

The Giver Notes Chapters. 1-12

Utopia: and ideal society towards which we should all strive. The end goal is to improve or change what is wrong in our society to make the perfect place.

Dystopia: a society that is supposed to be a utopia but has secret problems, often caused by rules enforced to keep people “happy” and “safe.”

Dystopian fiction Authors often choose to present dystopias in their works to highlight what is wrong or could go wrong with our current society.

They present worlds that *seem* perfect but have many issues, often with individual freedoms being taken away in order to create a *safe* world

9 CHARACTERISTICS OF A DYSTOPIAN SOCIETY

- ✓ Propaganda is used to control the citizens of society.
- ✓ Information, independent thought, and freedom are restricted.
- ✓ A figurehead or concept is worshipped by the citizens of the society.
- ✓ Citizens are perceived to be under constant surveillance.
- ✓ Citizens have a fear of the outside world.
- ✓ Citizens live in a dehumanized state.
- ✓ The natural world is banished and distrusted.
- ✓ Citizens conform to uniform expectations. Individuality and dissent are bad.
- ✓ The society is an illusion of a perfect utopian world.

Characterization

Like people, characters have personalities and we can tell what they are like based on:

- how they act in different situations
- how they relate to others
- how they deal with problems/conflicts
- how they change
- how they present themselves

Protagonist: Jonas

- A **symbol** is often an ordinary object, event, person, or animal to which we have attached extraordinary meaning and significance.

Symbol	Purpose	Examples
1. Color Red	Shows Jonas as separate from community because he can see the color Shows strong emotions – love, hate	Apple toss with Asher – shows Jonas' ability to see as a separation between friends. Fiona's hair – symbolizes Jonas' desire to feel emotions The Giver's books – shows wisdom denied to the community Lights on the house in Elsewhere – shows ideas of freedom/escape.
2. Gabriel	Represents Jonas accessing emotions (particularly love) denied by community rules. Represents purity because he is untainted by the community's rules.	Gabriel can't sleep or adapt to life in the Nurturing center so he is brought into Jonas' home; everyone has to sign something saying that they won't become attached (typifying the community's rules and morality). Jonas is unable to resist caring for Gabriel despite the societal expectations Becomes Jonas' Receiver during his stay at the house and the escape Becomes the reason that Jonas escapes ahead of the Giver's time frame.
3. Sled	Moving downhill on the sled symbolizes the transfer of memories from the Giver to Jonas. Symbolizes rescue when Jonas needs to mentally and physically escape the community's reality.	First memory given to Jonas by the Giver. Shows Jonas what cold is so that he can use those memories to protect Gabriel and himself from the heat-seeking airplanes during their escape – he makes them both cold. Jonas finds the sled at the end when he and Gabriel are about to give up. They use the sled to go toward the lights of the house in Elsewhere.
4. Light Eyes	Symbolizes the ability to see deeply, which allows Jonas to be the Receiver (he has depth of vision). Symbolizes separation from the community.	Lily points out that Jonas and Gabriel both have 'funny' eyes which angers Jonas because he wants to be part of the community in the beginning of the book. Light eyes allow colors to refract more easily allowing Jonas to see colors more clearly. Symbolizes separation from the crowd
5. River	Symbolizes the boundary between the community and Elsewhere which stops people from leaving. Symbolizes change – river continues to move away, not static Symbolizes death.	Caleb's death by drowning in the river introduces the negativity of death, which can be compared to the attitudes of the community to release. Jonas crosses the river to escape to Elsewhere.