



TEACHER GUIDE

GRADES 9-12

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

The Hunger Games

Suzanne Collins



READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT

The Hunger Games

Suzanne Collins

TEACHER GUIDE

NOTE:

The trade book edition of the novel used to prepare this guide is found in the Novel Units catalog and on the Novel Units website. Using other editions may have varied page references.

Please note: We have assigned Interest Levels based on our knowledge of the themes and ideas of the books included in the Novel Units sets, however, please assess the appropriateness of this novel or trade book for the age level and maturity of your students prior to reading with them. You know your students best!

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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, definitions,
target words, word maps,
homophones

Listening/Speaking

Discussion, oral presentation,
dramatizing, debate

Writing

Creative writing, personal
narrative, poetry, essay, report

Critical Thinking

Brainstorming, research,
compare/contrast, analysis,
evaluation

Across the Curriculum

Social Studies—mythology,
government types, advertising,
history; Geography—maps;
Science—environment, water
purification, night vision,
mockingbirds; Health—recipes,
diet, self-esteem, survival,
hearing loss; Math—
computation; Art—design,
illustration; Music—
composition, soundtrack

Genre: science fiction; dystopian fiction

Setting: futuristic North America; nation of Panem (which consists of the Capitol and 12 surrounding districts)

Point of View: first person

Themes: survival, hunger, violence, rebellion, oppression, power and control, sacrifice, love, trust, betrayal, identity

Conflict: person vs. society; person vs. nature; person vs. person; person vs. self

Style: narrative

Tone: suspenseful; dark; thought-provoking; sometimes romantic

Date of First Publication: 2008

Summary

In the nation of Panem, located in what once was North America, a shining Capitol oppresses its 12 surrounding districts. Every year, as punishment for a past uprising, the Capitol forces each district to send one boy and one girl to compete in the Hunger Games, a competition in which adolescents fight to the death on live TV. Sixteen-year-old Katniss Everdeen lives in the poverty-stricken, coal-mining District 12, where she and her best friend Gale forage and poach in the surrounding woods to feed their families. On reaping day, when her younger sister Prim is chosen as District 12's tribute, Katniss volunteers to take her beloved sister's place. She and Peeta, the baker's son who once saved her family from starvation, travel to the Capitol with their mentor, Haymitch. While preparing for the Games, Katniss and Peeta are pampered with the Capitol's opulence. Haymitch and the stylists assigned to Katniss and Peeta present them as a team and, after Peeta declares his love for Katniss, as star-crossed lovers—a strategy that wins over sponsors and the TV audience. During the Games, Katniss survives a highly manipulated environment, battle-trained tributes, horrific man-made monsters called muttations, and unprecedented rule changes. After the final showdown, Katniss and Peeta are the only remaining tributes. Unwilling to kill each other, Katniss contrives a faked double suicide. To “save face,” the Gamemakers permit two victors; however, Katniss earns the Capitol's fury. Terrified that the Capitol will take revenge on her family, Katniss claims her defiance is due to her love for Peeta. On the way back to District 12, Katniss discovers Peeta's love for her is real and not just a Game strategy. Katniss must sort through her feelings—for Peeta, for Gale, and for her actions during the Games—to find her true identity.

About the Author

Suzanne Collins was born in 1963. By the age of eight, she loved reading Greek and Roman mythology. War also played a role in Collins' childhood and heavily influences her writing. Collins remembers, despite her mother's protective efforts, being frightened by TV coverage of the Vietnam War, knowing her father was serving there. Collins' father, an Air Force officer, historian, and doctor of political science, “felt a great responsibility and urgency about educating his children about war” and used storytelling skills to bring history alive for his children. Collins

Vocabulary

deluged
amiable
exertion
contempt
mediocre
surly
slated
irredeemably
reprieved
aggravating
eccentric
ferocity
reproachful
banter
anecdote
unrequited

3. Why do you think Haymitch has Katniss and Peeta learn new skills in the Training Center? *(Answers will vary. If the other tributes are unaware of Katniss' skill at archery and Peeta's physical strength and wrestling skills, they cannot prepare a defense strategy. Katniss and Peeta will have the advantage of surprise and will have learned new skills to aid them in the fight.)*
4. Why are survival-technique trainers pleased to work with Katniss and Peeta? What skills do they learn? *(Most tributes focus on fighting techniques and ignore the survival techniques. The trainers understand the value of survival techniques and enjoy showing Katniss and Peeta how the skills can be useful. Survival skills include knot-tying, camouflaging, starting fires, knife throwing, making shelters, hand-to-hand combat, and identifying edible plants.)*
5. Describe Katniss' range of emotions during her time at the Training Center. What conclusions can you reach? *(Katniss is nervous about meeting the other tributes. She is curt and angry with Haymitch and Peeta, and pretending to be friends with Peeta is taking a toll on her. Thoughts of home sadden her, yet Katniss cannot*

bear to think about the present. Looking at Rue upsets Katniss because it makes her think of Prim. She is angry with the bored Gamemakers. Answers will vary. Katniss is afraid. She has never been away from home, is uncomfortable in the Capitol surrounded by strangers, and knows that she may soon die.)

