**Questions On The Lottery**

1. How would you characterize the village's society? Happy? Affluent? Patriarchal? How does it compare to your own village/town/city?
2. What kinds of values do the townspeople seem to hold about the social roles of men and women? Do these roles have any connection to the lottery?
3. What's up with the children of the village – specifically the boys – being the first to stockpile stones? What, if anything, is Jackson trying to suggest about children?
4. Do any class differences exist in "The Lottery"? What influence might that have on the story?
5. With the exception of the final five paragraphs, are there any indications of violence in the life of the village? What might the absence or presence of violence in other aspects of village life indicate, in light of the story's conclusion?
6. Do you agree with Mrs. Hutchinson – is the lottery unfair? How or how not? Her friends and neighbors point out that they all take the same risks in participating.
7. Are there any clues in the story that might explain how the lottery first started? What might its purpose be? What passages give the reader clues about the origins of this ritual?

**Using inference, explain what these quotes suggest about the psychology and culture of the town.**

**Quote #1**

*The people of the village began to gather in the square, between the post office and the bank, around ten o'clock. (1)*

Quote #2

*Well, now." Mr. Summers said soberly, "guess we better get started, get this over with, so's we can go back to work. " (10)*

Quote #3

*The crowd was quiet. A girl whispered, "I hope it's not Nancy," and the sound of the whisper reached the edges of the crowd.*  
*"It's not the way it used to be." Old Man Warner said clearly. "People ain't the way they used to be." (68 – 69)*

Quote #4

*The original paraphernalia for the lottery had been lost long ago, and the black box now resting on the stool had been put into use even before Old Man Warner, the oldest man in town, was born. Mr. Summers spoke frequently to the villagers about making a new box, but no one liked to upset even as much tradition as was represented by the black box. (5)*

Quote #5

*There was the proper swearing-in of Mr. Summers by the postmaster, as the official of the lottery; at one time, some people remembered, there had been a recital of some sort, performed by the official of the lottery, a perfunctory. tuneless chant that had been rattled off duly each year; some people believed that the official of the lottery used to stand just so when he said or sang it, others believed that he was supposed to walk among the people, but years and years ago this part of the ritual had been allowed to lapse. (7)*

Quote #6

*"They do say," Mr. Adams said to Old Man Warner, who stood next to him, "that over in the north village they're talking of giving up the lottery."*

*Old Man Warner snorted, "Pack of crazy fools," he said. "Listening to the young folks, nothing's good enough for them. Next thing you know, they'll be wanting to go back to living in caves, nobody work any more, live that way for a while. Used to be a saying about 'Lottery in June, corn be heavy soon.' First thing you know we'd all be eating stewed chickweed and acorns. There's always been a lottery," he added petulantly. "Bad enough to see young Joe Summers up there joking with everybody."*