



The Giver

by Lois Lowry

Teacher's Guide

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Synopsis

Chapter 1

Shortly before the December celebration of his twelfth year, Jonas grows restless and concerned, for this graduation at the Ceremony of Twelve will determine his life's work. In a controlled community where social intercourse requires formal apologies for any question or infraction, food is delivered by truck, births are maintained at an even 50 per year, old people and sick infants are exterminated, and rules require the sharing of dreams and feelings with family, Jonas tries to adhere to regulations. In his home, he wears a simple tunic and takes meals with his adoptive parents and adopted sister, eight-year-old Lily. At dinner, he expresses his apprehension about growing up.

Chapter 2

In a private conversation, Jonas' father, a Nurturer, reassures him about the changes that come from being twelve and recalls how sure he was that the Elders would assign him to care for newborn children. The placement of people in precise state-ordered community roles is important. Jonas remembers his ninth birthday, when he was allowed to ride a state-issued bicycle to school. He recalls that the Receiver has the most important job of all Elders and wonders what Asher will be assigned. Mother reminds Lily that, at age eight, she will have to surrender her comfort object, a stuffed elephant.

Chapter 3

Under a special dispensation that allows a sickly baby boy to live a trial year, Jonas' father brings home an infant named Gabriel, who receives a hippo as his comfort object. Lily hopes to be a Birthmother, but her mother reminds her that the job carries little honor and forces the women to become Laborers after three years and three births. Lily considers doing volunteer work among small children.

Jonas is a perceptive, sympathetic boy who realizes that Asher, his best friend, is unlikely to fare well in a career because he is often tardy, playful, too talkative, and forgetful. During one of their games, Jonas tosses him an apple and realizes that it alters in a new and unexpected fashion.

Chapter 4

At his volunteer work at the House of the Old, Jonas bathes and converses with Larissa, an elderly inmate, who tells about that morning's event—Roberto's Release ceremony, a euphemism for death.

Chapter 5

The next morning, the family tell their dreams. Jonas narrates his erotic fantasy about Fiona and describes his emotion as "wanting." His mother, a worker at the justice center, labels his feeling as normal "Stirrings." Lightheartedly, she explains that all people develop sexual feelings, which they counteract with a daily pill until they are old.

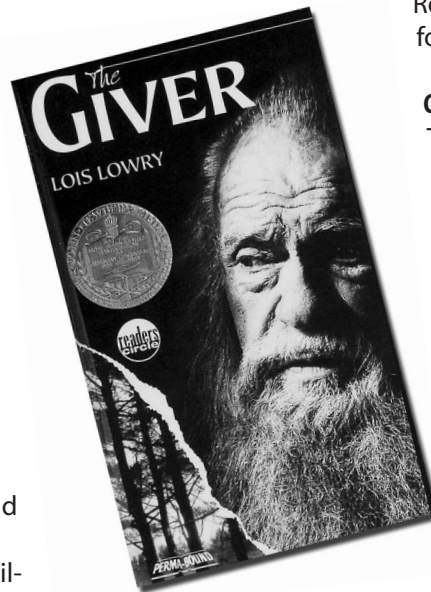
Chapter 6

At the annual ceremony, parents watch as the Elders recognize children by ages, 50 per level. The Nurturers participate in the first ritual,

the Naming of each infant. Gabe is exempt because he has been labeled Uncertain until he gains more weight and sleeps through the night. At the noon meal, Asher repeats a story about a man who swam to another community because he didn't get the assignment he wanted. Jonas reassures him that, like the matching of spouses, assignments are carefully weighed.

Chapter 7

Back at the auditorium after lunch, the twelves await assignment. Asher is named Assistant Director of Recreation and Fiona, Caretaker of the Old. Numbered children receive their assignments in order, but the Chief Elder passes over number 19, Jonas, and continues with 20-50.



Chapter 8

The Elder returns to Jonas and apologizes for raising anxiety. Because of his intelligence, integrity, courage, and wisdom, she proclaims him the next Receiver of Memory, a momentous honor and responsibility. Requisite to the job is the ability to “see beyond.” The community chants its approval. The unique position has remained unfilled for a decade while the decision makers looked for a likely candidate.

Chapter 9

Jonas feels isolated. At dinner, his parents express their pride. He learns that the last trainee, Rosemary, had asked to be released and had become an unperson whose name was never mentioned in public or passed to another baby. After dinner, he opens his folder and reads the job description, which sets him apart from others by letting him lie and be rude, denying him medical treatment and suicide, and excusing him from divulging dreams. He anticipates pain in his new job and must observe strict confidentiality.

Chapter 10

At the Annex of the House of the Old, Jonas meets his master, The Receiver, who enjoys complete privacy in a room full of books. Jonas is humble about his talents, but the old man insists that he immediately become the Receiver. For the first time, Jonas may read from the collection and may ask any question. During their initial session, The Receiver demonstrates how Jonas will assume responsibility for a significant part of human experience: the former Receiver lays his hands on Jonas’ bare back and prepares to pass into his memory a sled ride in snow.

Chapter 11

The experience teaches Jonas new concepts—snow, hill, sled, runners. At the end of the transfer, the perceptions no longer exist in the former Receiver; Jonas is the only possessor for all time. Exhausted, the old man explains that snow disappeared when the community entered Climate Control. In the second stage, the old man transfers sensations of sun and sunburn. At the end of their session, he names himself The Giver.

Chapter 12

The next morning, Jonas conceals his dream of sledding from his family and claims that he slept soundly. His parents complain that Gabe was fretful during the night. At noon and during recreation, other twelves tell of their new jobs, but Jonas is silent. Fiona wonders why he didn’t ride home with her. He apologizes for keeping her waiting.

Jonas arrives a minute late for his second session with The Giver. Jonas asks about a change in Fiona’s appearance that reminded him of the unusual apple incident. As he sinks into his experience with the sled, he begins to experience color. The Giver explains that the community relinquished color when it made the choice for Sameness. Jonas lies back to experience his second lesson, a rainbow.

Chapter 13

Over the next weeks, Jonas learns about all colors and assumes that citizens would be endangered if they could choose for themselves. As Jonas searches for answers to the problems of a controlled society, he grows angry. One evening, he returns home perturbed by his first vision of men shooting elephants. He tries to tell Lily that elephants really existed, but she doesn’t believe him.

Jonas asks about The Giver’s spouse and learns that he did have wife and that Jonas, too, may choose one. The difficulty lies in keeping secret The Receiver’s experiences. The Giver continues to interact with the Elders, but rarely advises them because they don’t want change. On some days, The Giver is too overcome with his alienation and suffering to instruct Jonas. The Receiver walks along the river and wonders what lies beyond the hills. To questions about pain, The Giver prepares Jonas for his first suffering.

Chapter 14

In the new memory, Jonas experiences a broken leg from a sledding accident. He awakens crying and requests relief, but gets none. At dinner, he conceals the experience from his father. Little by little, The Giver doles out joyful experiences and suffering. He asks the purpose of pain; The Giver replies that suffering gives wisdom. He tells Jonas about a time before his birth when the Elders pondered increasing the birth rate. The Giver recalled hunger and war. Jonas realizes that, in a land free from pain, nothing can change if it threatens the community’s Sameness.

Meanwhile, Gabe grows, but remains fretful at night. Jonas’ father announces that a Birthmother is expecting twin males the following month. He will have to select the one to live. Jonas thinks of Elsewhere and of Larissa, who had recently been released. He asks to put Gabe’s crib in his room. During the night, Gabe flails and whimpers. Jonas transmits the memory of sailing on the lake to Gabe. At dawn, Gabe cries again; Jonas gives him the rest of the memory. Gabe falls asleep. Fearful of his power, Jonas decides not to tell The Giver of the transfer.

Chapter 15

Finding The Giver in pain, Jonas asks to receive his pain. The memory puts him on a battlefield amid the thud of cannon. The anguished Giver asks forgiveness for burdening Jonas.

Chapter 16

Jonas hates his work, but returns each day as ordered. The Giver passes on his favorite memory—a Christmas memory and the warmth of family, including grandparents. Jonas realizes that his own parents will leave after he is grown. He likes experiencing love, which makes him feel complete.

At dinner, Jonas asks if his parents love him. They reply that the term is nearly meaningless. In October, Gabe thrives and can be named and given to a family, yet, after he is removed from Jonas' room, he resumes crying at night. Jonas conceals the secret that he is giving good memories and love to Gabe. The next morning, Jonas throws his pill away.

