Your Name

Date

Teacher’s Name

Period

Shirley Jackson

An author’s work is often a reflection of her life. According to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*,* Shirley Jackson was a smart, energetic child who loved sports and music. She kept a diary that “became a way of making [my] daily life into a wonderfully unusual thing instead of a grind.” Considered plain, unladylike and an embarrassment to her mother with whom her relationship steadily deteriorated, Jackson developed anxiety and felt like an outsider who didn’t belong (*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*). As a young woman, she was under the care of a psychiatrist to help her deal with “symptoms of social withdrawal.” The *\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* states that Jackson suffered from a sense of loneliness, a distrust of friends and ongoing depression and anxiety. As a writer, Jackson “consistently identified with the underdog, attacked racial and ethnic prejudice as well as the smug, gratuitous cruelty of the insiders in any group toward the outsiders” (*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*). For example, in “The Lottery,” her most famous work, Jackson depicts the “cruelty and brutality of humanity in the mass and the insensitivity of individuals to the suffering of society’s victims” (*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*) as the townspeople of an unidentified village stone to death the random winner of the annual lottery (“\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_”). According to *\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*, Jackson once said in an interview, “I suppose I hoped, by setting a particularly brutal rite in the present and in my own village, to shock the readers with a graphic dramatization of the pointless violence and general inhumanity of their own lives.” Shirley Jackson’s writing also shows her ability to find humor in life in the family household (*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*). Readers of her short story, “Charles,” are entertained as her son, Laurie, navigated his first few weeks of kindergarten influenced by a mischievous classmate named Charles whose identity is revealed in the last line of the story (“\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_”). Knowing about Shirley Jackson’s life enables readers to understand and appreciate her work.

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