

The giver book review

Literature, American Literature



I. Setting: In an isolated Arcadian community at an unknown time in the future

II. Characters and Commentary:

A. Jonas - The eleven year old protagonist (turns twelve at a point) who has “bizarre powers” and is chosen as the Receiver of Memory. He has a wide variety of interests. For a pre-adolescent, he is extremely wise, curious, thoughtful, and has a much deeper understanding in life than the others in his community. B. The Giver - Formerly known as the Receiver of Memory until Jonas was chosen (making him The Giver).

Just like Jonas, he is very patient, wise and understanding; He helps in making important decisions in the community. He looks old but actually is not as old as he looks because he deals with a lot of loneliness, frustrations, and painful and traumatizing memories.

C. Gabriel - Gabriel is a loveable and cute child Jonas's family takes care of. Jonas gets very attached to him especially at night when Jonas puts him to sleep with beautiful memories.

D. Jonas's father - Jonas's father is a good-natured, compassionate and loving Nurturer who works with infants. He is an incredibly sweet, affectionate, silly man and father. He enjoys his job and is fond of children. E.

Jonas's mother - Jonas's mother is your everyday lovely working mom. She has a significant role in the Department of Justice. She, like any warm-hearted mother gives guidance and advice to Jonas.

F. Asher - He is the high-spirited, clumsy, playful best friend of Jonas. He is always punished by his teacher for not have proper language acquisition and for frequently being late. Though in the ceremony of twelve's, he is assigned Assistant Director of Recreation. G. Fiona - She is a friend of Jonas who is assigned as a Caretaker in the House of the Old. She is red-haired (which only Jonas can see) and is kind-hearted, gentle and patient. Jonas acquires sexual stirrings for her. H. Lily - Jonas's little sister is very talkative and loud. But she is a very knowledgeable girl. I. The Chief Elder - She is a well-informed elder who is the leader of the community. She is the head of the Council of Elders, a committee that creates laws and controls the community.

III. Plot Summary

In a futuristic utopian society that has abolished pain, frustrations, sorrows, hatred and fear, everyone and everything is equal and the same; A perfect world where every person is assigned a role once they reach twelve years old. When Jonas, the wise and understanding protagonist turns twelve, he is assigned a very special role: The Receiver. He is trained by The Giver and receives different memories and feelings that were kept from their community. As Jonas learns more and gains deeper understanding, he finds out that when his father " releases" babies, he kills them. This makes Jonas very furious thus giving him a burning desire to change things in his community.

To achieve this, he abandons the community with Gabe (a new child who has been staying with them), suffering from hunger and pain, and avoiding search planes to convey feelings and color to his community and bring

himself to the world he has dreamed of knowing. When he reaches a point of physical exhaustion and starvation, he sees lights and hears music from a place ahead of him. IV. Point of View: The book was written in a “ limited omniscient” 3rd person point of view. It was written in third person with the points of view and feelings of Jonas.

V. Themes or Morals:

Do not give up and stand up for what you believe in. Just like Jonas, we should be able to gather up our courage to do whatever we can to achieve something especially if that something has a positive outcome and is for the good of many. Balance liberty and security. What is life when you are too sheltered? Life is about taking chances and being able to be free to do what you want. But there must also be a limit to this. There can be no pleasure without pain and vice versa. Pleasure and pain are considered a package deal. You simply cannot value how wonderful an experience is if you have no idea how suffering feels like. Without enjoying the beauty of life, you also do not feel sorrow and discomfort. Life would be very meaningless and dull without one or the other or even both.

Memories are vital. First of all, if your mistakes are forgotten, they may be repeated. This statement is also related to “ there can be no pleasure without pain and vice versa”. Yes, without memories, we will forget about all our sufferings and anguish but there will also be no true pleasure in life. Acknowledge differences. In The Giver, each individual is assigned by his/her interests especially at the age of twelve. Like in our world, at around twelve years old, we start shaping our own identities. We should celebrate these

differences and not be intimidated by the trends and peer pressure. Be who you are and respect others for being themselves.

VI. Author's style:

The author used different literary techniques to make the story more interesting and mysterious. A. Cliff hanger - In the end, Jonas sees lights and hears music, people singing. It doesn't specify what happened to neither Jonas, Gabe nor the community. It makes the reader wonder if Jonas and Gabe found the destination they've been looking for or maybe they passed away. B. Foreshadowing - When he bathes the old woman in the House of the Old, he feels closeness and love which foreshadows his longing for personal relations. - In the beginning, Jonas was apprehensive about the Ceremony of Twelve this foreshadows his disappointment with his community. C. Symbolism - Fiona's red hair especially the color red represents burning desire and passion. Thus, giving Jonas stirrings for her.

- The river which streams through the community to some other place represents escape from the boundaries of the community.

- Gabriel symbolizes hope, light and regeneration.

VII. Author's purpose (perspective) - The author's purpose is to inform and entertain. She sees that even a utopian society can be imperfect in many ways. Also, she finds memories are very significant VIII. Strengths or Weaknesses of the book: The book's plot is very original, unique and inspirational. The storyline was presented in a beautiful way. Though fictional, it is somewhat relatable and the themes are clear and moving. But,

there are complex thoughts that require maturity to be able to be interpreted well. Though, I do not see this as a weakness.

IX. Insights

a. As a person

As a person, first of all, be balanced. Anything in excess or lacking is not good. Whether pleasure and pain, or liberty and security. Secondly, keep hold of your memories. They aren't just a part of your past; these can also define your future. Also, never give up. Always give your 110% and you will succeed. Lastly, be who you are. As Dr. Seuss said " Today you are you, that is truer than true. There is no one alive who is youer than you" b. As an artist

As artists, we should be able to acknowledge each other's interests and respect each other's works of arts. Also, originality is important. I quote Dr. Seuss: " Why fit in when you were born to stand out?" c. As a member of the community

As a member of a community, you should be able to do everything that you can for the good of the community.

X. Recommendation (why should a person read this book?)

This Newbery Award winning novel seems quite simple yet it has very complicated views with an extremely interesting, one-of-a-kind and mind-blowing plot. This 179-page book will surely enlighten you and will change the way you perceive life.