Chapter 17

One morning four weeks later, an unscheduled holiday relieves Jonas of a day at school. He looks for Asher and finds him playing war with Tonya. The children scatter when Jonas cries. Asher reminds him that war games are a part of recreation. Jonas asks him not to enact violence any more. He departs alone and regrets that his friends aren't able to experience love.

That evening, Jonas smiles at Gabe's first steps. His father anticipates releasing one of the twins the next day. Lily fantasizes about a world of twins, one set in the community and their mates Elsewhere.

Chapter 18

Jonas has figured out for himself that the term "release" merely covers up murder. The Giver explains that the rules regarding release were made ten years before. He divulges that Jonas' predecessor, a girl named Rosemary, balked at experiencing loss and loneliness. After five weeks of training, she went to the Elders to request release. After her death, painful memories returned to the community.

Chapter 19

Jonas asks about the release of the twin. The Giver shows him the event on the screen. Jonas' father injects the infant in the scalp. When the child dies, his father ejects its corpse through a chute. The Giver confesses that he watched on the screen as Rosemary injected herself.

Chapter 20

Jonas grows so distraught that he spends the night with The Giver. After discussing the pain of death for two hours, The Giver deduces that things must change. Late into the night, they plan Jonas' flight. The Giver has almost lost his ability to see color. He offers to transfer music to Jonas, but Jonas insists that the old man keep it.

The next morning, Jonas' father lies about the previous day's work. For the next two weeks, The Giver intends to pass along courage and strength to help Jonas get to Elsewhere. The time of the projected escape is midnight before the Ceremony. The Giver intends to order a car and driver as though he is visiting a nearby community. The old man plans to return, announce Jonas' loss in the river, and comfort the community during the misery of bearing Jonas' memories. The Giver refuses to go because he must help the community change and bring about a much needed wholeness. He confides that he wants to join his daughter, Rosemary.

Chapter 21

At dinner, the night before Jonas is to hide his bicycle for the escape, his father reports that Gabriel stayed overnight at the Nurturing Center because he is still not sleeping well and must be euthanized the next morning. After the baby cried all night, Jonas' father voted for his release. At dusk, Jonas abandons The Giver's plan, seats Gabriel in a child carrier, and pedals his father's bicycle across the bridge and into the unknown. Gabriel sleeps soundly until dawn. Jonas feeds him beside a stream and spends the day asleep in the woods. Days later, they elude search planes with heat-seeking devices by flattening themselves on the ground to chill their flesh.

Chapter 22

After nights of pedaling, Jonas jolts against a rock and twists his ankle. With no sign of searchers, he pedals in daylight and sees a bird and deer. They run out of potatoes and carrots. Jonas nets fish at a stream. The strain of hunger and his sore ankle turn the ride into a struggle. For two days, there is rain. Both Gabe and Jonas cry.

Chapter 23

Jonas passes memories of heat into Gabe to keep him warm. They reach a snowy hill. Jonas, clutching Gabe, abandons the bike and walks. At the top, he sleds toward hope. Ahead he hears music and imagines that the same sound arises from the dreary land behind him.

Timeline

12 years earlier	Jonas is adopted.
10 years earlier	Rosemary, the new Receiver of Memory, kills herself.
8 years earlier	Jonas' family adopts Lily.
3 years earlier	Jonas rides a state-issued bicycle to school.
1 year earlier	An unidentified plane flies over the community.
November	Jonas' father brings home an infant named Gabriel.
next morning	Jonas narrates his dream about Fiona. His mother explains sexual feelings.
annual ceremony	Jonas becomes the next Receiver of Memory.
next day	Jonas meets his master, The Receiver.
end of the session	Jonas becomes The Receiver; the old man is The Giver.
next morning	His parents complain that Gabe cried during the night.
that afternoon	The Giver explains about color.
weeks later	Jonas learns about suffering. Larissa is released.
that night	Gabe sleeps in Jonas' room. Jonas calms him by transmitting a memory of sailing.
dawn	Jonas gives him the rest of the memory.
that afternoon	The Giver transmits an experience of war.
later	The Giver passes on a Christmas memory of family and love.
at dinner	Jonas asks if his parents love him.
October	After Gabe is removed from Jonas' room, he resumes crying at night.
next morning	Jonas throws his pill away.
four weeks later	On an unscheduled holiday, Jonas weeps as the children play war games.
that evening	Gabe begins walking.
next afternoon	Jonas learns about Rosemary's failure as The Receiver.
that night	Jonas stays with The Giver. They plan Jonas' flight.
two weeks later	Jonas learns that Gabe must be euthanized.
at dusk	Jonas flees with Gabe.
dawn	Gabe sleeps soundly.
that day	They sleep in the woods.
days later	They elude search planes.
later	Jonas twists his ankle.
for two days	Gabe and Jonas cry in the rain.
later	Jonas and Gabe arrive near the sound of singing.

Author Sketch



The daughter of army dentist Robert E. Hammersberg and Katharine Landis Hammersberg, Lois Hammersberg Lowry, the second of three children, was born on March 20, 1937, in Honolulu, Hawaii. She was four years old when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor. Until the end of the war, she, her older sister Helen, little brother Jon, and their mother took refuge at Lowry's grandmother's home near an Amish community in Pennsylvania. The love of her doting grandfather helped her tolerate the separation that splintered the family until their reunion in an American community in Tokyo in 1948. A later tragedy—Helen's death from cancer—struck in 1962 and influenced the creation of characters in *A Summer for Dying*, a novel about a young girl coping with the imminent death of her sister.

In her sophomore year at Brown University, Lowry married naval officer Donald Grey Lowry, with whom she had four children, Alix, Grey, Kristin, and Benjamin. The family lived in California, Connecticut, Florida, South Carolina, and Massachusetts, where Donald Lowry entered Harvard Law School. Lois Lowry completed a bachelor's degree from the University of Southern Maine in 1972. Divorced in 1977, she settled in Cambridge and worked as a freelance magazine and fiction writer and photographer. Her son became an air force fighter pilot and fought in the Gulf War. One of her daughters suffers from neurological disease.

Lowry has established a steady rhythm of publication, completing 21 books in 17 years along with photos, short fiction, and articles for *Downeast*, *Redbook*, and *Yankee*. Still living on Lexington Avenue in West Cambridge, Massachusetts, she enjoys her grandchildren and maintains a summer nineteenth-century farmhouse in Sanbornton, New Hampshire. Her manuscripts and collected papers reside at the University of Minnesota in the Kerlan Collection.

Critic's Corner

A prolific writer of young adult fiction in a class with Robert Cormier, Cynthia Rylant, and M. E. Kerr, Lois Lowry is not afraid to tackle such esoteric or humanistic topics as survival, treachery, and loyalty to self. Through the fictional adventures of her tough, mischievous alter ego, Anastasia Krupnik, Lowry tackles the sensitive issues of

coming of age. For her compassion and appreciation of young characters she won the Children's Book Committee Child Study Award and the 1990 Newbery Medal for *Number the Stars*, a suspenseful historical novel about Danish children coping with Hitler's anti-Semitic stormtroopers during World War II. Other awards include an ALA Notable Book, IRA Children's Literature Award, American Book Award nomination, *Horn Book* Award, Golden Kite Award, National Jewish Libraries Award, National Jewish Book Award, and Sidney Taylor Award.

The 1994 Newbery Award for *The Giver* brought thunderous approval from readers, parents, teachers, and librarians who welcome the dystopian fable for its clarity and classic control. To questions about the ambiguous ending, Lowry replied in her acceptance speech, "Those of you who hoped that I would stand here tonight and reveal the 'true' ending, the 'right' interpretation of the ending, will be disappointed. There isn't one. There's a right one for each of us, and it depends on our own beliefs, our own hopes."

