

Teacher Guide

Grades 7–8

Catching Fire

Suzanne Collins

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CATCHING FIRE

by
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Teacher Guide

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Note

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Skills and Strategies

Comprehension

Predicting, inferring, problem solving,
summarizing, supporting judgments, cause/effect

Literary Elements

Characterization, story mapping, setting, conflict,
theme, point of view, author's purpose, genre

Vocabulary

Synonyms, multiple-meaning words, definitions,
homophones, root words

Listening/Speaking

Discussion, oral presentation, dramatizing, debate

Writing

Creative writing, reading journal, personal
narrative, poetry, essay, report

Critical Thinking

Brainstorming, research, compare/contrast,
analysis, evaluation

Across the Curriculum

Social Studies—rebellion leaders, nuclear power,
propaganda, Spartacus; Geography—maps;
Science—seawater, locating water in the wild,
lightning, Nikola Tesla, force fields, hovercrafts;
Health—Posttraumatic Stress Disorder, herbal
medicine, CPR; Art—mat weaving, models, design,
illustration; Music—composition

Part I: “The Spark”

Chapters 1–3

Participating in the Hunger Games permanently alters Katniss’ life—she is confused about her identity, her relationship with Gale is strained, and the intimacy she shared with Peeta has turned to formal politeness. President Snow threatens to harm Katniss’ loved ones if she does not extinguish the spark of rebellion that her conduct during the Games ignited in the districts. She must convince the nation that she and Peeta acted out of love, not rebellion, so Katniss and Peeta once again play star-crossed lovers for their obligatory Victory Tour. Haymitch tells Katniss that the Capitol now controls her life and that she no longer has Peeta or her family will never be safe.

Vocabulary

loathe
anticipation
tesserae
tribute
rebellion
denance
inferno
treasonous
reaping
dynamite
deception
quell
alternatives
vengeance
impact

Discussion Questions

Why does the Capitol stage the Hunger Games and the Victory Tour? (*The Hunger Games are one of the Capitol’s strategies to dominate the 12 districts of Panem. The Games force districts to view each other as rivals. Along with geographical separation, limited travel, and almost no communication among the districts, this rivalry prevents them from uniting and rebelling. Helplessly watching the brutality of adolescent tributes fighting to the death on television reminds the people that they are slaves at the Capitol’s mercy. The falsely festive atmosphere of the Victory Tours, scheduled midway between the annual Games, maintains the feelings of horror and humiliation in the districts.*)

2. How has Katniss’ life been changed since winning the Hunger Games? What challenges does she face as a result of participating in the Games? (As a victor, Katniss is wealthy and has a large house in the Victor’s Village that she shares with her mother and private servants. Answers will vary. Before the Games, Katniss’ identity was based on providing for her family. Now she is unsure what role she plays. Her skills as a hunter are no longer needed for her family so she hunts to help Gale’s family and to keep her mind off the horrors she experienced in the Arena. The romance strategy she and Peeta

concocted allowed her to win the Games but ultimately resulted in alienating both Peeta and Gale. Katniss has lost her best friend, Gale, and she and Peeta share a strained politeness. As Katniss struggles to sort out her feelings for Gale and Peeta, she feels completely alone. The upcoming Victory Tour, during which she will face the audience again, fills her with dread. Katniss wishes for the unthinkable and impossible—that she could return to her meager existence, barely surviving in her family’s old shack.)

3. Why does Gale accept the money Katniss brings but refuse to take more money? (Answers will vary. Pride and hurt feelings make Gale hesitant to accept anything from Katniss. However, his priority is providing for his family, so he feels he has no choice but to accept the food. Working long hours in the mines leaves him no time to hunt himself, so he follows his pride for his family’s sake. On the other hand, Gale will not accept anything provided by the Capitol. Katniss offers money from her winnings, and Gale refuses it because he is angry about the Capitol’s control and mistreatment of the districts and their suffering citizens.)

children to the Games, so they feel no personal impact. Answers will vary. Some students may believe the Capitol is at fault for Venia, Octavia, and Flavius' lack of morality and empathy because the Games glorify violence and desensitize them to the true horror. Others may think that, despite the constant flow of propaganda, Katniss' prep team members are responsible for their own self-centeredness, indifference, and cruelty.)

10. Why is "Quarter Quell" an appropriate name for the special Hunger Games held every 25 years? What "miserable twist" do you predict will be added in the upcoming Quarter Quell? ("Quarter" means one-fourth, and "quell" means to stop something, usually by force. The Quarter Quells mark 25-year anniversaries of the Capitol's victory over the rebelling districts. The rule changes add interest to the Games and reinforce the Capitol's control. Predictions will vary.)
11. According to Haymitch, why can't Katniss ever have a life of her own? Predict how Katniss will respond. (President Snow must have Katniss continue to play the lovesick role she created for the Games. Otherwise, Snow will be admitting that there were no consequences for defying the Capitol. Katniss and Peeta's adoring fans expect them to be the star-crossed lovers they saw during the Hunger Games. As the princess will shatter the illusion, disappointing the viewers in the Capitol. The viewers in the districts would have proof that Katniss acted out of defiance and not love, further stoking the embers of rebellion. Predictions will vary.)
12. Prediction: Will Katniss convince President Snow that her love for Peeta is real?

Supplementary Activities

1. Literary Analysis: Begin the Story Map on page 37 of this guide. Add information as you read the story.
2. Art: Katniss admires Peeta's ability to decorate, bake cookies, and decorate them to represent District 12. You may wish to illustrate the characters, setting, or symbols of the district.
3. Comprehension: Write an e-mail from Katniss to Gale explaining why their "Sundays are a thing of the past" (p. 33).
4. Drama: Working with a partner, prepare a skit showing what Katniss would be like if she had been raised in the Capitol. Create costumes and stage props. Perform your skit in class.
5. Critical Thinking: Victors are expected to create a tale. Write a paragraph or two to explain what your talent would be.

Using Dialogue

Directions: Choose some dialogue from the current reading section. Fill in the chart below to evaluate the purpose of the dialogue and whether it is effective in moving along the plot.

Extra Credit—extra bits of dialogue I remember from my outside reading

Who is speaking?

How is the plot advanced with these words?

Dialogue on Pages _____

What is special about the dialogue?

What does the dialogue tell me about the characters speaking?