

5 November 20XX

Reader Response of "The Lottery"

A short story written by Shirley Jackson, "The Lottery" sets forth a stage that allows the reader to identify with and make various connections with. Of the many associations the audience can formulate, I found three to be most prominent. "The Lottery" illuminates the dangers of blindly following tradition and its effects on an individual, one's fear of change, and similarities shared with the popular novel *The Hunger Games*, written by Suzanne Collins.

In "The Lottery," Tessie Hutchinson draws a slip of paper harvesting the black dot, thus declaring her the victim of the village's stoning. Although murder is unquestionably corrupt, the villagers in the story do not question their actions because it has been an annual tradition for as long as anybody in the community can remember. The only character who realizes this act as immoral is Tessie, illustrating the hypocrisy humans possess towards violence. Once she became the victim, she was able to break free of the bandwagon and realize what the other villagers could not under the extreme influence of mob mentality. This part of the short story led me to formulate the idea that as society changes, traditions should change as well in order to improve the community. It further strengthened my belief to think independently and to establish and follow my own morals of right and wrong, regardless of what the rest of the world is doing.

People have a natural resistance to change due to the fear of an uncertain future. In "The Lottery," changing their tradition is an inconceivable idea to the villagers. Although it is

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suggested that having the lottery ensures a good harvest when Old Man Warner says "Lottery in June, corn be heavy soon" (Shirley 4), there is no clear reason as to why the lottery is conducted annually. Old Man Warner cannot give a concrete reason as to why the lottery must continue other than the fact that it being a tradition is reason enough. Old Man Warner's opposition to change is evident in the quote "When Mr. and Mrs. Adams suggest to Warner that some other villages have already given up the lottery or are thinking about doing so, he replies with, 'Next thing you know, they'll be wanting to go back to living in caves. There's always been a lottery'" (Shirley 4). Mr. and Mrs. Adams represent my generation. My generation has established opinions and ideas different than those of older generations, but such opinions and ideas are not prized because older generations are unsure of what may come of such philosophies. An example of this is the idea of living with one's own significant other before marriage. It is feared that only

0:40 AM Yesterday

Proper heading

Wishart Cathe...
8:48 AM Yesterday

Resolve

Proper construction of title

Wishart Cathe...
8:49 AM Yesterday

Resolve

Wow.

Wishart Cathe...
8:49 AM Yesterday

Resolve

Excellent thesis

Wishart Cathe...
8:50 AM Yesterday

Resolve

No direct quote, but the scene is painted and clear. Excellent.

Wishart Cathe...
8:51 AM Yesterday

Resolve

While I don't agree with this analysis of Tessie, the writer proves why he/she believes this.

Wishart Cathe...
8:51 AM Yesterday

Resolve

Wishart Cathe...

Wishart Cathe...
8:52 AM Yesterday

Resolve

Wonderful integrated quote - author should have been "Jackson," but no points taken off for this small error.

Wishart Cathe...
8:53 AM Yesterday

Resolve

Another excellent reader response connection.

prized because older generations are unsure of what may come of such philosophies. An example of this is the idea of living with one's own significant other before marriage. It is feared that only sin can manifest from this scenario, because it has been taboo to so many generations before today.

In "The Lottery" and *The Hunger Games*, desensitization is an underlying theme. In *The Hunger Games*, one boy and one girl, age twelve through eighteen, are selected by a lottery system in each of the twelve districts to battle to the death in a televised event as tribute to the Capitol. This "game show" is a prized event to the wealthy citizens of the Capitol, and they watch it without a single shutter regardless of the barbaric bloodbath of children. In "The Lottery," villagers of all ages stone their neighbors and family members without a slither of regret or guilt. These traditions in the two stories are idolized as entertainment. Moral human emotion has elapsed over the years as citizens of both societies are persuaded that violence and

Another excellent reader response connection.



Wishart Cathe...
8:55 AM Yesterday

Resolve

This portion bringing in *The Hunger Games* goes above and beyond any expectation for an "A."

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cruelty to the stated degree is acceptable. This theme of desensitization, leading to death in both societies, reinforces the mindless follow of tradition.

Shirley Jackson's "The Lottery" allows readers to establish many connections with themselves, the world, and other works. One of the three prominent connections is the fact that people blindly follow traditions. This further persuaded me to think independently and to establish and follow my own morals of right and wrong, regardless of what the world is doing. Next, the fear of change prevents new opinions and ideas to be prized. Finally, "The Lottery" and *The Hunger Games* share the similar theme of desensitization, which further persuades people to mindlessly follow tradition.



Wishart Cathe...
8:55 AM Yesterday

Resolve

My only comment is that the last three sentences could be combined into one. This was a high "A" paper - it would have been an "A" paper for an advanced lit class.