Lowry's Published Works

Black American Literature, 1973
Literature of the American Revolution, 1974
A Summer to Die, 1977
Values and the Family, 1977
Here in Kennebunkport (photos), 1978
Find a Stranger, Say Goodbye, 1978
Anastasia Krupnik, 1979
Autumn Street, 1979
Anastasia Again!, 1981
Anastasia at Your Service, 1982
Taking Care of Terrific, 1983
Anastasia Ask Your Analyst, 1984
Us and Uncle Fraud, 1984
One Hundredth Thing About Caroline, 1985
Anastasia on Her Own, 1985
Switcharound, 1985
Anastasia Has the Answers, 1986
Rabble Starkey, 1987
Anastasia's Chosen Career, 1987
All About Sam, 1988
Number the Stars, 1989
Your Move J.P., 1990
Newbery and Caldecott Acceptance Speeches (audiocassette), 1990
Anastasia at This Address, 1991
Attaboy, Sam!, 1992
 "Newbery Medal Acceptance Speech," *Horn Book*, July/August 1994

Anastasia, Absolutely, 1995
See You Around Sam!, 1996
Stay! Keeper's Story, 1997
Zooman Sam, 1999
Gathering Blue, 2000
Gooney Bird Greene, 2002
Silent Boy, 2003
Messenger, 2004
Gooney Bird And The Room Mother, 2005
Gossamer, 2005

Related Reading

Richard Adams, *Watership Down*
 L. Frank Baum, *The Wizard of Oz*
 Ray Bradbury, "There Will Come Soft Rains" and *The Martian Chronicles*
 Lewis Carroll, *Through the Looking-Glass*
 Robert Cormier, *I Am the Cheese*
 James Hilton, *Lost Horizon*
 Ursula K. LeGuin, *The Earthsea Trilogy*
 Madeleine L'Engle, *A Wrinkle in Time*
 Robin McKinley, *Beauty*
 Gary Paulsen, *Hatchet*
 Ayn Rand, *Anthem*
 Elizabeth George Speare, *The Witch of Blackbird Pond*
 Mary Stewart, *The Crystal Cave* and *The Hollow Hills*
 H. G. Wells, *The Time Machine*

Cross-Curricular Sources

For more information about euthanasia, dystopia, hunger, loss, and other subjects and issues deriving from the novel, consult these sources:
Acting on Your Values, Rosen Publishing Group
Characters in Crisis, Center for Humanities
Encyclopedia of Utopian Literature, ABC-CLIO
Grief Recovery Handbook, HarperCollins
No Man Is an Island, Center for the Humanities
Stand Tall, AGS Media

Also, consult these websites:
 Crisis, Grief, and Healing
<http://www.webhealing.com>
 Depression Homepage
<http://www.depression.com>
 Nazi Euthanasia
<http://www.historyplace.com/worldwar2/holocaust>
 Thomas Malthus
<http://www.ucmp.berkeley.edu/history/malthus.html>

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- Silver, Linda, "Review," *Library Journal*, May 1977, pp. 62-63.
- Snodgrass, Mary Ellen. *Encyclopedia of Utopian Literature*. Santa Barbara: ABC-Clío, 1995.
- Something About the Author*, Vol. 70. Detroit: Gale, 1993.
- Something About the Author Autobiography Series*, Vol. 3, Detroit: Gale, 1986, pp. 131-146.
- "Writer, Illustrator Win Children's Book Awards," *Chicago Sun Times*, Jan. 9, 1990.

General Objectives

1. To define coming to knowledge
2. To describe the physical, mental, and emotional effects of loss
3. To pinpoint examples of regimentation
4. To characterize family dynamics at gatherings and in private
5. To list ways of isolating community members
6. To account for private misgivings
7. To question coercion and ritualized death
8. To assess the harm caused by suicide
9. To isolate moments of disillusion, innocence, struggle, and fatigue
10. To account for the value of color, love, music, and grandparents

Specific Objectives

1. To characterize Jonas' ambitions and skills
2. To compare The Giver and Jonas' parents as role models
3. To characterize the relationship between Jonas and Asher
4. To comprehend the pressures that force Jonas to take Gabe
5. To list survival methods on the lone bicycle ride to Elsewhere
6. To explain how the Ceremony controls the community's future
7. To account for the names Jonas, Asher, Gabriel, and Rosemary
8. To contrast the community before and after Rosemary's death
9. To analyze the bonding of Jonas with The Giver
10. To characterize the ambiguity of the ending

Literary Terms and Applications

For a better understanding of Lois Lowry's fiction, present the following terms and applications:

Bildungsroman: literally a "formation novel," which describes the coming-of-age of an untried or naive youth. The story of Jonas' twelfth year highlights the maturation of a young boy into manhood. Complicating the issues of his feelings for Fiona and his dread of the Ceremony are his understanding of martyrdom, euthanasia, and suicide. As The Giver passes on a balanced series of impressions, Jonas blossoms into full human awareness of emotions and appreciation of

nature and self. By the time of his escape, he is ready to risk his prestige and place in the community while fleeing the senseless control that denies him completeness.

Climax: the height of an action, a crisis or turning point from which all behaviors or attitudes are permanently altered and nothing can ever be what it once was. The major turning point for Jonas is his acceptance of responsibility for Gabriel. After he asks that the crib be placed in his room, Jonas begins tending the child and soothing the nighttime crying. Without intending to, Jonas transmits to Gabe some of the pleasures stored in his mind. The open-hearted gesture of sharing elevates the character of Jonas from a boy in training to a mature man willing to give his store of pleasure to end a baby's discontent.

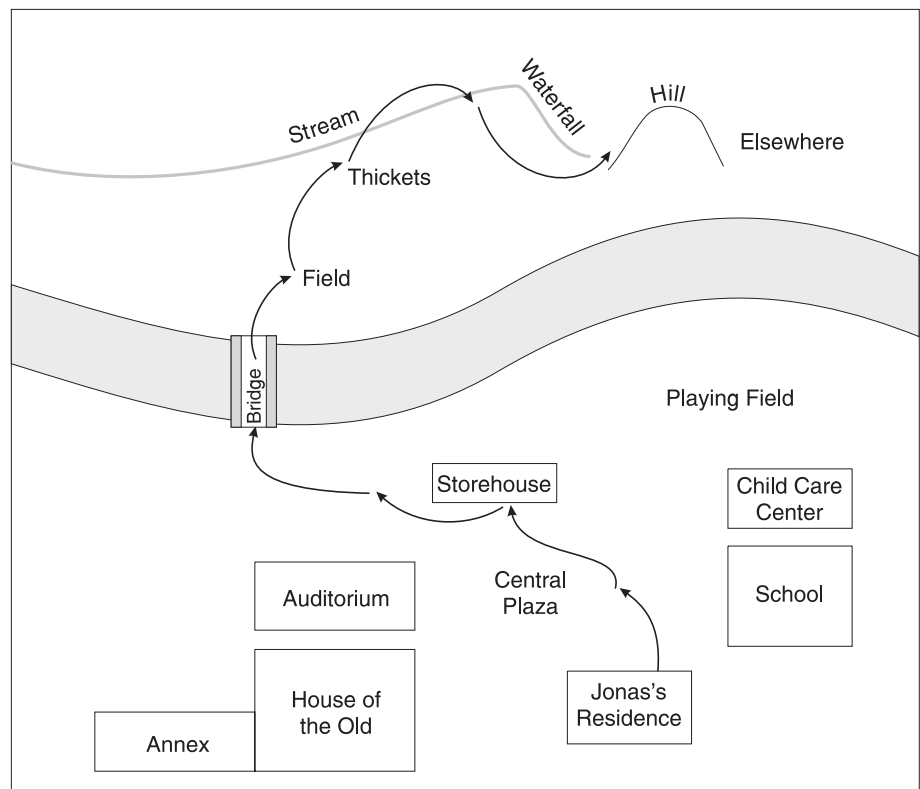
Euphemism: an inoffensive or indirect term substituted for a blunt, coarse, or shocking expression, for example, the use of Release for extermination. The Nurturer speaks lovingly of little children, yet is trained to inject their scalps with lethal serum. The ritual of boxing the corpses and disposing of them like garbage down a chute belies the purpose of Release. As Jonas learns from watching the screen, the ceremony rids society of excess or troublesome people. To his dismay, his father lies about the ceremony.

Foreshadowing: an object, statement, action, or motif that anticipates, prefigures, or predicts a significant event. There are three events that introduce Jonas' discontent and ultimate flight from a community that pretends to control all unpleasant experiences. When the pilot flies over twice the previous year, he raises consternation and nearly triggers violence among the panicked Elders. Later, Jonas hears Asher's comments about the disgruntled Twelve who leaped into the river rather than take a job that didn't suit him. After Jonas comes under The Giver's influence, he learns the more devastating truth about the young female Receiver who chose suicide after only five weeks in training.

