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The Giver
BY LOIS LOWRY



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Name: _____

Date: _____

Pre-Reading

Critical Thinking and Presentations

Objectives: Designing an ideal community
Making a short presentation

Activity

The community in *The Giver* has been consciously and thoroughly designed with the object of eliminating many of the social and psychological ills that plague our own communities. Everything is regulated with this in mind—even the age at which children should give up sleeping with stuffed animals. As a result, the community could in many ways be considered perfect. As the back cover of your book says, “Everything is under control. There is no war or fear or pain.”

With your group, design your own “perfect community”—a community that will be fair to all and free of suffering. In order to achieve these lofty goals, make sure to consider the following questions.

1. How will your community remain free of social and psychological ills such as:
 - homelessness
 - joblessness and job dissatisfaction
 - theft
 - greed and economic inequality
 - rape and assault
 - unwanted children
 - bad marriages, divorce, and broken homes
 - starvation and its opposite, an “obesity epidemic”
 - depression
 - auto accidents, out-of-control fires, hurricanes, and similar disasters
 - jealousy and unhealthy competition
 - racism
 - lack of affordable day care
 - war and violence, and so on?
2. What form of government will your community have?
3. How will the elderly be treated in your community?
4. At what age will a child be considered an adult?
5. What forms of punishment, if necessary, will be used in your community?
6. What will the community look like? (housing, etc.)

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapters 1 and 4**Creative Writing**

Objective: Writing a patriotic song (or anthem)

Activity

In Chapter 1, Lowry writes of a “patriotic hymn” that Jonas sings in class. Larissa, too, mentions “the anthem” that was performed at Roberto’s release.

Patriotic songs usually make reference to the things in a people’s nation or community that make the people most proud to belong to it. Consider what you know of Jonas’s community, then write its anthem. Write at least two verses and a chorus. If you like, write new words to go with a melody you already know (such as that of “The Star-Spangled Banner”). It is not necessary, however, to set your anthem to music.

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 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.