**Reading and Discussion Questions on Shirley Jackson's "The Lottery"**

1. Were you surprised by the ending of the story? If not, at what point did you know what was going to happen? How does Jackson foreshadow the ending? Conversely, how does Jackson lull us into thinking that this is just an ordinary story with an ordinary town?

2. In what way does the setting affect the story? Does it make you more or less likely to anticipate the ending?

3. In what ways are the characters differentiated from one another? Looking back at the story, can you see why Tessie Hutchinson is singled out as a "winner"?

4. What is the ritual of the scapegoat? In what way might Tessie be considered a scapegoat?

5. Jackson gives interesting names to a number of her characters. Can you explain the possible allusions or symbolism of some of these?   
Delacroix   
Graves   
Summers   
Bentham   
Hutchinson   
Warner  
Martin

6. This is a different sort of story when you read it for the second time. What elements (such as Mrs. Hutchinson's attempt to have her daughter, Eva, draw with the family) take on a different meaning the second time through?

7. Are there other symbols? Why is the "black box" battered, for example?

8. Describe the point of view of the story. How does the point of view affect what we know about the situation? How does it preserve the story's suspense?

9. 8. This story was published in 1948. Are there any cultural or historical events that Jackson might be commenting on here? Is this JUST a story about this particular time and place, or is she trying to say something important about human nature?