

Novel·Ties

The Hunger Games

SUZANNE COLLINS



A Study Guide

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For the Teacher

This reproducible study guide consists of instructional material to use in conjunction with the novel *The Hunger Games*. Written in chapter-by-chapter format, the guide contains a synopsis, pre-reading activities, vocabulary and comprehension exercises, as well as extension activities to be used as follow-up to the novel.

NOVEL-TIES are either for whole class instruction using a single title or for group instruction where each group uses a different novel appropriate to its reading level. Depending upon the amount of time allotted to it in the classroom, each novel, with its guide and accompanying lessons, may be completed in two to four weeks.

The first step in using NOVEL-TIES is to distribute to each student a copy of the novel and a folder containing all of the duplicated worksheets. Begin instruction by selecting several pre-reading activities in order to set the stage for the reading ahead. Vocabulary exercises for each chapter always precede the reading so that new words will be reinforced in the context of the book. Use the questions on the chapter worksheets for class discussion or as written exercises.

The benefits of using NOVEL-TIES are numerous. Students read good literature in the original, rather than in abridged or edited form. The good reading habits formed by practice in focusing on interpretive comprehension and literary techniques will be transferred to the books students read independently. Passive readers become active, avid readers.

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES AND QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Preview the book by reading the title and the author's name and by looking at the illustration on the cover of the book. What do you think this story is going to be about? Where and when might the action take place? Have you read any other books by the same author?
2. Read the Background Information about futuristic novels on page two of this study guide. Do some additional research to learn about the genre that explores the potential problems of the world in coming centuries. As you read this book, notice how fears about famine, the ecology, and the fate of humankind shape the society as a whole, as well as the lives of the individual characters.
3. Go online and Google the Latin word *panem*. What is the meaning of this word? As you read, consider the concept of *panem* and how it relates to the plot of *The Hunger Games*?
4. **Social Studies Connection:** Read the Background Information on Gladiators in Ancient Rome on page two of this study guide and do some additional research. As you read this novel, notice how young people are compelled to fight one another for survival in an arena, like the gladiators of ancient Rome. What do you think it would be like to be forced to engage in combat for the entertainment of an audience, when you yourself do not want to fight? How might you react to such a situation?
5. **Cooperative Learning Activity:** In this novel, a television audience watches the drama unfold between characters who are not actors, but simply ordinary people placed in the spotlight. This may be compared to reality shows on TV today. With a small group of your classmates, discuss possible reasons for the popularity of reality television among today's viewers. Make a list of the pros and cons of the trend toward reality television shows.
6. **Oral Language Activity:** The plot of this novel was influenced by classical mythology, particularly by one well-known story—the Greek myth Theseus and the Minotaur. Read several versions of this myth. Then prepare an oral presentation of the myth and present it to the whole class.
7. When the main characters, Katniss and Peeta, are faced with betrayal, they experience a great shock. Have you ever been betrayed or tricked by someone? Write a description of the circumstances and tell how you reacted.
8. **Pair/Share:** This novel explores a clash or conflict between individuals and the larger society. Make a list of conflicts that could arise between a person and society as you know it. Exchange lists with a partner. Discuss how each of these conflicts might be settled. Are there some conflicts that simply cannot be solved?

Chapters 1 – 4 (cont.)

5. What circumstance had made it more likely that either Gale or Katniss would be randomly selected on Reaping Day?
6. What was the social structure of the community in which Katniss had grown up?
7. How did the Hunger Games inspire competition among the twelve districts?
8. Why did Katniss immediately volunteer to take Prim's place as a tribute?
9. Why did Katniss refuse to cry or show any sign of weakness as she said goodbye to her mother and sister?
10. Why did Gale think that Katniss had a good chance of winning?
11. Why did Katniss see kindness as an enemy? How did this view color her reaction to Peeta?

Questions for Discussion:

1. Do you think it was fair for Katniss to blame her mother for her emotional state following her husband's death?
2. Why do you think people from some of the other districts considered it an honor to be selected for the Hunger Games?
3. What factors do you think might have been responsible for Haymitch's alcoholism?
4. How do you think the story of the mockingjay reflects on the actual history of the United States? Under what circumstances have people used song to express and lessen their sufferings?
5. What elements in today's society could result in a political and social structure such as that described in Panem?
6. Do you think Peeta will be an ally or a stiff competitor for Katniss?
7. How do you think Katniss felt about the country of Panem? District 12? about her family life?

Literary Devices:

- I. *Point of View*—Point of view in literature refers to the person telling the story. The story may be told by the author (third-person narrative) or by a character in the story (first-person narrative). From whose point of view is this story told?

Why do you think the author chose this point of view?
