



 Prestwick House

Activity Pack

THE GIVER

BY LOIS LOWRY



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Name: _____

Date: _____

Pre-Reading

Vocabulary Word Search

Objectives: Defining words
Completing a word search

Activity

The following words and concepts will be important to your understanding of *The Giver*. In the puzzle, the words may appear diagonally, vertically, or horizontally; they may also run backwards or forward. First, write definitions for the words, using a dictionary if necessary. Then circle the words as you find them in the puzzle.

WORD LIST

ceremony – a formal event to celebrate or solemnize something

coming-of-age – the reaching of the official age of adulthood and legal responsibility

conform – to behave or think in a socially acceptable or expected way

dystopia – an imaginary place where everything is as bad as it possibly can be, or a vision or description of such a place

equality – rights, treatment, quality, or value equal to all others in a given group

euphemism – a word or phrase used on place of a term that might be considered too direct, harsh, unpleasant, or offensive

euthanize – to kill an incurably ill or injured person or animal to relieve suffering

ideal– *n.* an excellent or perfect example of something or somebody; *adj.* serving as the best or most perfect example

ritual – an established and prescribed pattern of observance

utopia – an ideal or perfect place or state, where everyone lives in harmony and everything is for the best

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapters 1 – 16**Rule and Ritual**

Objective: Understanding the purpose behind the rules and rituals of Jonas's community

Activity

Jonas lives in a community of many rules, rituals, and practices that are alien to our own society. These rules and rituals were originally introduced because it was believed that they would make the community better in some way—safer, in some instances, and less prone to deviance and discord. The reasoning behind certain practices is obvious: citizens use bicycles instead of cars because automobiles are more dangerous; car accidents are usually far more serious than bicycle accidents. But what about the rule calling for “precision of speech”? Or the ritual of the evening “telling of feelings”? Or the fact that animals are absent and considered “make-believe” creatures?

As you read *The Giver*, make a note of each new rule, ritual, or curious circumstance (like the absence of animals) you come across. Write each in the first column. In the second column, jot down what you think is the reasoning behind each—that is, why the community would have such a rule or require such a ritual. Some in the first column have been done for you as an example. At times, you may want to make note of a rule and fill in the second column after reading further; the motivation behind a rule can be hard to guess at first encounter and may become clearer in retrospect. Feel free to add more lines to the chart if necessary.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapters 1 – 23**Plot and Tone**

Objectives: Identifying significant incidents in the plot
Identifying tone

Activity

Author Lois Lowry has chosen to number the chapters of *The Giver* rather than title them. This gives us the opportunity to make up titles for the chapters as we read along.

In novels with chapter titles, the titles frequently give an overview of a chapter's content or point towards a significant incident. Chapter 1 of *The Giver*, for example, might have been entitled "An Evening in the Community" or "The Evening Telling of Feelings."

On the other hand, a chapter might take its title from part of the dialogue or descriptive prose in the chapter—or even from a significant word that sums up the overall tone of the installment. In this case, Chapter 1 might be called "Apprehensive."

As you read *The Giver*, pause after each chapter to consider possible titles. Fill in the following chart by writing one plot-related title and one prose- or tone-related title per chapter.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapter 6**Brochures****Objective:** Creating travel brochures**Activity**

One of the most distinctive features of Jonas's community is its extraordinary safety. The community has other features, too, that might make it an attractive vacation spot for families.

Imagine that you have been given the assignment of Chief of Public Relations and that the community has decided to open its doors to vacationers from the America of today. You're in charge of writing and illustrating a travel pamphlet that will convince people to spend their vacations in the community. The brochure should highlight all of the best the community has to offer and include information on dining and recreation. Feel free to invent information about lodgings and other attractions, but make sure your innovations are in keeping with the spirit of the community.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapter 10

Artwork

Objective: Creating two mural-sized class collages

Activity

In Chapter 10, Jonas finds out just what it is that a Receiver receives: the memories of the whole world. Some will be comforting, exciting, or exquisitely beautiful. Others will be horrifying, sickening, or nearly unbearable. These memories will give Jonas the wisdom he will need to advise the rest of the community.

As a class we will be creating two mural-sized collages and adding to them daily. On one, we will attempt to represent as fully as we can what the world's best memories might be. On the other, we will try to capture the world's worst memories.

Each student is responsible for bringing in two images—one for each collage—per day until we complete our unit on *The Giver*. You might draw or paint images, design them on a computer, clip them from magazines or newspapers, photocopy them from books, etc. Take advantage of these options by trying different searches rather than using the same one every day. Cut around your images neatly so that they will be ready to be added to the murals when you get to class.

