



THE GIVER: NOVEL DISCUSSION GUIDE #1

Encourage critical thinking and support your students' literacy development by asking questions during reading. Here are some questions you can ask your readers to engage them in a discussion.

Chapters 1 – 2

Comprehension

- What is unusual or important about the aircraft incident that Jonas mentions at the very beginning of the book?
- Jonas spends much of Chapter 1 trying to accurately describe how he's feeling. What are some of the words he uses, and how are they different from each other?
- What do the group names "Elevens" and "Sevens" mean in the story? Why are these group names important?
- Jonas makes comments about animals and imaginary creatures being used as comfort objects. What might his comments indicate about the setting of the story?
- What is the purpose of the December ceremonies for the children of the community? What are some of the specific things that happen for the children?
- Who is the Receiver? Why is this person important in the community?
- Describe the Committee of Elders. Who are they, and what is their role in the community?

Analysis

- Why was Jonas "awed" that his father had broken a rule? And why was he "relieved" when he saw his mother smiling? What does Jonas's response to this information tell you about the importance of following the rules in the community and the consequences for breaking them?
- How does Lois Lowry build suspense about the month of December throughout Chapter 1? Cite specific parts of the text in your answer.
- How does the author use language to build the setting and create a sense of strangeness? Give some examples from the text to support your answer.

Personal Connection

- ★ How would you feel about receiving an Assignment at age 12 that would last for the rest of your life? Explain why you would feel this way.



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Chapters 3 – 5

Comprehension

- How does Jonas feel when Lily mentions his eyes at the beginning of Chapter 3? Why does he feel that way?
- What do you know so far about different Assignments and how they're viewed in the community?
- Go back to Chapter 3 and look closely at the paragraph where Jonas describes how the apple changed. Keeping in mind what you know about apples, what is unusual about the apple that Jonas describes in Chapter 3? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.
- What are some rituals that members of the community are required to participate in? What do you think is the purpose of these rituals?
- What is the purpose of volunteer hours?
- Describe the release celebration that Larissa talks about in Chapter 4.

Analysis

- In the beginning of Chapter 3, you learn that “almost every citizen in the community has dark eyes.” But Jonas and the newchild, Gabriel, have pale eyes. What can you infer about the characters with light eyes?
- Volunteer hours are a rare opportunity for children to make their own choices. Why do you think the community allows children to make these choices?
- Why do you think there are rules against calling attention to differences and bragging in the community? What do minor rules like this tell you about the community?

Personal Connection

- ★ What Assignment would you want in the community? What do you think the Elders might choose for you based on your personal interests and things you've done in your own life?