

Grade 6: Unit 1

The Giver: Whole Class Novel Seminars

Seminar 3: Whole Class Novel

What Does Success Look Like?

Scholars envision the setting and characters Lowry introduces. They analyze what makes Jonas's community unique and evaluate its advantages and disadvantages.

Seminar 3:

***The Giver*: Chapters 1–3 (pages 1–32)**

Do Now — 10 minutes

- Play classical or jazz music to establish a calm work environment.
- Scholars revise their Exit Tickets from yesterday's seminar based on the feedback you gave them.

Launch — 2 minutes

- Tell scholars that as they listen to the opening pages, they should PICTURE the setting and characters Lowry introduces. Remind scholars to envision as they listen and read.

Read and Discuss 1 — 40 minutes

Read:

- **Play Audiobook (00:00:02–00:15:46):** Chapter 1, pages 1–13

Discuss:

- Scholars discuss the following question in pairs: How is Jonas's community similar to and different from our community? Call on pairs to share out. Insist that scholars back up their claims with evidence from the text.
- If scholars nailed the previous question, ask: What moves does Lowry make to establish an unfamiliar setting?

Read:

- **Read Aloud (10 minutes):** Chapter 2, pages 14–24

Discuss:

- Scholars discuss the following question in pairs: Evaluate the way in which adults in Jonas's community obtain jobs. What are the advantages and disadvantages of the Ceremony of Twelve? Call on pairs to share out. Insist that scholars back up their claims with evidence from the text.

Write — 10 minutes

Write an essay of no more than 200 words:

- What is more important in Jonas's community: freedom or security? Justify your argument with at least **two** concrete pieces of evidence from the text.

Wrap-up — 5 minutes

- Show an exemplar essay to scholars. Have scholars discuss what makes the claim clear and compelling. Have scholars articulate the transferable takeaway from the work study that they will apply to their own work moving forward.

Read and Discuss 2 — 15 minutes

Independent Reading (10 minutes):

- Chapter 3, pages 25–32

Discuss:

- Scholars discuss the following question in pairs: What characteristics distinguish Jonas from others in his community? Call on pairs to share out. Insist that scholars back up their claims with evidence from the text.
- If scholars nailed the previous question, ask: Which is valued more in Jonas's society: the well-being of the individual or the well-being of society? Ground your claim in evidence from the text.

Exit Ticket — 8 minutes

Write an essay of no more than 200 words:

- What is Lowry's message about freedom and security? Justify your argument with at least **two** concrete pieces of evidence from the text.

Seminar 4: Whole Class Novel

What Does Success Look Like?

Scholars evaluate the rules and rituals of Jonas's community. They understand how Lowry uses these to develop her message about logic and emotion.

Seminar 4:

***The Giver*: Chapters 4–6 (pages 33–62)**

Do Now — 10 minutes

- Play classical or jazz music to establish a calm work environment.
- Scholars revise their Exit Tickets from yesterday's seminar based on the feedback you gave them.

Launch — 2 minutes

- Review the big ideas from yesterday's reading by having scholars quickly discuss the following question: What is Lowry's message about freedom and security? Then, build excitement for today's reading and discussion.

Read and Discuss 1 — 35 minutes

Read:

- **Play Audiobook (00:38:43–00:50:40):** Chapter 4, pages 33–42

Discuss:

- Scholars discuss the following question in pairs: Why does Jonas experience a "feeling of safety" in the bathing room? (page 39). Call on pairs to share out. Insist that scholars back up their claims with evidence from the text.
- If scholars nailed the previous question, ask: Both in this chapter and in previous chapters, we have heard various characters describe "release." How has your understanding of "release" changed?

Read:

- **Play Audiobook (00:50:43–00:59:22):** Chapter 5, pages 43–50

Discuss:

- Scholars discuss the following question in pairs: What are Stirrings and why does this community suppress them? Call on pairs to share out. Insist that scholars back up their claims with evidence from the text.

Write — 10 minutes**Write an essay of no more than 200 words:**

- What is the community's point of view on emotion? Why might the community hold this point of view? Justify your argument with at least **two** concrete pieces of evidence from the text.

Wrap-up — 5 minutes

- Show an exemplar essay to scholars. Have scholars discuss what makes the claim clear and compelling. Have scholars articulate the transferable takeaway from the work study that they will apply to their own work moving forward.