The Importance of Setting

The milieu of *The Giver* contrasts the rigidity of a planned community with the random quality of nature, which symbolizes the difference between controlled life and reality. Within the confines of Jonas' daily existence are his home, school, and House of the Old, where he performs volunteer work among the aged. Pedaling past the Central Plaza and Storehouse, he interacts with friends Asher and Fiona on the playing field. On the most important day of his life, he and others assemble at the Auditorium. After being named The Receiver of Memories, he focuses on the Annex, behind the House of the Old, and views through the screen his father's murder of an undersized twin at the Childcare Center.

Separating the commune from Elsewhere is the river, the first hint of uncontrolled nature. After Jonas makes his choice to flee, he departs by the bridge, the slender connector between mind control and choice. From that point on, he encounters the wonders of nature that he has seen in his training experiences. From field, thicket, and stream, he passes to waterfall and hill. The weather varies to extremes of cold, confronting him with the difficulties of snow and discomfort as he seeks some unknown replacement for the rigid dystopia of his childhood. To soothe Gabe, Jonas returns to thoughts of a sailboat on a lake and transmits the image to the infant.



Themes and Motifs

A study of the central issues and situations in Lois Lowry's *The Giver* should include these aspects:

Themes

- apprehension
- repression
- isolation
- discovery
- reward
- loyalty
- rescue
- martyrdom
- survival

Motifs

- living in a controlled society
- asserting self-control
- coping with fear of the unknown
- acknowledging self-doubt
- taking responsibility for actions
- giving selflessly to others

Meaning Study

Below are words, phrases, sentences, or thought units that have particular meaning in the novel. Explain the meaning of each. Chapter and page numbers are given so that you can note the context from which the item is taken.

1. His father smiled his gentle smile. "Well, it was clear to me—and my parents later confessed that it had been obvious to them, too—what my aptitude was." (Chap. 2, p. 15)
(Committee members study the Elevens to determine what the fifty youngsters are capable of doing as a life's work. The jobs selected for each demonstrate the Elders' ability to observe and judge innate talents, which are more comprehensive than a measure of intelligence. IQ is easily determined by testing certain cognitive tasks, such as memorizing numbers and repeating them backwards and pronouncing and defining words with abstract meanings. Aptitude is a blend of the ability to learn and the leanings of the personality, temperament, and interests toward working alone/working in groups, leading/following, creating/replicating a pattern, and intrinsic/extrinsic needs. Jason's father concludes, "I had always loved the newchildren more than anything . . . Again and again, during free time, I found myself drawn to the newchildren. I spent almost all of my volunteer hours helping in the Nurturing Center. Of course the Elders knew that, from their observation.")

2. "Most of us even lose track of how old we are as time passes, though the information is in the Hall of Open Records, and we could go and look it up if we wanted to." (Chap. 2, p. 17)
(A recurrent motif of the story is the importance of the past. Jonas' community lives so predictable, unvarying an existence that adult citizens lose track of rites of passage and crucial information, even forgetting their ages. Like the ancient Mayans and Incas, who kept primitive calendars but left their compilation and application in the hands of priests, Jonas' community concentrates so hard on specialization that citizens unburden themselves of details and create a specialty supervisor to cover the minutiae of ages and birthdays. The keeper of the data is the Hall of Open Records; the chronicler of community progress and history is the Receiver.)
3. Lily followed behind, but she glanced back over her shoulder at Jonas and teased, "Maybe he had the same Birthmother as you." (Chap. 3, p. 20)
(An insignificant, almost shame-laden subclass of women in the community are the breeders, who are denied the name of "mother." The whole concept of genetics, imprinting, mother-child bonding, and family traits shrink in value while the behavior of regimented citizens surges to utmost importance. An adjunct to the decentralization of inherited traits is evident in the lack of mirrors, which, "were rare in the community; they weren't forbidden, but there was no real need of them, and Jonas had simply never bothered to look at himself very often even when he found himself in a location where a mirror existed.")
4. "He just bowed to all of us and then walked, like they all do, through the special door in the Releasing Room. But you should have seen his look. Pure happiness, I'd call it." (Chap. 4, p. 32)
(The docility of citizens marked for execution suggests the compliance of Jews sent to Hitler's death camps. The celebration of Roberto's life begins with an oral biography, a toast, the standard anthem, and a farewell speech. Roberto, who understands no more of the process than does Larissa or Jason, asks no questions and displays no terror. Jonas and Larissa discuss the ramifications, but have no data, no belief system to guide them. The conversation about the ritual ends on an ominous note: Jonas suggests that the committee study a way to include children at the release ceremony; Larissa chortles at the idea of interfering with the will of the committee.)
5. "But today we honor your differences. They have determined your futures." (Chap. 7, p. 52)
(The irony of the Ceremony of Twelve underscores the importance of uniformity and obedience. Even on the day when children receive arbitrary assignments to jobs that will fill their

adult days, use their talents and energies, and bring them fulfillment, the determination of the future remains in the hands of a faceless, adamant committee. Similar reductions, usurpations, or destructions of individuality stand as major conflicts of landmark dystopian novels, particularly Ayn Rand's *Anthem*, George Orwell's 1984, Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, and Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*. The duplicity of oppressive governments that pretend to honor individuality escapes the citizens, who appear content to be studied by a committee and awarded a career and to ignore the suicide or escape of a child who preferred drowning in the river to a lifetime of collecting garbage.)

6. Jonas bowed his head and searched through his mind. *What had he done wrong?* (Chap. 7, p. 58)
(The indoctrination of twelve years of kowtowing to adult tyranny over choices and behaviors proves strong in Jonas, even if he is different and possesses the roots of clairvoyance. After the numerical order of assignments skips over number nineteen, he suffers through numbers 20-50 in agony, unable to look at his parents, whom he suspects of blushing with shame.)
7. "So we continue to observe during training, and to modify behavior when necessary." (Chap. 8, p. 61)
(B. F. Skinner, the author of *Walden Two* (1948), is credited with raising the stimulus/response paradigm to a practical teaching method, called behavior modification. By parceling out rewards and punishments based on an external judgment of what is good or bad, Skinner evolved a teaching machine as well as discipline models tailored to classroom, mental institution, and social service needs plus similar, but more stringent treatments for inappropriate or dangerous behaviors, particularly those displayed by rapists, thieves, child molesters, and other felons.)
8. With the chant, Jonas knew, the community was accepting him and his new role, giving him life, the way they had given it to other newchild Caleb. (Chap. 8, p. 64)
(The rising murmur of "JONAS. JONAS. JONAS" indicates that the populace is supporting a singular individual, one who possesses second sight and the burgeoning gift of wisdom. The boy is named for Jonah, the biblical character who carries God's message to Nineveh that the Assyrian city will suffer if it does not alter its wicked ways. Jonah flees the assignment and is swallowed by a great fish and, three days later, regurgitated onto the shore near the city he is expected to rescue. Jonah succeeds in preaching change to the city, then departs in despair to sit in the sun awaiting death. God rescues him a second time by sending a gourd vine to shade him, illustrating that divine redemption is available to people who adhere to God's commands.)

9. "And here in this room, all alone, I re-experience them again and again. It is how wisdom comes. And how we shape our future." (Chap. 10, p. 78)
(The author's simplified explanation of the role of history and reflection in the development of wisdom includes the single most painful element of introspection—the Receiver completes his duty to the state "all alone." Except for the apprenticeship performed by the Receiver-in-training, no one shares the burden, no one comforts the Receiver during his wrestlings with human suffering. The room, like a prison cell, rings with silent echoes of his anguish. On some days, he is unable to transcend suffering or to do the unthinkable—send another unsuspecting child into a suicidal state by presenting him the gift of all human emotions and experiences.)
10. "The family in the memory seemed a little more—" He faltered, not able to find the word he wanted. "A little more complete," The Giver suggested. (Chap. 16, p. 126)
(Without recognizing his yearning for wholeness, Jonas has suspected that living with adoptive parents and an adopted sister has deprived him of some special connection to the past. By viewing a Christmas celebration, he learns the value of grandparents, connectedness, warmth, and love. By pressing his parents for a simple declaration of love, he recognizes their inability to respond to a "very generalized word" that has been shoved into the obsolete pile and supplanted by more sterile terms: "enjoy" and "take pride in.")

Comprehension Study

Answer the following questions in your own words. There is not always a right answer. Your judgment is important and you should be ready to defend your answers by referring to passages in the book.

