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# Sample

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**Response Journal**

Reflections: A Student Response Journal



*The Giver*  
Lois Lowry

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*Reflections: A Student Response Journal*



*The Giver*  
**Lois Lowry**



**Prestwick House**

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## *Response Journal*

### **To The Student**

Although we may read a novel, play, or work of non-fiction for enjoyment, each time we read one, we are building and practicing important basic reading skills. In our ever-more complex society, in which reading has become more and more crucial for success, this, in itself, is an important reason to spend time reading for enjoyment.

Some readers, however, are able to go beyond basic reading techniques and are able to practice higher thinking skills by reflecting on what they have read and how what they read affects them. It is this act of reflection—that is, stopping to think about what you are reading—that this journal is attempting to encourage.

To aid you, we have included writing prompts for each section; however, if you find something that you wish to respond to in the book more compelling than our prompts, you should write about that. We hope you enjoy reading this book and that the act of responding to what you have read increases this enjoyment.

After you read the indicated sections, choose the questions to which you will respond. Keep in mind that there are no right or wrong answers to these prompts, and there is no one direction in which you must go.

## Chapter 1

1. Even though *The Giver* is a work of fiction, many of Jonas' emotions have been felt by most young people. This chapter begins with Jonas feeling frightened of an airplane because it is flying over his community. Write, as a diary entry, about a time you have been frightened of something mechanical.
2. Being scolded by a teacher or coach can be an embarrassing feeling, as Jonas found out for saying something he was not supposed to. Perhaps you have had a friend who has had this unpleasant experience, or remember one from a television program. Write a short paragraph about the incident.
3. Perhaps you will agree that an apology in a classroom setting is not a usual happening. Even more unusual is that, after Asher's apology, the class in unison accepts it. Write an email, or note, to a friend telling of your thoughts about this and the idea of apologies in general.

## Chapter 2

4. None of the children in this novel celebrate an individual birthday. Instead, they have the passing of the years marked for them in a "Ceremony" for those in their age group, which is attended by the whole community. Write an imaginary conversation in which you tell a friend why you would like, or not like, to have your birthday celebrated this way.
5. Jonas is to be twelve years old, after which he is considered an adult. After his Ceremony of Twelve, he will begin training for the assigned job he will do for the rest of his life. In our society, we have choices about the type of work we would like to do as an adult. Write a short newspaper column titled "Choices: What's Good and Bad About Them" with your feelings about this topic.

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*The Giver*

11. We read that a small mistake made by an eleven year old boy was “a disgrace that had clouded his entire future.” Write a letter to an imaginary friend telling about your feelings at the treatment this boy received.
12. Jonas and Larissa genuinely seem to like and enjoy caring for aged men and women in the House of the Old. Relate the nicest experience you have ever had with an old person.

## **Chapter 5**

13. There seems to be very little privacy in Jonas’ home. All the family members are required to tell their feelings about their day after dinner. They must also share their dreams at breakfast. Relate an incident in your life when you were forced to disclose something, and because of it, you felt your privacy was invaded.
14. Jonas does not question the need to begin taking pills for what his mother calls “Stirrings.” If you were Jonas, would you take pills without asking exactly what they were for, and how they were going to affect you?
15. *The Giver*, so far, has shown a full day in the life of Jonas and his family. Make a list comparing various activities in this family with a list of activities in your household over a twenty-four hour period.

## **Chapter 16**

46. Jonas learns about being a special individual when he receives the memory of a birthday party. Write an email or letter to a friend describing a real or imagined birthday party which made a person feel very special.
47. The children of the community have never seen a real animal. The Giver transfers the memory of a horse to Jonas. He immediately understands the bond and pleasure of a relationship with an animal. Relate an incident when you have felt some kind of bond with an animal.
48. The Giver presents a very warm and wonderful memory picture of a family to Jonas. He learns what the word “Grandparent” means. He also hears about “love.” Write a diary entry which begins with the sentence, “My most powerful memory of a grandparent is about the time...”

## **Chapter 17**

49. Jonas has begun to realize the difference between surface feelings and deeper emotions. He thinks that he now knows what love is. The rest of the community, except for The Giver, does not know about love. Relate something you have seen or know about from real life that would be a good example of what love is.
50. The “Discipline Wand” is a slender stick used to hit children if an adult feels they deserve punishment. What options, if any, do you think there are to teach children right from wrong without hurting them physically.

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## Response Journal

66. At the end of this chapter, we are not sure if Jonas and Gabriel actually have reached Elsewhere. Write an imaginary ending to *The Giver* which would show that Jonas and Gabriel actually did arrive there.

### W r a p - u p

67. Write a list of three things you liked best, and three things you liked least about *The Giver*.
68. *The Giver* seems to be a novel that would qualify to have a sequel to it written. Write a brief plot for a sequel to *The Giver*.
69. Write a letter to a friend telling her or him about the reasons you did or did not enjoy reading *The Giver*.
70. If you were to tell a friend what you think the message of this novel is, what would that be?
71. Write an imaginary letter to the author of *The Giver*, Lois Lowry. In the letter, ask her three questions about what the life of a writer is like.