Read and Discuss 2 — 20 minutes**Independent Reading (10 minutes):**

- Chapter 6, pages 51–62

Discuss:

- Scholars discuss the following question in pairs: What do the Ceremony of Loss and the Murrumbidgee Ceremony reveal about the community's point of view on individuals? Call on pairs to share out. Insist that scholars back up their claims with evidence from the text.
- If scholars nailed the previous question, ask: Lowry writes, "The community was so meticulously ordered, the choices so carefully made" (page 61). What does the community sacrifice to achieve this order? Are the community members aware of this sacrifice?

Exit Ticket — 8 minutes**Write an essay of no more than 200 words:**

- Based on her descriptions of the aging ceremonies and other rituals, what is Lowry's message about the relationship between logic and emotion? Justify your argument with at least **two** concrete pieces of evidence from the text.

Homework

- Read *The Giver*: Chapters 7–8 (pages 63–81).

Seminar 5: Whole Class Novel

What Does Success Look Like?

Scholars analyze how the assignment of Receiver of Memory affects Jonas. They explain how Lowry uses word choice to turn familiar settings into unfamiliar settings.

Seminar 5:

***The Giver*: Chapters 9–11 (pages 82–110)**

Do Now — 10 minutes

- Play classical or jazz music to establish a calm work environment.
- Scholars revise their Exit Tickets from yesterday's seminar based on the feedback you gave them.

Launch — 2 minutes

- Review the big ideas from yesterday's reading by having scholars quickly discuss the following question: Based on her descriptions of the aging ceremonies and other rituals, what is Lowry's message about the relationship between logic and emotion? Then, build excitement for today's reading and discussion.

Read and Discuss 1 — 40 minutes

Read:

- **Play Audiobook (01:38:49–01:50:04):** Chapter 9, pages 82–90

Discuss:

- Scholars discuss the following question in pairs: How will the rules for the Receiver of Memory impact Jonas's ability to conform? Call on pairs to share out. Insist that scholars back up their claims with evidence from the text.
- If scholars nailed the previous question, ask: How does Jonas's assignment drive the plot forward?

Read:

- **Play Audiobook (01:50:05–02:04:44):** Chapter 10, pages 91–100

Discuss:

- Scholars discuss the following question in pairs: Based on Chapter 10, how is the old Receiver of Memory different from the rest of the community members? Call on pairs to share out. Insist that scholars back up their claims with evidence from the text.

Write — 10 minutes

Write an essay of no more than 200 words:

- Why does the community need a Receiver of Memory? Justify your argument with at least **two** concrete pieces of evidence from the text.

Wrap-up — 5 minutes

- Show an exemplar essay to scholars. Have scholars discuss what makes the claim clear and compelling. Have scholars articulate the transferable takeaway from the work study that they will apply to their own work moving forward.

Read and Discuss 2 — 15 minutes

Independent Reading (10 minutes):

- Chapter 11, pages 101–110

Discuss:

- Scholars discuss the following question in pairs: What words and phrases does Lowry use to convey the newness of snow to Jonas? Call on pairs to share out. Insist that scholars back up their claims with evidence from the text.
- If scholars nailed the previous question, ask: How do the memories that Jonas receives in this chapter affect him?

Exit Ticket — 8 minutes

Write an essay of no more than 200 words:

- Based on Chapters 9 to 11, how does Jonas feel about being the next Receiver of Memory? Justify your argument with at least **two** concrete pieces of evidence from the text.

Seminar 6: Whole Class Novel

What Does Success Look Like?

Scholars evaluate the community's decision to have a Receiver of Memory. As Jonas questions the status quo, scholars analyze the sacrifices and gains of living in a world where the burden (and joy) of memory is not shared by all.

Seminar 6:

***The Giver*: Chapters 12–14 (pages 111–143)**

Do Now — 10 minutes

- Play classical or jazz music to establish a calm work environment.
- Scholars revise their Exit Tickets from yesterday's seminar based on the feedback you gave them.

Launch — 2 minutes

- Review the big ideas from yesterday's reading by having scholars quickly discuss the following question: Based on Chapters 9 to 11, how does Jonas feel about being the next Receiver of Memory? Then, build excitement for today's reading and discussion.

Read and Discuss 1 — 40 minutes

Read:

- **Play Audiobook (02:19:02–02:33:30):** Chapter 12, pages 111–121

Discuss:

- Scholars discuss the following question in pairs: What did the community hope to gain when they “did away with differences”? (page 120). Call on pairs to share out. Insist that scholars back up their claims with evidence from the text.
- If scholars nailed the previous question, ask: Why does Jonas think that the choice to go to “Sameness” was a mistake?