Questions 1-4 (Literal Level)

1. Where does Jonas live? With whom?
(Jonas, a character in a dystopian fable, is an eleven-year-old boy who lives in an unnamed planned community. The mechanization of childbearing maintains the size of the population to no more than fifty of each age level. Jonas is number 19 of the fifty in his level, who attend school together, ride bikes, and play as well as volunteer for such community projects as care of the elderly in the Home of the Old or of children in the Childcare Center.)

The community's engineering of topography and climate, reproduction, and sensual experiences keeps the ground flat, the weather unchanged, human desires under control, and an awareness of color and sexual feelings limited to the experiences

of one man, *The Receiver of Memory*, a man revered among the ruling Elders. In Jonas' family's home, which is equipped with ports for bicycles and a screen and public address system to enable the committee to make announcements about infractions of rules, he shares the attention of two parents with his adoptive sister Lily and a baby brother Gabriel, who is assigned to the family temporarily. None of the family members appear to be related.)

2. What happens at the Ceremony of Twelve?
(On a December day, community members, including parents, committee members, and Elders, gather at the Auditorium to acknowledge the passage of a year in the lives of children. The Ones are named; the Threes learn to appreciate language; the Eights lose their assigned "comfort objects" and receive jackets with pockets; the Nines receive their state-issued bicycles. The Twelves, the focus of the second day of the lengthy ritual, are assigned to careers. Based on committee observation and the individual's performance at school, in public behavior, and in volunteer posts, each receives a lifetime assignment. In Jonas' group of fifty, the assignments proceed by number until the Chief Elder arrives at nineteen—Jonas' number. She skips him and completes the roll call for the remaining 31 assignments. Then, with apologies for causing him apprehension, she returns to him and announces that Jonas is the new Receiver-in-training.)
3. How is life different at the Annex?
(Jonas continues to go to school to study community regulations, but his after-school hours are devoted to the Annex at the Home of the Old. In the time he spends each day in apprenticeship to *The Giver*, he is alone with his mentor and free of the usual constraints to tell the truth, to apologize for interrupting, and to refrain from asking questions. As *The Giver* explains, the two do not have time for these cumbersome amenities that get in the way of truth.

Tenderly, hesitantly, The Giver leads Jonas into new sensual and emotional experiences, some of which are painful and frightening. Jonas comes to love the old man, but to dread the terror, anticipation, and loneliness of bearing the burden of all history. The Giver possesses uncharacteristic powers—to turn off the room screen that spies on individual behavior and to read books—but no political power beyond a cursory honor of being one of a kind. Through the balanced revelation of good and bad, pleasurable and horrific, Jonas begins shouldering the mantle of The Receiver's future. He accepts the role almost as a kindness to the bearded old man who has borne it alone for a decade.)
4. Why does Jonas spend the night at the Annex?
(Near the end of the first year, the conversation between Jonas and his mentor turns to release, the local euphemism for execu-

tion or euthanasia. Jonas asks why the rules changed ten years earlier. Sadly, *The Giver* tells the story of Rosemary, the last Receiver-in-training, whose despair at the troubled visions she had to endure press her beyond the capacity to cope. At the end of five weeks, she requested a release. As *The Giver* watched on his screen, she bravely injected herself and died, her name passing to the list of unmentionables. *The Giver* confesses that he loved Rosemary, who was his daughter.

Interrupting the piteous tale of The Giver's pariah daughter, Jonas recalls that this is the morning that his father, a Nurturer, must release one member of a set of identical twins. The two bundles are weighed. One is returned to the nursery. The little boy with the lesser weight lies in the Nurturer's arms; Jonas' dad injects the fatal dosage into the forehead. The tiny body quivers and lies still. After the Nurturer places the corpse in a box and jettisons it down a chute, Jonas realizes that he cannot return home to his father, a killer of babies. The Giver senses that the turn of events has changed Jonas and offers him shelter for the night.)

Questions 5-8 (Interpretive Level)

5. How does Jonas prove himself worthy?
(In the mold of the hero in flight, Jonas must make an instant decision to rescue Gabriel by settling him in an infant seat on the bicycle and pedaling across the bridge and into Elsewhere. The journey, receiving little preparation, is perilous with heat-seeking search planes, rough roads, and harsh weather. Fortunately, Jonas knows about the dangers and applies his experiences with the past, which *The Giver* passes through his pupil's back by the laying on of hands.

The going is demoralizing as hunger and fatigue take their toll on Jonas and the baby, weakened with hunger, frets. Still, Jonas presses on. When pursuers appear to end their surveillance, he ends his furtive withdrawals to the forest and dares to pedal in the rain and chill over icy roads in daylight. When snow imperils both boys, Jonas mounts a sled, clasps Gabriel to him, and slides toward twinkling yellow lights, a family, and the sound of music, his rewards for bravery and perseverance.)
6. Why does the community keep a man like *The Giver* as Receiver of Memory?
(The nebulous Elders who govern the community apparently know the value of the past and of knowledge. Rather than pass the burden of human experience to each child, the Elders choose one human repository for all feeling, all sensuality, all suffering and consult the Receiver of Memory at threatening moments, for example, the unexplained flight of jets over the community. Described by the Chief Elder at the Ceremony of Twelve, *The Receiver* "is to be alone, apart, while he is prepared by the current Receiver for the job which is the most honored in our com-

munity." A symbol of that honor is the costume he wears, which is the same as that of an Elder.

The next Receiver, who must possess intelligence, integrity, courage, wisdom, and incipient clairvoyance and must never report a dream of uncertainty, is rewarded with total clairvoyance—the Capacity to See and Hear Beyond—and access to thousands of books, the repositories of experience. Whether male or female, The Receiver must bear an inhuman task. In The Giver's words, "They don't want [burdens and pain]. And that's the real reason The Receiver is so vital to them, and so honored. They selected me—and you—to lift that burden from themselves." As demonstrated by The Giver, the life of The Receiver is too closeted, too secretive to nurture marriage, a fact corroborated by the departure of his wife. When loss of a daughter oppresses the lonely Receiver beyond his ability to endure psychic pain, solitude, and guilt, he contemplates suicide, the death chosen by his beloved Rosemary and denied him by law as a control on loss of experience to the community.)

7. Why are the pale eyes significant?

(The community is so regimented with tunics for uniforms, special costumes for Elders, and mandated hairstyles, that it has little use for mirrors. Jonas gives scant thought to his aberrant pale eyes until Lily rudely breaks the injunction to avoid offensive language and contrasts her brother's unusual eyes to the standard dark eyes. Jonas notices two other people who have pale eyes—The Receiver and Katherine, a six-year-old girl. When Jonas and The Giver acknowledge that Jonas must leave, The Giver agrees that he must continue in the job because Katherine is too young to begin training.

Because of the significance to the plot of control, predictability, and uniformity, the appearance of light eyes suggests that there is some inward vision in those whose eyes vary from the usual dark irises. In keeping with the literary tradition of blind poets, seers, and prophets like Homer, Odin, Tortuous, and the girl who leads people from the eruption of Vesuvius in David Bulwer-Lytton's *The Last Days of Pompeii*, the creation of characters with light eyes implies that the lightness of iris allows introspection and clairvoyance and an uninhibited gaze at reality. By the conclusion of his first year as apprentice to The Giver, Jonas has utilized his pale eyes in symbolic fashion to discern the lapses of utopia—the lack of love and family, the absence of wholeness.)

8. Why is understatement valuable to Lois Lowry?

(By utilizing understatement, Lowry creates more horror than a similar story told with ghastly details of execution and oppression. Because children learn only appropriate phraseology from the age of three, they suppress questions about life and death, love and meaning that might bubble up naturally in their think-

ing. By revealing their dreams, they keep nothing in their private memory banks and develop no suspicions about society's murderous controls. Thus, Lily is able to warble about the pending execution of an identical twin, "One for here, one for Elsewhere." Lowry's use of the childish jingle overlays a sinking feeling in Jonas as he questions the location of Elsewhere and the method by which people are transferred there.

Anticipation also proves to have its positive uses. When Jonas arrives at Elsewhere, he anticipates a "they" who wait for the arrival and voices singing. Lowry deliberately omits details about the songs arising and the singers below, whose "yellow lights . . . twinkled from trees" and who "created and kept memories" and "celebrated love." The absence of specifics increases the anticipation of inclusion in a family, possibly one with grandparents. Separated by the vastness of difference between home and Elsewhere, Jonas hears a faint echo, but cannot discern whether his community, too, raises voices in song.)

