

1996

Lowry, Lois. *The Giver*. Houghton Mifflin Company, 1993.

SUMMARY:

Given his lifetime assignment at the Ceremony of Twelve, Jonas becomes the receiver of memories shared by only one other in his community and discovers the terrible truth about the society in which he lives.

QUESTIONS:

What assignment would you like to be given if you lived in this type of community?

Why do you think that Jonas is chosen as the next Receiver of Memory?

If you lived in a world where there was only one color, which color would you choose?

If everyone were the same, would our world be a better or a worse one to live in?

How do relationships in our world differ from those in Jonas'?

How would you feel about a committee matching you up with a spouse?

Jonas says, "If everything's the same, then there aren't any choices! I want to wake up in the morning and *decide* things!" (p.97) Why is the ability to make choices important?

At what point did you realize what being released meant? How did you feel about it then, and how do you feel about it now?

The Giver has been a frequently challenged book, meaning that individuals have written formal requests asking that it be removed from libraries or classrooms. Why do you think it has been challenged so much? Do you think it should be?

How do you think this story ends?

JOURNAL STARTERS:

I would describe a perfect world as. . .

My favorite memory is...

The freedom to make my own choices is important to me because...

ACTIVITIES:

Draw a map of Jonas' community.

For one day, try living by one of the Rules that Jonas must abide by.

Talk with a grandparent or other elderly person about his/her memories.

Visit a nursing home to see how it compares to the House of the Old that Jonas knows.

Research the topic of *euthanasia*.

Write a different ending for *The Giver*.

INTEREST LEVELS: Grades 5-8

BOOKTALK:

Imagine a world of strict rules, where everyone is treated the same, and you are assigned a number when you are born. Your birthday is not celebrated nor even remembered! Every part of your life is regulated, such as when you can first have pockets on your clothing, when you will receive your first bicycle, and what your Assignment (job) will be. Imagine a world without color, without animals, and without love!

This is the society that Jonas has grown up in, and when he is named the next Receiver of Memory, he is assigned to the Giver to receive his instruction. The Giver begins to share with him memories of an entirely different kind of world: one of snow and heat; pain, sorrow and war; color, animals, happiness and love; and free choice. Jonas must then decide what he will do with the information.

READ-ALIKES:

Anderson, M. T. *Feed*. Candlewick Press, 2004.
Bradbury, Ray. *Fahrenheit 451*. Simon & Schuster, 1967.
Card, Orson Scott. *Ender's Game*. T. Doherty Assoc., 1985.
Farmer, Nancy. *The House of the Scorpion*. Atheneum, 2002.
Philbrick, W. R. *The Last Book in the Universe*. Blue Sky Press, 2001.
Skurzynski, Gloria. *Virtual War*. Simon & Schuster, 1997

RELATED WEB SITES:

Lois Lowry Author: www.loislowry.com
Carol Hurst's Children's Literature Site: www.carolhurst.com/titles/giver.html
IPL KidSpace: www.ipl.org/div/askauthor/Lowry.html
Lois Lowry Teacher Resource File: <http://falcon.jmu.edu/~ramseyil/lowry.htm>
SPARKNOTES, *The Giver* www.sparknotes.com/lit/giver

OTHER RECOGNITION:

Newbery Medal, 1994
Margaret A. Edwards Award, 2007

Winner of a Children's Choice Award in each of the following states and region:
Arizona, 1995; Indiana, 1997; Kansas, 1996; Maine, 1995; Maryland, 1995; Michigan, 1996;
Nebraska, 1995; Nevada, 1995; New Hampshire, 1996; New Jersey, 1996; New Mexico, 1997;
Ohio, 1997; Oklahoma, 1996; Pacific Northwest, 1996; Pennsylvania, 1995; Virginia, 1996;
Wisconsin, 1996.