

**ELA GEE FOCUSED –LEARNING LESSON 3:
Analyzing the Use of Irony in a Short Story**

Assessment Component: Reading and Responding

STANDARD ONE: Students read, comprehend and respond to a range of materials using a variety of strategies for different purposes.

STANDARD SIX: Students read, analyze, and respond to literature as a record of life experiences.

PRIMARY BENCHMARKS ADDRESSED:

- ELA-1-H2** analyzing the effects of complex literary devices (e.g., figurative language, flashback, foreshadowing, dialogue, irony) and complex elements (e.g., setting, plot, character, theme, mood, style) on a selection

- ELA-6-H2** analyzing distinctive elements (e.g., recurrent themes, historical significance, literary techniques) of ancient, American, British world literature

- ELA-6-H3** identifying, analyzing, and responding to a variety of classic and contemporary literature from many genres (e.g., folktales, legends, myths, poetry, fiction, biography, autobiography, nonfiction, novels, drama, epic)

GRADE 9 GLEs ADDRESSED:

3. Identify and explain the significance of literary devices, including:

- mixed metaphors
- imagery
- symbolism
- flashback
- foreshadowing
- sarcasm/irony
- implied metaphors
- oxymoron (ELA-1-H2)

8. Identify and explain recurrent themes in world literature (ELA-6-H2)

9. Analyze in oral and written responses distinctive elements (including theme, structure, characterization) of a variety of literary forms and types, including:

- essays by early and modern writers

- epic poetry such as *The Odyssey*
- forms of lyric and narrative poetry such as ballads and sonnets
- drama, including ancient, Renaissance, and modern
- short stories and novels
- biographies and autobiographies (ELA-6-H3)

LESSON FOCUS: Students will connect literature to real-life situations and will recognize how the use of irony helps develop theme.

I. Translating Standards Into Instruction

- A. The following activities go with the story “The Lottery” by Shirley Jackson (found at www.Shortstoryclassics.com).
- B. For an introductory activity, tear pieces of paper to match the number of students.
 1. Mark a black dot on one of the pieces and have the students draw a slip, with instructions not to look at the piece of paper.
 2. Pose the following question and write responses on the board as they are speaking: What do you know about lotteries? [Money, happiness, winning, buying things].
 3. Instruct students to look at their individual slips of paper. Tell them that the one with the black dot has won the “class lottery.” [Use a predetermined award such as candy or extra credit.]
- C. Read the story “The Lottery” orally as students follow on their copies.
- D. After reading the story, divide the students into groups to answer questions about the story.
 1. Name two symbols in “The Lottery.” [black box, black dot]
 2. Give five examples from the story that show how men have the power in this society. [Male keeps box; men draw; women’s identities directly tied to their husbands; men stand in front; boys are playing; girls are standing around quietly; a woman dies in the end]
 3. Give two examples of foreshadowing. [Boys picking up rocks, the color black of the box]
- E. Define the term *situational irony*. [Actual outcome of the situation is the opposite of someone’s expectations]
- F. Discuss the following two examples of irony from the story.
 1. Refer to original brainstorming activity- lotteries are supposed to be good not deadly.
 2. Old Man Warner says, “The lottery keeps us civilized. [This practice does not seem civilized at all.]
- G. Have students make a short list of possible themes from the story and list them on the board. [Example: some customs that we call civilized are truly not.]

- H. Writing sample: In a composition of 100-150 words, give the theme of the story “The Lottery” and explain how the author uses irony to help develop this theme. Use context to support your statements. [Composition should state a clear, significant theme with at least three examples of well-explained support from the story.]
- I. Give students a biography of Anne Hutchinson, a Puritan who shares the same last name with Tess Hutchinson or have them use reference books or the Internet to research her themselves.
1. *Anne Hutchinson was a Puritan woman who was exiled for speaking out against the church. She had many terrible things happen to her and the men said she deserved these tragedies. Tess and Anne are alike because they both speak out on inequalities and unfair practices.*
 2. Writing Activity: In a composition of 150-200 words, show how these two women, Anne Hutchinson and Tess Hutchinson, are alike. Use specific detail from both the biography and the story to support.

Rubric for evaluation:

Strong topic sentence	10
Proper organization for comparing [Line-by-line or block]	10
Specific examples of support	15
Explanation for each support example	15
Clear sentence structure	10
Few errors in punctuation or spelling	10

II. Sources of Evidence of Student Learning

- A. Participation in brainstorming about lotteries.
- B. Answers to questions based on the story.
- C. Composition connecting irony and theme.
- D. Composition based on a comparison of an historical figure and a character from the story.

III. Attributes of Student Work at the “Got-It” Level

- A. Students demonstrate an understanding of irony and its use in the story
- B. Students can identify and explain a theme for the story.
- C. Students effectively compare the lives of an historical figure and a character in the story.

IV. **GEE 21 Connection**

The “ELA Assessment Framework” for Grade 10 shows that students will be given fiction passages that may contain stories, folktales, legends, myths, or drama. Students will be required to answer a variety of questions, including multiple-choice, short-answer, and essay. For examples see “Sample Test Items,” pages H-12 to H-15.

V. **Recommended Materials**

- A. Copies of the story “The Lottery” by Shirley Jackson
- B. Torn papers and prize for lottery activity
- C. Biographical information on Anne Hutchinson
- D. Rubrics for evaluation of compositions

References:

<http://ee.1aspost.com/shortstoryclassics/index.html>

www.gutenberg.org