Questions 9 and 10 (Critical Level)

9. What is the purpose of dystopian literature for children?

(Young readers often devalue history and oral tradition because they haven't lived long enough to know what those wisps of humanity mean to them. By experiencing a community where life is one lock-step motion, where holidays are a rare treat, and where children and old people and rebels are murdered in a mockery of patriotic or religious ritual, the reader can understand the wonder of sensations that The Giver transmits to Jonas and Jonas passes to Gabe. The dystopian or out-of-sync quality in the community is the faint unease in one child, Jonas, who is selected at age 12 to bear the world-sized load of suffering meant only for martyrs. Like the mage Merlin training Arthur for England's throne, like Christ questioning rabbis in the Temple of Jerusalem, like Fiver, the gibbering, undersized rabbit prophet in Richard Adams' *Watership Down*, Jonas hesitantly presses for answers to the anomalies that the rest of the community seem comfortable with or indoctrinated enough to avoid.

The reading of young adult dystopian literature is unsettling, but not without precedent. Children who read Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland* know that Alice is so lonely in the frenzied land of the Queen of Hearts that she does not expect to be missed at home by anyone except Dinah, the cat. Dorothy, the heroine of L. Frank Baum's *The Wizard of Oz*, knows the challenge of great and powerful witches and a distant wizard in a land filled with unexplained happenings, yet is willing to risk all for her friends and for a return to her family's farm in Kansas. In a less obvious re-creation of reality, James Barrie's *Peter Pan* depicts Never-never land, a psychological anyplace where children never grow up and continue to fight the forces of evil, represented by Captain Hook, a stalking crocodile, Smee and the

pirates, and the nearby Indian clan. By extrapolating evil, separation, and alienation, these classic fiction writers have wrapped scary topics in fantasy so far removed from real life that children can safely absorb and profit from it without fear. With *The Giver*, the story moves closer to the realm of the familiar, the possible.)

10. What wisdom pushes societies to control suffering? (When unidentified war planes, cataclysmic weather, and overpopulation with its attendant starvation and warfare threaten the world, philosophers and governors are prone to press for control, even for fascism. If it were possible to regulate the flow of water, then there would be no deserts, no floods. If birth control could end the problem of unwanted human lives, then all children would find a place in society. If conflict ceased, then all would seek fulfillment under an umbrella of peace. But reality would end, the river would stop flowing, and history would cease.)

Lowry implies a time-honored pattern—the yin and yang of the human situation. As depicted in the Ramayana, Confucius’ Analects and Lao Tzu’s Tao, without fear of death, there is no joy in life. Without hunger and thirst, there is less pleasure or satisfaction in eating and drinking. And without tradition, there would be neither Giver nor Receiver. Because Jonas establishes a trusting relationship with the bearded old man and tries to shield his wearied frame from more torment, the two experience love, an emotion that teases Jonas’ curiosity. Ironically, he presses for a declaration of love from his mother, an administrator of the justice department, who declares the term “inappropriate.”

Kept safe from the terrors of home for the night in the familiar room in Annex, Jonas can peer into another refuge, the shelter for newchildren, where death is not only present but foisted on a boy whose only crime is being smaller than his twin brother. The recognition of willful destruction forces Jonas to seek its analog. Like a fledgling from the nest, he must counteract the savagery awaiting Gabe and sacrifice security and the love of *The Giver* in order to bring hope to the next generation. The act, a human attempt at redemption from death, suggests the cycle of yin pursuing yang as left foot follows right foot around the sprocket of Jonas’ bicycle. Past the steady flow of the river such as once mesmerized Gautama Buddha, Jonas finds his own enlightenment at a level appropriate to a 12-year-old; he relocates himself and his little foster brother in a real family.)

Questions 11-13 (Creative Level)

11. Write a poem or the lyrics to a song in which you express joy in spontaneity or doing things just for fun. Describe the happiness that children from Elsewhere possess and the fun they have with kites, mud puddles, crayons, and other entertainments. Why would Halloween and the Fourth of July appeal to Jonas?

12. Create a genealogy for Jonas or *The Giver*. Label pseudo-relationships, particularly Jonas and Lily’s kinship to each other and to their foster brother Gabriel. Contrast Jonas’ meager connections to living people with your own genealogy.
13. Read some of the fables of Aesop, Horace’s “The City Mouse and the Country Mouse,” Joel Chandler Harris’ *Uncle Remus* stories, Rudyard Kipling’s *Just So Stories*, and medieval *Reynard the Fox* tales. Explain how this tightly constructed literary form relates to *The Giver*.

Across the Curriculum

Business and Economics

1. Explain how a planned community would end poverty, homelessness, disease, handicaps, crime, war, and other miseries of the real world and save taxpayers the expense. What arguments keep societies from forcing people to live like everybody else? How is a planned society like a prison, laboratory, or asylum?
2. Discuss how euthanasia of old people or the terminally ill saves money. What moral or ethical arguments require that medical establishments keep people alive? How do these arguments conflict with the role of the insurance actuary?

Geography

1. Explain why a community might choose completely flat land. How do hills and curves disrupt transportation, building, and pollution control? What does a varied terrain add to human enjoyment of nature?
2. Make a collage explaining why aspects of a river cause poets and song writers to select it as an image of change or time. Why does *The Giver* warn Jonas to stay away from the riverbank?

Social Studies and Religion

1. Join a panel to discuss why the planned community never mentions a god or religion. How does complete governmental control replace the need for belief systems, prayers, and contemplation of heaven? Why are people forced to apologize for wrongdoing?

2. Discuss the segregation of people by age. What benefits do societies gain by mixing children with parents and grandparents? Why would mandated homes for the elderly rob the community of a rare resource?
3. Using desktop publishing, outline activities for an occasional unplanned holiday. Why do citizens greet it with joy? How do the children spend free time? Why does the holiday give an illusion of choice?
4. Brainstorm ways of responding to an unexpected plane headed for the community. Include methods of reacting to a crash and fire.

Psychology

1. List qualities that set Jonas apart from his peers. Why is his assignment greeted with an approving chant? Why do the committee and other citizens put their trust in a twelve-year-old boy whose eyes are a rare color and whose gravest infraction of rules is hoarding an apple?
2. Pantomime the behavior of the one miserable member of the planned community. What effect do loneliness, alienation, loss of spouse and daughter, and freedom from control have on The Receiver? Why does he mourn Rosemary? How does Jonas lift the burden of suffering?
3. Discuss in a short speech how the suppression of color affects everyone's life, whether the person is artistic or not. How does color blindness differ from total blindness?

Mathematics

1. Create an age chart to explain what each child in the community does at each stage of growth. For how many years do couples stay together?
2. Make a report on the Malthusian theory. Why are spouses in the planned community limited to two children? What did Malthus mean when he said people multiply much faster than the food supply? What new evidence suggests that he may have overstated the danger?

Science and Health

1. Write an essay on death as it appears in the story. What effect does the smaller twin display at the moment of death? Why is he jettisoned rather

than buried in a cemetery? How does his release differ from Roberto and Larissa's?

2. Debate how society would change if medication were available to make every disease or accident completely painless. Why is Jonas refused medication after he becomes a Receiver-in-training? What medication would have helped Rosemary cope with the pain borne by The Receiver?

Language and Literature

1. Apply a definition of fable or parable to *The Giver*. Why might this story be told to teach a lesson? What lesson does Lowry intend the reader to learn? Why is the ending unclear? Why are many of life's lessons told over and over in fables, yet never resolved? Why are the stories important?
2. Discuss the sense impressions that enable the Receiver to experience sunburn, war, a broken leg, bleeding, cannon fire, and the smaller twin's death. Explain why such passages complement the rainbow, apple, red hair, hammock, palm trees, sailboat, and colored lights.
3. Dramatize with a partner the subtle meaning of Asher's confusion of "snack" and "smack." How closely related are pleasure and pain in the controlled community? Why is Jonas' mother unable to answer a direct question about love? Why is Jonas successful in soothing Gabriel's nighttime crying?
4. Locate euphemisms, which are pleasant ways to say unpleasant things. Explain why "release" implies that the murdered infant is being helped rather than harmed. Why must language be "correct" to be acceptable?
5. Suggest names for the community Jason leaves and the one he approaches. Why is the bridge a significant part of his departure from his childhood training? Why did the future sanitary engineer swim the river?

Art

Comment on the cover of *The Giver*. Whose face is depicted? Why does he stare to the right? Why is the forest in color? Why is the color picture torn? Why is the rest of the cover black and white?