Read:

- **Read Aloud (10 minutes):** Chapter 13, pages 122–135

Discuss:

- Scholars discuss the following questions in pairs: Analyze the dialogue between Jonas and the Giver in Chapter 13. How does it compare to their dialogue in Chapter 10? Why might Lowry have made this deliberate shift in the nature of their interactions? Call on pairs to share out. Insist that scholars back up their claims with evidence from the text.

Write — 10 minutes

Write an essay of no more than 200 words:

- How is Jonas’s view of the community beginning to shift? Justify your argument with at least **two** concrete pieces of evidence from the text.

Wrap-up — 5 minutes

- Show an exemplar essay to scholars. Have scholars discuss what makes the claim clear and compelling. Have scholars articulate the transferable takeaway from the work study that they will apply to their own work moving forward.

Read and Discuss 2 — 15 minutes

Independent Reading (10 minutes):

- Chapter 14, pages 136–143

Discuss:

- Scholars discuss the following question in pairs: How does the experience of feeling pain affect Jonas? Call on pairs to share out. Insist that scholars back up their claims with evidence from the text.
- If scholars nailed the previous question, ask: Why did the community decide that only one person should hold all the memories?

Exit Ticket — 8 minutes

Write an essay of no more than 200 words:

- How does their lack of memories keep the community members safe? Justify your argument with at least **two** concrete pieces of evidence from the text.

Homework

- Read *The Giver*: Chapters 14–16 (pages 143–162).

Seminar 7: Whole Class Novel

What Does Success Look Like?

Scholars analyze how the wisdom Jonas gains from the memories causes him to change and mature. They study the moves Lowry makes to convey this shift.

Seminar 7:

The Giver: Chapters 17–20 (pages 163–193)

Do Now — 10 minutes

- Play classical or jazz music to establish a calm work environment.
- Scholars revise their Exit Tickets from yesterday's seminar based on the feedback you gave them.

Launch — 2 minutes

- Review the big ideas from yesterday's reading by having scholars quickly discuss the following question: How does their lack of memories keep the community members safe? Then, build excitement for today's reading and discussion.

Read and Discuss 1 — 35 minutes

Read:

- Read Aloud (10 minutes): Chapter 17, pages 163–173

Discuss:

- Scholars discuss the following questions in pairs: What is the significance of the scene in which Jonas interrupts Asher and Fiona's game of good guys and bad guys? How does this scene develop Jonas's character? Call on pairs to share out. Insist that scholars back up their claims with evidence from the text.
- If scholars nailed the previous question, ask: Does Father's description of the Ceremony of Release match what you had previously envisioned? Why or why not?

Read:

- Play Audiobook (03:40:12–03:51:25): Chapter 18, pages 174–181

Discuss:

- Scholars discuss the following question in pairs: Novels often contain symbols, or objects that represent larger ideas. A recurring symbol in *The Giver* is the river. Based on your understanding of the novel so far, what might the river symbolize?

Call on pairs to share out. Insist that scholars back up their claims with evidence from the text.

Write — 10 minutes

Write an essay of no more than 200 words:

- Consider the following two perspectives: “People are better off being ignorant of pain” and “Wisdom is essential for human progress.” Which statement would Lowry most agree with? Justify your argument with at least **two** concrete pieces of evidence from the text.

Wrap-up — 5 minutes

- Show an exemplar essay to scholars. Have scholars discuss what makes the claim clear and compelling. Have scholars articulate the transferable takeaway from the work study that they will apply to their own work moving forward.

Read and Discuss 2 — 20 minutes

Independent Reading (10 minutes):

- Chapters 19–20, pages 182–193

Discuss:

- Scholars discuss the following question in pairs: Why do you think the Giver thought it was so important for Jonas to watch the release? Call on pairs to share out. Insist that scholars back up their claims with evidence from the text.
- If scholars nailed the previous question, ask: How does the community in *The Giver* manipulate language to control citizens’ emotions? Consider the example of release.

Exit Ticket — 8 minutes

Write an essay of no more than 200 words:

- How has Jonas changed from the beginning of the novel to now? What moves does Lowry make to convey this change? Justify your argument with at least **two** concrete pieces of evidence from the text.

Seminar 8: Whole Class Novel

What Does Success Look Like?