Use your imagination! A good memory might be anything from a grandfather's hug to the discovery of a cure for a disease to an unspoiled landscape or sensational bowl of chicken curry. Bad memories can range from personal disappointments to atomic bombings. One day, you might bring in images that conjure up good or bad memories for you personally; on another, you might contribute images from another time or place that have broader significance. Be prepared to share your images with the class on any given day and explain your reasons for choosing them.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapter 13

Critical Thinking II

Objective: Considering the presence of free choice in our daily lives

Activity

“It’s the choosing that’s important, isn’t it?” The Giver asks Jonas this question when Jonas pines for the ability to decide what color of tunic to put on in the morning. While the freedom to make choices is not an option in Jonas’s community, it is practically a foundation of Western society. Anyone who’s stood in the cereal aisle of a grocery store and contemplated which cereals to buy can tell you that. (This assumes, of course, that one has the *money* to buy the cereal—which is *not* promised in our society, but is, in its own way, in Jonas’s.)

How much freedom of choice do you exercise on any given day? To complete the following chart, continue the list in the first column by adding other things that you do on an average weekday. For each thing you do, decide whether you have *no* choice in the matter, *some* choice, or *complete* freedom of choice, then place an *X* in the appropriate box. Consider each activity broadly—for example, for “go to school,” you may have no choice in that you must go, but some choice in terms of who you sit with on the bus. Make comments along with your *X*’s whenever your answers need explanation. Feel free to add more rows if necessary.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapters 5, 9, 12, 16, 17, 20, and 21**Dialogue**

Objective: Writing dialogue

Activity

The Giver would be a drastically different novel if more of the characters could communicate as honestly as Jonas and The Giver do. Choose three of the following opportunities for further dialogue between characters; for each, write the conversation that might have taken place. Each of your dialogues should be 1-2 pages long. A sample beginning to the Chapter 5 dialogue is provided as a model.

Chapter 5:

In this chapter, Jonas's mother instructs him to begin taking pills, as he's just experienced his first Stirrings. Write a conversation that begins with Jonas either asking *why* the community members take pills for Stirrings or refusing his pill on the grounds that he enjoyed his dream.

Jonas: Okay—if I forget my pills, the Stirrings will come back; I get it. But what *happens* if they come back? Why do we take pills to get rid of them?

Mother: Well, Jonas, if we all had Stirrings, it could harm the community.

Jonas: How?

Chapter 9:

Asher hardly speaks to Jonas on the ride home after the Ceremony of Twelve. Write a conversation in which they discuss Jonas's selection.

Chapter 12:

Jonas is prohibited from dream-telling now that he is The Receiver, but his family doesn't know that. He manages to avoid his mother's question when she asks about his dream of the previous night. Write the conversation that might take place if Jonas *did* share his dream. Include all three members of his family unit in the discussion.

OR

As they ride to the Annex, Fiona clearly expects Jonas to provide more details of his first day of training. Write the conversation that might take place if he were to confide in her.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapter 21

Newspapers

Objective: Creating a newspaper

Activity

Jonas just left the community, and we readers have gone with him to follow his and Gabe's story. Lowry doesn't describe what happens when the citizens awake to find Jonas and Gabriel missing and themselves awash in memories. We have to imagine those details for ourselves.

With that in mind, your assignment is to create a special edition of the community's newspaper. Your edition will be published late in the evening of the community's first day without a Receiver of Memory to buffer them from history's realities (and don't forget things like color and freedom of choice). Give the newspaper a name, and include a weather report, two leading—or main—news articles, and at least three smaller (one- or two-paragraph) articles covering events that took place during the day. Make sure to include catchy, newspaper-style headlines for your articles and to supply illustrations for—at least—the two leading stories. You may also choose to include one or more of the following:

- a cartoon or comic strip
- a style section
- an advice column
- a book review (remember, most of the community have never seen books other than rule books before today)
- an arts or entertainment section

Be prepared to discuss with the class the choices your editorial team made.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Wrap-Up

Sequels

Objective: Writing creatively

Activity

While Lois Lowry has written a “companion novel” to *The Giver* called *Gathering Blue*, she has stated that she will never write an actual sequel to *The Giver*.

In the publishing world, though, it sometimes happens that a second author will write a sequel to a book written by somebody else. Alexandra Ripley wrote *Scarlett*, a sequel to Margaret Mitchell’s *Gone with the Wind*, for example, and Helen Ericson wrote *Harriet Spies Again* as a sequel to Louise Fitzhugh’s *Harriet the Spy*. In addition, the Internet has provided an excellent forum for fans of certain novels, movies, or television series to write and post “fan fiction”—fiction inspired by and involving the characters from works that set ideas spinning in their heads.

The Giver contains loose ends that might provide a good foundation for a sequel. Some examples are listed for you. Using one or more for guidance, write a one-page summary of your sequel to *The Giver*. Feel free to create new material or plotlines for your sequel, but make sure your ideas are based on your reading of *The Giver*.

Some loose ends:

1. Do Jonas and Gabriel make it down the hill? Is there really a welcoming home waiting for them at the bottom?

2. Is it possible that Jonas is hallucinating at the end of the book, due to the freezing cold and his lack of food?

3. How does the onslaught of memories affect certain members of the community? How does it affect Asher? Fiona? Lily? Jonas’s father?

4. Is The Giver able to convince the community that everyone should bear memories equally? Does the community adapt and eventually become more like our own?

5. What happens to Katharine, the Six with the pale eyes?
