

Student Essay on Reader Response of the Lottery

Reader Response of the Lottery by Shirley Jackson

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Essay

This story represents the dark side of Humanity. According to the title, one would think that he has a good idea of what the story is about; that it was a social function that would benefit the people in the community, but the true purpose of the lottery turns out to be an utterly sinister and unthinkable act in today's society with the winner getting stoned. This ritual had been observed for almost a century if not longer. Evidence of this fact is obvious according to old man Warner who had managed to be lucky enough to survive through seventy-seven lotteries, a fact that he was proud of and rightly so.

Though it is not evident until the end of the story the black box represented death instead of prosperity. Mr. Summers suggested that a new box should be made, since the one they had was old and worn out. The villagers claimed that the box represented tradition, but they did not really take very good care of it, leaving one to wonder if the real reason was that the villagers did not want to build something that might eventually lead to their death.

The wanton attitude of the villagers towards stoning someone to death in their community; that they had known all of their life demonstrates their lack of respect for life. One would think that the stones that were gathered at the beginning of the story represented something as child's play that the boys did to occupy their time until the lottery was started. Instead they were the very things that would be used to kill the unfortunate person that pulled the slip of paper with the black dot on it.

Mrs. Hutchinson arriving late to the lottery would lead one to think that she might have had a feeling that she would be the unlucky one to draw the winning slip of paper. The word Hutchinson derived from the Latin word recuse, means to refuse. She definitely lived up to the meaning of it to her last breath.