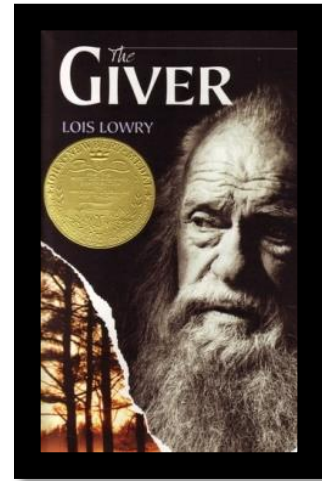


Title: The Giver
Author: Lois Lowry
Grade Level: 5th Grade



SUMMARY

Jonas lives in a utopian, futuristic society where all negative emotions and events have been erased – everything is pleasant, convenient, and ordered. Upon turning 12, he is chosen to be the Receiver of Memory, a task in which he will hold the collective memory for the community since no one else possesses recollections of his or her own. With this new knowledge comes questions, and questions can be dangerous in this society! This award-winning novel provides a great opportunity for your family to get into the science fiction genre. Lowry's beautiful book will give your family a pathway to interesting discussions that are important to us all.

QUESTIONS TO TALK ABOUT WHILE READING

VOCABULARY

It's important to make sure that your child has an understanding of key words in the book. Talking about words while reading is a great way for your child to learn new words.

In this book, you might talk about these words:

- palpable (pg. 3)
- bewildered (pg. 23)
- solemn (pg. 25)
- ritual (pg. 34)
- transgressions (pg. 45)
- prestige (pg. 53)
- transmit (pg. 79)
- disgrace (pg. 80)
- fleeting (pg. 90)
- capacity (pg. 92)
- perceived (pg. 100)
- clouded (pg. 116)
- precision (pg. 127)
- customary (pg. 164)

You might begin your discussion words with questions like:

In the book, what does the word palpable mean? How does the story help you understand what it means?

KEY IDEAS and THEMES

In addition to words, it's important to talk about key ideas and themes and how they develop over the course of the book. Here are some examples to get you started:

1. On page 3, the text states, "Jonas was careful about language." Talk with your child about the role language plays in *The Giver*. Why does Jonas and everyone else need to be careful about language? Why do you think so? Where do you see that in the text?



2. Chapter 3 opens with a discussion about Gabriel and Jonas' eyes. Because mirrors aren't common, Jonas hasn't thought much about his light eyes – most others are brown. While there is a physical difference with Jonas's eyes, consider what the figurative difference might be. Ask your child: What do you think the author chose to make Jonas' eyes different from the rest? What do you think that means? Talk about this together while encouraging your child to look for clues in the story to support his or her thinking.
3. Members of the society of Sameness have no choices to make. Talk about the advantages and disadvantages of having no choice. Ask how the author describes this scenario. Can you imagine what it would be like to have no choices in life? Why is this such an important element in the book?
4. At the Ceremony of Twelve, Jonas is given the assignment of Receiver of Memory. The society of Sameness has given up memory to prevent disruption and pain. Ask your child why they would do such a thing and if he or she thinks it would work. Talk about the advantages and disadvantages of getting rid of memory. Do you think this was a good idea? Why or why not?
5. The image of the sled appears early in the story and again much later. Ask your child what this sled signifies or means. Why do you think Lois Lowry used this image? Reread the descriptions of the sled and the events surrounding it. As a family, talk about what it might mean using the story for examples.

EXTRA ACTIVITIES

1. After reading *The Giver*, watch the movie together. Compare the two versions of the story. Talk about transmediation – the translation of one work (a novel) into another (film). Ask your child if the movie producers did a good job translating the book into a movie. What did they get right? Where did they go wrong? Be sure to remind your child to use examples from the text when talking.
2. *The Giver* is the first book in a quartet. The others are *Gathering Blue*, *Messenger*, and *Son*. To build independence in your child's reading, suggest that he or she read the next book independently while you do the same. Come together to talk about the second novel after each chapter.