Scholars analyze how Jonas’s freedom and security change as he enters a new setting. As a result, they understand Lowry’s message about freedom and security.

Seminar 8:

The Giver: Chapters 20–23 (pages 194–225)

Do Now — 10 minutes

- Play classical or jazz music to establish a calm work environment.
- Scholars revise their Exit Tickets from yesterday's seminar based on the feedback you gave them.

Launch — 2 minutes

- Review the big ideas from yesterday's reading by having scholars quickly discuss the following questions: How has Jonas changed from the beginning of the novel to now? What moves does Lowry make to convey this change? Then, build excitement for today's reading and discussion.

Read and Discuss 1 — 35 minutes

Read:

- **Play Audiobook (04:07:10–04:19:55):** Chapter 20, pages 194–203

Discuss:

- Scholars discuss the following question in pairs: How will Jonas's escape impact the community? Call on pairs to share out. Insist that scholars back up their claims with evidence from the text.
- If scholars nailed the previous question, ask: Why does the Giver feel that he cannot leave with Jonas?

Read:

- **Read Aloud (10 minutes):** Chapter 21, pages 204–213

Discuss:

- Scholars discuss the following questions in pairs: Why does Jonas suddenly change his plans for escape? What does this reveal about him as a character? Call on pairs to share out. Insist that scholars back up their claims with evidence from the text.

Write — 10 minutes

Write an essay of no more than 200 words:

- Compare Jonas's perspective on the value of the individual to the community's perspective on the value of the individual. Justify your claim with examples of actions taken by Jonas and actions taken by the community.

Wrap-up — 5 minutes

- Show an exemplar essay to scholars. Have scholars discuss what makes the claim clear and compelling. Have scholars articulate the transferable takeaway from the work study that they will apply to their own work moving forward.

Read and Discuss 2 — 20 minutes

Independent Reading (10 minutes):

- Chapters 22–23, pages 214–225

Discuss:

- Scholars discuss the following questions in pairs: What has Jonas lost by leaving the community? What has he gained? Call on pairs to share out. Insist that scholars back up their claims with evidence from the text.
- If scholars nailed the previous question, ask: What might the hill at the end of the novel symbolize?

Exit Ticket — 8 minutes**Write an essay of no more than 200 words:**

- Based on *The Giver*, which would Lowry argue is more important in life: security or freedom? Justify your argument with at least **two** concrete pieces of evidence from the text.

You Did It!

Congratulations! You've reached the end of Literature Unit 1: *The Giver*!

As a result of teaching this unit, you as the teacher have:

- Helped your scholars envision and analyze the dystopian world of *The Giver*.
- Built your scholars' ability to articulate their understanding of texts both orally and in writing.

Your scholars can:

- Envision the setting, characters, and plot in a fiction text.
- Write and revise arguments of 200 words to demonstrate their understanding of texts.

Celebrate your scholars' successes by acknowledging what they can now do as readers as a result of their work during this unit. Invite scholars to share how much fun they had learning about Jonas and his community.

Reflect on your successes and stretches, as well as those of your scholars. Look at your Fountas & Pinnell results. Have your scholars grown as readers over the last month? Between the start of the school year and midyear, your scholars should move from a Level W to a Level X. This is always a tricky jump for scholars and they can easily get stuck, making little to no growth. In order to move to a Level X, scholars must keep track of jumps in time and narration, infer the meaning of symbols, and express changes in ideas and perspectives across texts. Enlist parents to help get scholars over this hump!

Scholars must read at home, as well as in school. Do you have 100% of your scholars reading nightly at home? Make sure at-home reading is happening and meet with families who are falling short to recommit them to this team effort.

Do you have 100% of your scholars reading fluently? Using all of the tools at their disposal to figure out the meaning of what they are reading?

Do you have 100% of your scholars doing their literacy homework? You must insist that 100% of scholars complete their homework nightly.

Going into the next unit, make specific reading goals for yourself. Set a percentage goal for how many scholars you will move. Set a goal for scholars who are not reading at home. Who will you get to consistently read at home? Set a goal for moving any scholars stuck at Level V or below. Why are they stuck? Do they read fluently? Do they understand what they're reading? Do they understand the big idea? How will you partner with parents to support their growth?

If you are having trouble meeting your goals, do not wait until you have NOT succeeded. Consult your colleagues. Consult your leaders. ASK FOR HELP so you can meet your goals!