

The Giver- Lois Lowry



<u>Dystopian Conventions</u>		<u>Chapter breakdown</u>	
<p>Conventions of a Dystopia: Propaganda is used to control the citizens of society. • Information, independent thought and freedom are restricted. • A leader/concept is worshipped by the citizens of the society. • Citizens have a fear of the outside world. • Citizens live in a dehumanized state. • Citizens conform to uniform expectations. Individuality and dissent are bad because personal freedoms are limited. • The society is an illusion of a perfect utopian world.</p> <p>A Dystopian Protagonist: Often feels trapped and is struggling to escape. • Questions the existing social and political systems and attempts to rebel but in a way that is still morally acceptable • Believes or feels that something is terribly wrong with the society in which he or she lives. • Lacks the selfish nature of those in charge.</p> <p>Typical settings of a Dystopia: Futuristic, industrial cities • Destroyed natural habitat with little connection to nature • High levels of surveillance • Environments and weather that creates a strong sense of oppression or constraint.</p>		<p>1-3 Introduced to the main character Jonas. We learn about his structured community where rules play an important role. We learn about the ceremonies that take place, that there are 50 new babies every year and how at the age of 12 they are given their career assignment. Jonas' dad, a Nurturer, brings a new baby home to spend some nights with them.</p>	
		<p>4-6 Jonas spends some volunteer hours at The House of the Old. There he discusses the release of one of the old. His release is seen as a celebration of his life. Jonas tells his parents he experienced feelings about a female friend. They tell him he is required to take a pill every morning to stop the thoughts. We learn about more the age milestones. One child provided to a family this year is a replacement child for a child who passed away previously.</p>	
		<p>7-9 Ceremony of 12 takes place and Jonas' name is skipped. At the end of the ceremony we learn that Jonas has been selected to be the Receiver of memory. This person must be someone with a great deal of intelligence, integrity, courage and the ability to 'see beyond.' He feels people are treating him differently now. His assignment rules state he can lie and he can't apply for release.</p>	
		<p>10-11 Jonas goes to the Receiver's home for his first day of training and notices it is more lavish than the rest of the community homes. Jonas is told he will be transmitted memories that will give him wisdom and insight to help the community. Jonas receives the memory of snow and sunshine. The Receiver says he can now call him 'The Giver'</p>	
		<p>12-13 Jonas' starts to see colours. He experiences frustration that the members of the community are not given choice. The Giver tells him the Receiver's role is to hold the painful memories that the community cannot handle. Last Receiver failed and all the memories were transmitted to the community and everyone suffered.</p>	
		<p>14-15 The Giver continues to transmit painful memories but always ends with a positive one. Jonas begins to wonder what happens when people are released. Jonas accidentally transmits a memory to baby Gabriel. The Giver transmits a memory of a war scene and Jonas is traumatised at experiencing real pain.</p>	
		<p>16-18 The Giver transmits his favourite memory of Christmas. Jonas asks if his parents love him and they laugh him off. Jonas stops taking his stirrings pill. Jonas refuses to play a game that resembles a war scene and tries to explain that the games makes a joke out of a horrible reality. Jonas asks The Giver about release. The previous Receiver enjoyed the memories at first but after receiving a memory about loss and poverty asked to be released.</p>	
		<p>19-20 Jonas is curious about release as his father had to release one of the identical twins he cared for. Jonas watches a tape of the release. Jonas realises the baby is dead and watches his father but him in the garbage. Jonas is traumatised and spends the night at The Giver's home. The Giver comes to the conclusion that things need to change and that memories need to be shared. They plan for Jonas to escape leaving all of his memories for the community.</p>	
		<p>21-23 Staff at the Nurturing centre have decided to release baby Gabriel. Jonas decides to escape sooner. He rides all night and they hide from the planes during the day. Jonas transmits the memory of snow so that they are not detected by the heat technology of the planes. Jonas catches fish and gathers berries to sustain himself and Gabriel. It begins to snow and gets too much for them to continue with their journey but Jonas things of his friends and family and The Giver's memories and makes it up the hill where he spots a sled. Jonas goes in the sled with Gabriel down towards the houses where loving families are waiting for them.</p>	
<u>The Author</u>	<u>Plot summary</u>		
<p>Lois Ann Lowry (née Hammersberg; March 20, 1937) is an American writer. She is the author of several books for children and young adults, including The Giver Quartet, Number the Stars, and Rabble Starkey. She is known for writing about difficult subject matters, dystopias, and complex themes. Lowry has won two Newbery Medals: for Number the Stars in 1990 and The Giver in 1994. Her book Gooney Bird Greene won the 2002 Rhode Island Children's Book Award. Lowry Says 'The Giver' Was Inspired By Her Father's Memory Loss. Lowry's father didn't have Alzheimer's but as he began to forget his past, the author says, she began to imagine a book about eliminating painful memories.</p>	<p>Jonas lives in a seemingly perfect community in which there is little pain and little crime. People are polite. Everyone belongs to a supportive family. But this harmony comes at a price; there is no choice and real emotions are non-existent. Life is dictated by strict rules. A committee of elders matches spouses and assigns them children born from women whose only job is to give birth. The committee names all babies; chooses every person's career; and families are dissolved when the children are grown. Everyone looks similar in skin colour and dress. Everything serves a purely practical purpose and the old or sick are "released," which the community believes means sent to live "Elsewhere".</p>		