Music, Video, Journalism

1. Select instrumental music to accompany these scenes: a first experience with snow, Gabriel's first step, Fiona's red hair, Asher and Jonas at play, the second half of the Ceremony of Twelve, and Rosemary's first day with the Receiver.
2. Write a newspaper article about a pilot's arrival at an unnamed place where climate, topography, and length of life are controlled. Explain why everyone appears happy. Why would outsiders be watched or escorted across the bridge and refused entry?

Student Involvement Activities

1. Compose a scene in which the Giver and Jonas meet at the bridge to discuss how the community has changed since Jonas' departure. Answer questions about the surviving twin, Lily, Gabriel, Fiona, Asher, Jonas' parents, the Chief Elder, The Giver's work, and the next Receiver-in-training.
2. Read Robert Cormier's *I Am the Cheese* or M. E. Kerr's *Gentlehands*. Parallel motifs and themes that appear in *The Giver*. Mention treachery, control, flight, terror, confusion, questions, name significance, coming of age, and ambiguity.
3. Contrast definitions of utopia and dystopia. Why would a pain-free, poverty-free place like Jonas' community be considered dystopian? Why might the place he sleds toward be heaven rather than Elsewhere?
4. Lead a discussion of name significance. Apply the meanings and implications of these names to the fable: Jonah or Jonas, "dove, pigeon, moaner, jinx, or bringer of bad luck"; Asher, "happy, lucky, or felicitous"; Gabriel, "hero of God, an archangel"; Lily, "a fragrant white Easter flower"; Rosemary, "remembrance"; and Fiona, "fair, pale, white."
5. Read aloud passages that capture a single positive feeling, especially love, delight, pleasure, comfort, or welcome. Add details that The Giver might add to Jonas' enjoyment of nature, for example, fireflies, ocean waves, clouds, or spring.
6. Comment on ambiguity or outright deception in the story, particularly Jonas' father's role as

Nurturer and caregiver for infants and Jonas' mother's role as spokesperson for justice. Predict Fiona's response to the role of euthanizer of the old at releasing ceremonies. Why is Asher aptly suited for recreation rather than a more emotionally demanding job, for example, security, teaching Threes, pilot, or disposal of euthanized infants?

7. List books, stories, movies, videos, art, sculpture, dance, worship, and other forms of enlightenment that you would want Jonas to experience to learn more about all sides of human life. For example, how would Jonas respond to the movie *THX-1138*, the film version of Michael Crichton's *Jurassic Park*, Robin McKinley's *Beauty*, or Gary Paulsen's *Hatchet*, *Woodsong*, or *Nightjohn*? What would Jonas make of Yoko Kawashima Watkins' experience in *So Far from the Bamboo Grove*?
8. Create a department of experience for Jonas' community. Arrange bus and bike tours of Elsewhere at different points in a child's maturing years, throughout adulthood, and into old age. List experiences that will break the monotony of a controlled community, such as a change of topography, climate, customs, food, holidays, rituals, sexuality, and expectations.
9. Write a theme explaining one of several possibilities of Jonas' exodus from home:
 - a. He pedals to the next controlled village.
 - b. He reaches heaven.
 - c. He arrives at his own grandparents' home on Christmas Day.
 - d. He pedals in a circle and coasts back into his community.
 - e. He and Gabe freeze in the snow.
 - f. He finds that Elsewhere is the real world, where there are no restraints on his experiences.
 - g. He has been tricked into a vision of escape.
 - h. He finds whatever you wish for him to enjoy.
 - i. He encounters the reunion of The Giver's family, including Rosemary.
 - j. He awakens from a nightmare.
10. Make an oral report on euthanasia. What situations allow people or animals to be relieved of pain or to be killed? Is Lowry advocating an end to the death penalty, abortion, or assisted suicide? What valid arguments exist for these three controversial acts? Why do people deserve a voice in making laws to control euthanasia?

Alternate Assessment

1. List the experiences that enter lives of community members year by year. Which age ceremony is most momentous? At what time do citizens cease to live with spouses? When do adults die? How is the life of a Birthmother different other careers? Who selects the next Receiver of Memory? How is the selection made?
2. Make a list of scenes that afflict Jonas with dismay, disappointment, or pricks of conscience. Include the theft of Gabriel and transmitting experiences to Gabriel.
3. Compose a message from the citizens of Elsewhere to Jonas' parents or to The Giver. What hope can you offer of humankind's ability to live in an unplanned community? What will you say about the family? What will you reveal about Gabriel and Jonas in their new home?
4. Explain how a community like Jonas' hometown can become a dystopia or dysfunctional environment. What elements are lacking? Why should the committee risk poverty, crime, chaos, war, and overpopulation in exchange for individuality and personal freedoms?

Teacher's Notes

Vocabulary

Underline a word in parentheses to complete each of the following sentences.

1. Before he had left the dwelling, he had laid his hands firmly on Gabe's back and transmitted to him the most soothing memory he could: a slow-swinging hammock under palm trees on an island someplace, at evening, with a rhythmic sound of (**reflective, mutilated, languid, infringing, incidental**) water lapping hypnotically against a beach nearby.
2. As the memory (**glimpsed, seeped, transgressed, opted, admonished**) from him into the newchild, he could feel Gabe's sleep ease and deepen.
3. Together the (**elders, genders, fugitives, rarities, logistics**) slept through the first dangerous day.
4. The journey had become automatic: the sleep by days, hidden in underbrush and trees; the finding of water; the careful division of scraps of food, (**cultivated, augmented, exempted, gestured, prohibited**) by what he could find in the fields.
5. His leg muscles were (**rutted, palpable, taut, squat, unwieldy**) now.
6. But the frequency of the planes (**supplemented, apprehended, mystified, diminished, distinguished**).
7. As he pedaled through the nights, through isolated landscape now, with the communities far behind and no sign of human habitation around him or ahead, he was constantly (**vigilant, apt, vital, hueless, rueful**).
8. But now there were new fears; the unfamiliar landscape held hidden, unknown (**regulations, infractions, logistics, vibrance, perils**).
9. (**Tentatively, Irrationally, Compellingly, Insistently, Remorselessly**) he began to ride in daylight.
10. He slowed the bike again and again to look with wonder at wildflowers, to enjoy the throaty (**fitful, warble, crescendo, anthem, tabulation**) of a new bird nearby, or merely to watch the way wind shifted the leaves in the trees.
11. (**Experimentally, Reflectively, Methodically, Indolently, Stirringly**) Jonas hacked [the fish] to pieces with a sharp rock and fed the raw shreds to himself and to Gabriel.
12. He tried to use the (**flagging, scrupulous, attentive, interdependent, relieving**) power of his memory to recreate meals, and managed brief, tantalizing fragments: banquets with huge roasted meats; birthday parties with thick-frosted cakes; and lush fruits picked and eaten, sun-warmed and dripping, from trees.
13. But when the memory glimpses (**chastised, appropriated, prodded, subsided, discarded**), he was left with the gnawing, painful emptiness.
14. Jonas remembered, suddenly and grimly, the time in his childhood when he had been (**petitioned, distraught, cringed, transgressed, chastised**) for misusing a word.
15. But the hill was treacherously steep; he was (**disquieted, benign, rehabilitated, frazzled, impeded**) by the snow and his own lack of strength.

Comprehension Test A

Part I: Character Identification (20 points)

Name the characters described below.

- _____ 1. the old person who enjoys Roberto's release ceremony
- _____ 2. the child who thinks a bird is a plane
- _____ 3. the child who wants to fly with a pilot
- _____ 4. the nurturer who injects the smaller twin
- _____ 5. the worker in the justice department who brings papers home from the office
- _____ 6. the announcer at the Ceremony of Twelve
- _____ 7. the Giver's failed replacement
- _____ 8. the new Director of Recreation
- _____ 9. the trainee who studies "the fine art of release"
- _____ 10. the child disciplined for hoarding an apple

Part II: True/False (30 points)

Mark the following statements either T for true or F if any part is false.

