



# “The Lottery” Reading Comprehension Activity

By: Lori McDonald  
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Language Arts  
Grades 6-8



## Introduction

This is a lesson based on a great short story, “The Lottery” by Shirley Jackson. Students will engage in discussion and debate and will conclude with a comprehension activity.

## Learning Objectives

- ([CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.1](#)) Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- ([CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.2](#)) Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.
- ([CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.3](#)) Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).

## Materials Needed

- [“The Lottery” by Shirley Jackson](#)

## Procedure

**Hook** – Tell students today they will all choose a piece of paper out of a bag when they come into class. Tell them that they are not allowed to open their slip of paper until the teacher says so. On one slip of paper will be a black spot. All the others will be blank. After all students have drawn, have them open their slips of paper. Find out who got the black dot. Then explain to them that the one with the black spot will fail the class (or any other unjust consequence). After the shock, explain that this was just an example of an activity in the next story they will read, “The Lottery.”

1. Begin a group discussion about whether or not the activity they participated in was fair. Allow students to debate and discuss.
2. Have students read the story twice. Have them make notes on aspects of the story they notice the second time that they did not notice the first time.
3. Put students in small groups to discuss the story and the notes they’ve taken. Then, have the groups complete a [graphic organizer](#) together.

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## Evaluation

As a formative assessment, have students complete the following exit ticket.

**Write a brief summary of the events in “The Lottery”. Include both the problem/conflict and resolution in at least six sentences.**