The Giver- Lois Lowry



Character list				Key themes						
<p>Jonas- The eleven-year-old protagonist of The Giver. Sensitive and intelligent, with strange powers of perception that he doesn't understand, Jonas is chosen to be the new Receiver of Memory for his community when he turns twelve.</p> <p>Asher- Jonas's best friend. Asher is a fun-loving, hasty boy who usually speaks too fast, mixing up his words to the exasperation of his teachers and Jonas. He is assigned the position of Assistant Director of Recreation.</p> <p>Lily- Jonas's seven-year-old sister. She is a chatterbox and does not know quite when to keep her mouth shut, but she is also extremely practical and well-informed for a little girl.</p> <p>The Giver-The old man known in the community as the Receiver of Memory. The Giver has held the community's collective memory for many years and uses his wisdom to help the Committee of Elders make important decisions, even though he is racked by the pain his memories give him and believes that perhaps those memories belong in the minds of everyone in the community.</p> <p>Rosemary- It is revealed that Rosemary is the Giver's daughter and became the Receiver-in-training after him. After experiencing all the pain and loss that were in the memories transmitted to her, she applied for Release and asked to inject herself, wilfully committing suicide.</p> <p>Gabriel- The new child (baby) that Jonas's family cares for at night. He is sweet and adorable during the day, but he has trouble sleeping at night unless Jonas puts him to sleep with some memories. He and Jonas become very close.</p> <p>Mother- A practical, pleasant woman with an important position at the Department of Justice. Jonas's mother takes her work seriously, hoping to help people who break rules see the error of their ways. She frequently gives Jonas advice about the worries and fears he faces as he grows up.</p> <p>Father- A mild-mannered, tender-hearted Nurturer who works with infants. He is very sweet with his two children. He enjoys his job and takes it very seriously, constantly trying to nurture children who will stay alive until the Ceremony of Names. However, even if he is attached to a child, he will release it if that seems to be the best decision.</p>				<p>Memory -Sometime in the past, Jonas's community decided to give up their memories in order to eliminate the pain and regret that came with them. They were trying to create a totally peaceful and harmonious society without conflict, war, or hate by eliminating emotion entirely. They succeeded: the community is almost perfectly stable and totally safe. Yet Jonas realizes that without memories, a person can't learn from mistakes, celebrate accomplishments, know love or happiness or any other deep emotion, or grow as an individual.</p> <p>Individual vs Society-Jonas's community is founded on the idea of Sameness—the elimination of difference in its members. In order to achieve this Sameness, individualism is discouraged, and rules and discipline matter most. Jonas learns from an early age that both breaking rules and being different is considered shameful. By celebrating group birthdays, allowing only one kind of clothing and haircut, assigning spouses, jobs, children and names, and eliminating sexual relations, Jonas's society stifles the things that allow for individual differences. Without mirrors, there can be no vanity or jealousy. Without sex, vanity loses its importance, and competition and conflict are eliminated. In Sameness, no one knows the meaning of loneliness, but no one knows true happiness either.</p> <p>Choices & Freedoms- In Jonas's community, no one makes choices. All choices about the community were made in the distant past when Sameness was created, and any additional changes involve painfully slow bureaucratic procedures. Without choice, no one suffers the consequences that come from making wrong choices, but they also don't experience the joys that come with making right ones. By sacrificing the freedom of choice, community members are guaranteed a stable, painless life. Consequently, the people lead pleasant—but robotic—lives.</p> <p>The Relationship Between Pain and Pleasure-Related to the theme of memory is the idea that there can be no pleasure without pain and no pain without pleasure. No matter how delightful an experience is, you cannot value the pleasure it gives you unless you have some memory of a time when you have suffered. The members of Jonas's community cannot appreciate the joys in their lives because they have never felt pain: their lives are totally monotonous, devoid of emotional variation. Similarly, they do not feel pain or grief because they do not appreciate the true wonder of life: death is not tragic to them because life is not precious. When Jonas receives memories from the Giver, the memories of pain open him to the idea of love and comfort as much as the memories of pleasure do.</p> <p>Feeling and emotion-The people of Jonas's community don't understand genuine emotion or pain, because their lifestyles allow no opportunity to experience it. Birthmothers are not allowed to raise their own children. Sex is forbidden and sexual urges medicated away. Adults are not allowed to choose their own spouses. Identical twins are not both allowed to survive because they would be too close emotionally. Every decision made in the community serves a purely practical purpose and is based on the rules set down at the time of the community's establishment, promoting Sameness and leaving no room for sentimentality.</p>						
Weekly spelling										
Community	Nurturing	Disquieting	Irritability	Mischief	Maintenance	Inaccurate	Contorted	Dejected	Shuddering	Meticulously
Unidentified	Adherence	Gurgling	Interdependence	Solemnly	Unremarkable	Irrationally	Grotesquely	Enthusiastic	Rueful	Disciplined
Intrigued	Aptitude	Perspiring	Relinquish	Aptitude	Luxurious	Immense	Immobilised	Anguish	Miserably	Condemned
Obedient	Chastisement	Announcement	Additional	Nourishment	Slender	Consciousness	Contentedly	Successor	Acquire	Languid
Dwelling	Acknowledged	Reassuring	Transgressions	Precision	Recognised	Meticulous	Luxuriating	Seldom	Startlingly	Hypnotically
Upturned	Humiliation	Glimpsed	Discarded	Anticipation	Exhilarating	Vaguely	Wholeheartedly	Astonished	Maintenance	Fugitives
Revolving	Bewilderment	Nuisance	Anxiously	Requirements	Tentatively	Assimilated	Unscheduled	Sympathetically	Inconsiderate	Augmented
Overwhelming	Mystified	Auditorium	Unaccustomed	Unanimous	Interrupting	Invigorating	Permeated	Deposited	Frequently	Diminished
Embarrassment	Magnifying	Gravitating	Correspond	Integrity	Generations	Instantaneous	Exasperation	Syringe	Apparent	Tantalising
Distraught	Recreation	Accomplishments	Meticulously	Acquisition	Apprehensively	Excruciating	Suppressing	Wretched	Confronted	Banquet