- _____ 1. Because he committed suicide, Caleb's name is never mentioned or passed to another newchild.
- _____ 2. At age nine, Jonas received his parents' present—a bicycle with a name plaque attached to the seat.
- _____ 3. The Receiver-in-training at one time had the right to ask for release.
- _____ 4. Selected experiences and knowledge pass from The Giver's hands forever after he wills it to enter Jonas.
- _____ 5. Birthmothers give up their rights to see newchildren.
- _____ 6. Jonas realizes that his father is capable of murdering a newborn child.
- _____ 7. On a preannounced holiday, Asher and Lily ride across the bridge on their bikes.
- _____ 8. By lying on the cold earth, Jonas and Gabe avoid heat-seeking search planes.
- _____ 9. The Giver has power over books and questions, but not over the speaker, which must always be left on.
- _____ 10. The incident that triggers Rosemary's suicide is her first view of a battlefield and a dying boy.
- _____ 11. After Jonas enters training as a Receiver, he stops going to school with his friends because he can't tell what he learns of the past.
- _____ 12. The grandparents in the Christmas vision have the same light eyes as Jonas.
- _____ 13. Jonas is permitted to spend the night in the Annex.
- _____ 14. By placing visions in Gabe's mind, Jonas loses them forever.
- _____ 15. The Giver insists that honor is not the same as power.

Comprehension Test A (Page 2)

Part III: Fill-in (20 points)

Complete each of the following lines with a term.

1. The land beyond the river is generally referred to as _____.
2. At the top of the hill, Jonas recognizes the scene, clings to Gabe, and mounts the _____.
3. At each session, the Giver's touch on the skin of Jonas' _____ transfers experiences and events.
4. Jonas plans to hide his _____ in the bushes and depart in the car with the Giver.
5. The heat of the sun intensifies into a painful _____.
6. A single _____ per day keeps Jonas from dreaming of Fiona.
7. The screen transmission revealed to _____ how Rosemary injected herself.
8. Fiona admits to Jonas that administrators use a _____ to control the Old.
9. Gabriel clutches his comfort object, a _____.
10. The Chief Elder skips number _____ and continues to 50.

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Discuss the significance of two of the following passages.

1. Before he had left the dwelling, he had laid his hands firmly on Gabe's back and transmitted to him the most soothing memory he could: a slow-swinging hammock under palm trees on an island someplace, at evening, with a rhythmic sound of languid water lapping hypnotically against a beach nearby. As the memory seeped from him into the newchild, he could feel Gabe's sleep ease and deepen.
2. He was very aware of his own admonition not to discuss his training. But it would have been impossible, anyway. There was no way to describe to his friends what he had experienced there in the Annex room. How could you describe a sled without describing a hill and snow; and how could you describe a hill and snow to someone who had never felt height or wind or that feathery, magical cold?
3. Almost every citizen in the community had dark eyes. His parents did, and Lily did, and so did all of his group members and friends. But there were a few exceptions: Jonas himself, and a female Five who he had noticed had the different, lighter eyes. No one mentioned such things; it was not a rule, but was considered rude to call attention to things that were unsettling or different about individuals.
4. Jonas felt himself losing consciousness and with his whole being willed himself to stay upright atop the sled, clutching Gabriel, keeping him safe. The runners sliced through the snow and the wind whipped at his face as they sped in a straight line through an incision that seemed to lead to the final destination, the place that he had always felt was waiting, the Elsewhere that held their future and their past.

Comprehension Test B

Part I: Identifying Terms (20 points)

Select terms from the list below to fit each description that follows.

anthem	Ceremony of Twelve	dreams of snow	hoarding
apple	chute	Elsewhere	House of the Old
bicycle	comfort object	Fish Hatchery Attendant	injection
Birthmother	Director of Recreation	genetic scientists	sled
Ceremony of Loss	discipline wand	Hall of Open Records	warfare

- _____ 1. Fiona's weapon
- _____ 2. Jonas' first major experience with color
- _____ 3. a dead-end job
- _____ 4. Jonas' vehicle down the last hill
- _____ 5. gift for a Nine
- _____ 6. source of information about Jonas' grandparents
- _____ 7. method of infant release
- _____ 8. audience response at Roberto's celebration
- _____ 9. result of overpopulation and hunger
- _____ 10. ritual The Giver plans for Jonas

Part II: Short Answer (30 points)

Supply a word or phrase in answer to each of the following questions. Place your response in the blank provided at left.

- _____ 1. For whom does Jonas' father show aptitude?
- _____ 2. Whom does Larissa denigrate for being stupid and unimportant?
- _____ 3. What determines which twin lives?
- _____ 4. What family members seem to give Jonas' visions wholeness?
- _____ 5. What is the antidote to the Stirrings?
- _____ 6. What do children lose at the Ceremony of Ten?
- _____ 7. What do Threes acquire?
- _____ 8. What female name is designated Not-to-Be-Spoken?
- _____ 9. What does The Giver refuse Jonas after the vision of the broken leg?
- _____ 10. Who confuses "snack" and "smack"?
- _____ 11. Who jumped into the river and was never heard from again?
- _____ 12. Who considers Gabriel "my little brother"?
- _____ 13. What does Jonas use for a fish net?
- _____ 14. What bed does Jonas envision on an island?
- _____ 15. Who professes love for Jonas?

Comprehension Test B (Page 2)

Part III: Selecting Details (20 points)

Place an X beside any statement that is true of The Giver:

- _____ 1. injects Rosemary.
- _____ 2. plans to rejoin Rosemary.
- _____ 3. has an aptitude for Twelves.
- _____ 4. worries that the escape plan will endanger Jonas.
- _____ 5. could not stay married.
- _____ 6. suspects Fiona of having an aptitude for cruelty.
- _____ 7. places Gabe safely in the bicycle carrier.
- _____ 8. must act quickly before the morning release.
- _____ 9. allows Jonas to lie and interrupt.
- _____ 10. gives Jonas more hardship than Rosemary received.

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

- 1. Explain the necessity for control in a planned community.
- 2. Discuss where and how people gain wisdom.
- 3. Discuss the events that draw Jonas to Gabriel.
- 4. Justify the community's decision to have a Receiver of Memory.

Answer Key

VOCABULARY

- | | |
|---------------|------------------|
| 1. languid | 9. Tentatively |
| 2. seeped | 10. warble |
| 3. fugitives | 11. methodically |
| 4. augmented | 12. flagging |
| 5. taut | 13. subsided |
| 6. diminished | 14. chastised |
| 7. vigilant | 15. impeded |
| 8. perils | |

COMPREHENSION TEST A

Part I: Character Identification (20 points)

- | | |
|------------------|----------------|
| 1. Larissa | 6. Chief Elder |
| 2. Gabriel | 7. Rosemary |
| 3. Lily | 8. Asher |
| 4. Jonas' father | 9. Fiona |
| 5. Jonas' mother | 10. Jonas |

Part II: True/False (30 points)

- | | | |
|------|-------|-------|
| 1. F | 6. T | 11. F |
| 2. F | 7. F | 12. F |
| 3. T | 8. T | 13. T |
| 4. T | 9. F | 14. T |
| 5. T | 10. F | 15. T |

Part III: Fill-in (20 points)

- | | |
|--------------|--------------------|
| 1. Elsewhere | 6. pill |
| 2. sled | 7. The Giver |
| 3. back | 8. discipline wand |
| 4. bicycle | 9. hippo |
| 5. sunburn | 10. 19 |

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Answers will vary.

COMPREHENSION TEST B

Part I: Identifying Terms (20 points)

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. discipline wand | 6. Hall of Open Records |
| 2. apple | 7. injection |
| 3. birthmother | 8. anthem |
| 4. sled | 9. warfare |
| 5. bicycle | 10. Ceremony of Loss |

Part II: Short Answer (30 points)

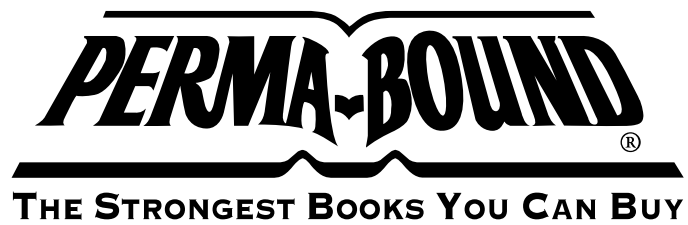
- | | |
|---------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. newchildren | 9. medication |
| 2. Edna | 10. Asher |
| 3. weight | 11. new Sanitation Laborer |
| 4. grandparents | 12. Jonas |
| 5. pill | 13. baby blanket |
| 6. long hair | 14. hammock |
| 7. correct language | 15. The Giver |
| 8. Rosemary | |

Part III: Selecting Details (20 points)

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. | 6. X |
| 2. X | 7. |
| 3. | 8. |
| 4. | 9. X |
| 5. X | 10. X |

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Answers will vary.



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