

Approved for use in 7th grade

Summary of the Work:

In his Utopian society Jonas, a 12-year-old boy, is given a special assignment. He is to be the Receiver and acquire from the Giver all of his community's memories. Without memories, the people of the community do not experience pain, fear, or unhappiness. During the sessions with the Giver, however, Jonas realizes the imperfection of his community and the lies that support it. He finds himself making a choice between freedom of thought and individualism or the sameness and predetermined life of the community.

Rationale:

The Giver continues to provide a mechanism for teens to understand themselves, the world in which they live and their relationships with others and with society. This book also supports the seventh grade social studies curriculum which focuses on different cultures in our world.

Professional Reviews and/or Critical Essays:

- Kellerman, (1993, May). Book review: Junior high up fiction. *School Library Journal*, 39, 124. "The author makes real abstract concepts, such as the meaning of a life in which there are virtually no choices to be made and no experiences with deep feelings. This tightly plotted story and its believable characters stay with readers for a long time.
- Nilsen, A.P. & Donelson, K.L. (1993, November). 1993 Honor listing: A bumper crop. *English Journal*, 83, 99. This book is a "catalyst for heartfelt discussions on such issues as intellectual vs. intuitive knowledge, physical and psychological manipulation, euthanasia, family planning, and the costs of conformity compared to the costs of divergence. "
- Bushman, J.H. & Bushman, K.P. (1994, January). The tradition continues: New releases from well known authors. *English Journal*, 83, 80. "Lowry has captured a powerful, haunting theme and presented it in a most readable science-fiction novel."
- Editors' Choice '93. (1994, January 15). *Booklist*, 90, 868. "In simple yet powerful prose, Lowry creates an anti-utopian world where the lack of hardship, war, and poverty only covers the citizen's deeper lack of freedom. A well-conceived novel that kids will think about as well as enjoy."
- Jones, T.E., Toth, L., & Elder, V. (1993, December). Best books 1993. *School Library Journal*, 39, 26. "A riveting, chilling story that inspires a new appreciation for diversity, love, and even pain. Truly memorable."
 - * Print resources are available from the library media center and libraries in the district. Contact any library media specialist to view the scholarly sources.
 - * Scholarly reviews are also available online through Books in Print and Gale. Contact the library media specialist to obtain username and password information to access the subscription database of full-text reviews.

Noted Distinction:

- Winner of the 1994 Newbery Meda
- recipient of the 2007 Margaret A. Edwards Award

Readability:

- Lexile Score: 760
- Readability Level:

Learning Resources Guidelines:

- The novel meets the Learning Resources Guidelines.

Standard Alignment: [\(link\)](#)

Approval:

Submitted to Committee:

Approved for Adoption:

Notes on the Text:

(The best way to evaluate and understand a novel is to personally read the book in its entirety.)

The Giver was one of the most frequently challenged books from1990-2000, as recorded by the ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom. Reasons include: sexual maturity, Christian symbolism, disobedience to society's rules and order, euthanasia.

Connection to the Curriculum:

Lois Lowry's depiction of Jonas' community shows the value of differences between people, freedom of choice, and the importance of memories. With the story being told through the eyes of Jonas, the reader discovers and faces (in a simplified form) issues that have historical connections to today's world. Lowry weaves together many of our world societies into one community. Students can examine characterization, point of view, and timely issues such as euthanasia and overpopulation.

Additional Connections:
(AP, Honors, Essential/Applied, Dramas, Films, etc.)