***The Lady, or the Tiger?***

**About the Author**

.......Frank R. Stockton was born in Philadelphia in 1834. He was one of nineteen children. When Frank emerged from a mischievous boyhood, he began to study engraving on wood. Even then he wrote fairy stories, and he contributed to some of the New York papers. In 1860, he married Miss Marion Tuttle of Virginia and soon after came to Nutley to live. About this time he took a position on Hearth and Home, and in 1873 became associate editor of St. Nicholas. "Rudder Grange" was at first a story which he wrote for Scribner's, and it was received with enthusiasm. Then followed years of writing unique stories, his most famous of which are in the form of fairytales, ghost stories, or romances, but in all of them his humor has an edge like a knife. When “The Lady, or the Tiger?” first appeared in *Century Magazine* in 1882, it caused excitement all over the country. Hundreds of people wrote letters to the magazine or to their newspapers about it. Many letters demanded an answer to the question that the story asks. Others asked if the story was really about government, psychology, the battle of the sexes, or something else. Wisely, Stockton never answered any of the letters. The story remains as fresh today as it was then. Frank Stockton died in 1902.

**Anticipation Guide**

**Put an “X” in the space to indicate whether or not you agree or disagree with the corresponding statement.**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Statement(s)** | **Agree** | **Disagree** |
| It is possible for two people to know and understand each other completely. |  |  |
| I would trust my life to a lover or close friend. |  |  |
| Jealousy is a stronger emotion than love. |  |  |
| I wouldn’t mind an arranged marriage if my spouse was hot. |  |  |
| The death penalty is a fair way to convict criminals. |  |  |
| Chance and luck are more important than rules and laws. |  |  |

***The Lady, or the Tiger?* Discussion Questions**

1. Some stories don’t follow a nice plot diagram. This one ends at the climax. How did you feel when the story ended without its problem being solved?
2. Since the king loved his daughter dearly, why do you think he threw her lover in prison?
3. Do you think the king’s system of justice is fair? Why or why not?
4. “Which came out of the opened door-the lady, or the tiger?” What do you think? Did the princess send her lover to the lady or the tiger? Why?
5. The end of “The Lady, or the Tiger?” is about the princess’s decision: whether to send her lover to the lady or to the tiger. But doesn’t the lover, too, have a decision to make? With a movement of her hand, the princess has told him to open the door on the right. This leads us to the final question. Remember, the lover knows that the princess knows which door hides the lady, and which door hides the tiger. How well does the lover know the princess? Will he open the door she has chosen? Or, believing it hides the tiger, will he open the other one? Why, finally, did he open the door on the right?
6. Do you think people are less barbaric now than they were hundreds of years ago? In what ways? Are they more barbaric? In what ways? Are they exactly the same? Give specific examples to help others understand your thoughts.