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Literature
Teaching Unit
Chapter-by-Chapter Study Guide



The Hunger Games

by Suzanne Collins

- Learning objectives
- Study Guide with short-answer questions
- Background information
- Vocabulary in context
- Multiple-choice test
- Essay questions
- Literary terms



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The Hunger Games

Objectives

By the end of this Unit, the student will be able to:

1. identify the form of narration used in the novel and provide an opinion on why Collins may have chosen this particular type of narration to tell the story.
2. describe Katniss's life in District 12 and explain how the title of the novel relates not only to the Hunger Games themselves, but also to Katniss's daily struggle for survival in the Seam.
3. discuss the tyrannical nature of the government of Panem and describe the various tactics that the Capitol uses to maintain its power, focusing in particular on the Hunger Games.
4. provide examples of the divisions among the social classes of District 12, as well as the class differences between the people living in the Capitol and those living in the outlying districts.
5. identify several of the many references to ancient Rome throughout the novel, pointing out how the Capitol is similar to ancient Rome and how the Hunger Games are analogous to the gladiator games that were fought there.
6. explain the symbolic significance of Katniss's covering Rue's dead body with wildflowers and give reasons for why the Capitol would view this gesture as an act of rebellion.
7. trace the evolution of the star-crossed lovers scenario between Katniss and Peeta, explaining how the ploy proves crucial to the pair's survival in the Games yet also causes confusion and emotional pain for both of them.
8. compare and contrast the following tributes, describing each one's strategy for survival in the Games and pointing out the special skill or talent that each one brings to the contest:
 - Katniss
 - Peeta
 - Rue
 - Thresh
 - Foxface
 - Cato
9. define dramatic irony and explain how Collins presents it with regard to Katniss's inability to grasp the truth about Peeta's feelings for her.

The Hunger Games

Questions for Essay and Discussion

1. What type of narration is used to tell the story? Why do you think Collins chose to utilize this form of narration? How might the story have been different if it had been told from a different perspective?
2. Describe Katniss's life in District 12. What is her daily routine like? Who are the most important people in her life? In what ways does her life drastically change when she is taken to the Capitol to participate in the Games? How might the title of the novel refer to both the Games themselves and to Katniss's daily struggle for survival in the Seam?
3. Discuss how Collins establishes from the first chapter that the government of Panem is oppressive. Why are people fearful of the Capitol? What rights do we have in our society that the people in the districts of Panem lack? How does Collins present the imbalance of wealth and power between the Capitol and the outlying districts? Describe the various tactics that the Capitol uses to maintain its power.
4. Briefly summarize the history of Panem. How did the nation originate? What occurred during the Dark Days? What happened to District 13? Explain what the Treaty of Treason is. How do the Hunger Games relate to this treaty?
5. Explain how the reaping system works. Which class of people suffers the most because of the way the system functions, and why?
6. Why has Katniss always felt that she has owed Peeta? Why is Peeta forever connected with the concept of hope in Katniss's mind?
7. Discuss the character of Haymitch. What has happened to him as a result of his being a contestant in the Hunger Games? What are his duties and responsibilities as Katniss and Peeta's mentor? In what ways does he prove himself to be a valuable teacher and a great asset to Katniss and Peeta during the Games, despite Katniss's initial doubts about him?
8. In what ways is the Capitol similar to ancient Rome? How are the Hunger Games similar to the ancient Roman gladiator games?
9. Compare and contrast life in the Capitol with life in the outlying districts. What things are abundantly available in the Capitol but are inaccessible in the districts? Explain how the people in the Capitol differ from those in the districts in terms of behavior, speech, dress, standards of beauty, and the way they view the Games.

The Hunger Games

Part I: “The Tributes”

Chapter 1

Vocabulary

apothecary – a place where medicines are sold; a pharmacy
claustrophobic – cramped, confined, closed in
deterrent – something that prevents or discourages
indifferent – uncaring; not interested
iridescent – shimmering, gleaming
maniacally – in a crazy or overexcited manner
obliterated – completely destroyed, wiped out
paraffin – wax used to make candles
paunchy – having a large belly
pelt – the hide and fur of an animal
poaching – illegally hunting and taking fish or game
preposterous – ridiculous; outrageous
reaping – harvesting; gathering
repentance – remorse for one’s sins
sustenance – food, nourishment
torturous – painful, agonizing
unintelligible – impossible to understand or make sense of
vermin – bugs or other pests that carry disease
verve – energy; enthusiasm

1. Who is the narrator of the story? What form of narration is used?

2. Describe Katniss’s family members. How does she feel toward each of them? What happened to her father?

5. When Katniss learns that Peeta Mellark will be the male tribute, she reacts with distress and alarm. Why does she feel conflicted about this situation?

6. Find an example of personification Katniss uses in her description of stumbling around in the rain searching for food.

7. What does the dandelion symbolize in the following quote? How is it connected to Peeta in Katniss's mind?

“To this day, I can never shake the connection between this boy, Peeta Mellark, and the bread that gave me hope, and the dandelion that reminded me that I was not doomed.”

4. Briefly summarize what happens between Katniss and the redheaded girl. What does the girl do, to Katniss's surprise? What is the girl trying to communicate to Katniss when she touches her lips and then points at Katniss's chest?

5. Describe how Cinna helps Katniss succeed at the interview. What important advice does he give her? How does this advice differ from that of Haymitch and Effie Trinket?

6. As Katniss watches the host, Caesar Flickerman, she finds herself thinking about the differences between the Capitol and the poorer districts in regard to such things as age and beauty. In what ways do the standards of beauty in the Capitol differ from those in District 12? In your experience, is contemporary American society more like the Capitol in this regard, or is it more like District 12? Give reasons to support your opinion.

7. What final question does Caesar Flickerman ask Katniss? How does she respond?

8. On what dramatic note does the chapter end?

Chapter 18

Vocabulary

avenge – to take revenge on behalf of someone else
banish – to drive out
capacity – ability
despondency – sadness, misery, depression
eerily – strangely; in a frightening or mysterious way
embedded – lodged in place; implanted
fretful – upset; irritable
impotence – a lack of power; helplessness
inducement – incentive, encouragement, motivation
lethargy – a lack of energy; sluggishness
materializes – appears; comes out
melodic – sweet-sounding
novice – a beginner
precedes – comes before
ravings – wild, angry speeches
vulnerable – weak; defenseless
wreathing – surrounding; encircling; covering

1. As Rue is dying, what promise does Katniss make to her?

2. What final request does Rue make of Katniss? How does Katniss respond?

3. Why is a child's lullaby an appropriate song for Katniss to sing to Rue? How might the lullaby be understood in metaphorical terms?
