

As you read the stories of "A Rose for Emily" and "The Lottery," consider the following. Be able to respond upon our return to class.

### **William Faulkner's "A Rose for Emily"**

1. What is important about the title of the short story, "A Rose for Emily"? What are the multiple meanings for the "rose"?
2. What are the conflicts in "A Rose for Emily"? What types of conflict (physical, moral, intellectual, or emotional) do you see in this story?
3. How does William Faulkner reveal character in "A Rose for Emily"?
4. What are some themes in the story? How do they relate to the plot and characters?
5. What is significant about the gray hair at the end of the short story?
6. What is the central/primary purpose of the story? Is the purpose important or meaningful?
7. How essential is the setting to the story? Could the story have taken place anywhere else?

### **Shirley Jackson, "The Lottery"**

1. Why has Jackson chosen common people for her characters? Could she have chosen characters from other levels of sophistication with the same effect? What is the *irony* of the tone of this story?
2. What seems to have been the original purpose of the lottery? What do people believe about it?
3. Is it important that the original paraphernalia for the lottery had been lost? What do you suppose the original ceremony was like? Why have some of the villages given up this practice? Why hasn't this one?
4. What is the significance of Tessie's final scream, "It isn't fair, it isn't right"? What aspect of the lottery does she explicitly challenge; what aspect goes unquestioned?
5. Some critics insist that the story has an added *symbolic* meaning. Do you agree? If so, what is Shirley Jackson trying to tell us about ourselves? (Hint: Consider that this story was written during the height of the rise of Communism and the Soviet Union.)
6. Is the lottery a collective act of murder? Is it morally justified? Is tradition sufficient justification for such actions? How would you respond to cultures that are different from ours that perform "strange" rituals?