“ A sudden hush fell on the crowd as Mr. Summers cleared his throat and looked at the list. ‘ All ready?’ he called” (Jackson). The New Yorker published Shirley Jackson’s story, The Lottery, in 1948. The story produced the largest amount of mail ever received by the magazine, and most of it was hateful (shirleyjackson.

org). The controversy of the story was because of Jackson’s critique of small towns’ rituals and values (shmoop. com). In the short story The Lottery, Jackson shows how social classes, or the lack thereof, have an effect on the characters and the events within town. To begin, social classes within this small town affect all lower class families. Every lower class family has a chance of getting chosen.

Families have to worry about one of their family members being stoned to death because they’re chosen out of a box. The thought of that seems very unfair and unsettling because most of the time, an innocent person will end up dead: “ Who’s got it?” “ It’s Bill” (Jackson). More specifically, social class affects families with no powerful or older men in their family. For whatever reason, those families are looked down on: “ Clyde Dunbar.” he said.

“ That’s right. He’s broke his leg, hasn’t he? Who’s drawing for him?” “ Me. I guess,” a woman said and Mr. Summers turned to look at her. “ Wife draws for her husband.” Mr.

Summers said. “ Don’t you have a grown boy to do it for you, Janey?” (Jackson). Mr. Summers acts like it is the end of the world that Mrs. Dunbar has to pick for herself, when in reality, it’s not her fault at all that her

husband cannot do it. In addition, social classes also have an effect on almost every event in town because it affects the normality of the town.

The lottery is based on social class, and the townspeople are always worried about the lottery. They now look down on the town and everything about it because of the lottery. “ Seventy-seventh year I been in the lottery,” Old Man Warner said as he went through the crowd. “ Seventy-seventh time” (Jackson). The lottery has had a bad effect on the town for over seventy-seven years, and it’s making old residents from the town look at the town badly.

Also, the social classes affect the lottery itself because higher status families get to be out of it. Since Mr. Summers is of high social class and runs the lottery, he gets to be completely out of it and never has to worry about being the one picked to die. “ The lottery was conducted...by Mr. Summers, who had time and energy to devote to civic activities” (Jackson).

For whatever reason, it’s accepted that Mr. Summers is powerful enough to be able to run the lottery because of his high status. However, it’s affecting the lottery by making it unfair and tyrannical. In conclusion, a lot can be learned after reading “ The Lottery”. After reading the story, readers can learn ways that small towns control their population.

They can realize that people everywhere will use inhumane solutions to solve their problems. After reading this paper, readers can possibly realize the unfairness in people judging others based on social class. In the short story The Lottery, Jackson shows how social classes, or the lack thereof, have an effect on the characters and the events within town.

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