6. During her private session, what message does Katniss send to the Gamemakers? Why do the Gamemakers give her such a high score despite her actions? What do you think is Katniss' greatest strength? *(Shooting the apple in the roast pig's mouth to get the Gamemakers' attention and then sarcastically thanking them for their consideration before abruptly exiting shows Katniss' spirit. She is telling the Gamemakers that she is a survivor and she is not afraid to break the rules. The score of 11 shows that the Gamemakers acknowledge Katniss' shooting skills and her spirit. The Gamemakers know that giving Katniss a high score will attract the attention of the TV audience and the gamblers and add interest to the Games. They may also wish to "save face" with the high score by not letting on that Katniss' actions frightened them. Answers will vary. Possibilities include Katniss' hunting skills, her survival instinct, or her rebellious nature.)*
7. Why doesn't Katniss question Gale's motives? Why does she always doubt Peeta's? *(Answers will vary. Katniss and Gale's relationship took years to develop. Gale earned Katniss' trust. Katniss does not really know Peeta. She cannot trust him because she does not know which parts of their friendship are real and which are faked for the Games.)*
8. What is the purpose of the tribute interviews? Why does Katniss have a problem with this? *(How the tributes present themselves to the Capitol determines sponsorships that provide help during the Games. Effie and Haymitch try to make Katniss appear likeable and to show a personal side of her. However, Katniss does not want strangers, especially ones trivializing her survival, to know what matters most to her. She feels they are taking her future but are not entitled to her past. Katniss is also angry about being forced to participate in the Games and having to hide her true feelings about them.)*
9. Why does Caesar Flickerman help the tributes during their interviews? How is his name significant to his character? *(Answers will vary. The host's job is to put on a good show for the audience. Having been the host for over 40 years, Caesar Flickerman knows how to lead the audience. He also knows how to salvage poor answers or fill awkward silences, both of which could*

prove deadly to a tribute. “Caesar” means “hair.” Year after year, Caesar Flickerman keeps the same hairstyle, only changing its color. “Flickerman” could refer to how images flicker on a TV screen. Also, since Caesar is a TV personality, the Games are televised each year, and the district citizens are forced to watch, the name is fitting.)

10. Katniss realizes that in the Capitol, “Wrinkles aren’t desirable. A round belly isn’t a sign of success” (p. 125). Why do Capitol citizens view these characteristics differently than District 12 citizens? What is today’s society’s viewpoint? (*The different viewpoints are based on wealth. In District 12, the poor do not live long enough to get wrinkles and they do not have enough food to ever become overweight. In the Capitol, citizens can afford surgery to disguise their age and to remove signs of overindulgence. Answers will vary.*)
11. **Prediction:** Is Peeta’s declaration of love real or simply a Game strategy?

Supplementary Activities

1. Comprehension/Critical Thinking: Divide a sheet of paper into two columns. In Column One, list important strengths and skills for tributes to have. Devise Game strategies based on these strengths and skills, and list them in Column Two.
2. Creative Writing: Katniss tells Peeta about the time she was chased by a black bear. Write a humorous story about Katniss challenging a black bear over rights to a beehive.
3. Critical Thinking/Art: Katniss uses “artificial candy” as a metaphor to describe the Capitol. Brainstorm a list of metaphors for ten cities in the United States. Illustrate at least five metaphors from your list.
4. Character Analysis: Haymitch’s coaching session makes Katniss feel as if she is “no one at all” (p. 118). Complete the Bio-poem on page 37 of this guide for Katniss.
5. Drama: Working in groups, create a skit of Caesar Flickerman interviewing the tributes of the Hunger Games.

Part II: “The Games” Chapters 10–12

The night before the Games begin, Katniss worries about the conditions she will face. Peeta, on the other hand, searches for a way to show that the Capitol does not own him. Cinna waits with Katniss until the Hunger Games begin. Despite Haymitch’s instructions to avoid the Cornucopia, the center of the Games arena, Katniss grabs a backpack but cannot retrieve a bow and arrows. She escapes two attackers and flees into the woods. Peeta forms an alliance with the Career tributes, which Katniss views as a betrayal. Katniss suffers from dehydration before finding a pond. She awakens to a wall of fire.

Discussion Questions

1. Analyze Katniss’ and Haymitch’s statements regarding Peeta’s declaration of love for Katniss: “He made me look weak!” (Katniss); “He made you look desirable!” (Haymitch) (p. 135). With whom do you agree? Explain your choice. (*Answers will vary. Discussion should cover how Katniss thinks being in love makes her appear vulnerable, while Haymitch believes it will make her popular with the sponsors.*)

Character Web

Directions: Complete the attribute web below by filling in information specific to Katniss.

