



**Georgetown Township Public Library
Book Discussion Guide**
The Hunger Games
Suzanne Collins (2008)

About This Book

Katniss is a 16-year-old girl living with her mother and younger sister in the poorest district of Panem, the remains of what used to be the United States.

Long ago the districts waged war on the Capitol and were defeated. As part of the surrender terms, each district agreed to send one boy and one girl to appear in an annual televised event called, "The Hunger Games."

The terrain, rules, and level of audience participation may change but one thing is constant: kill or be killed. When Kat's sister is chosen by lottery, Kat steps up to go in her place. (*From the publisher.*)

From: <http://www.litlovers.com>

About the Author

Suzanne Collins is the author of the *New York Times* bestselling *Underland Chronicles* series, which has more than one million books in print and is available in seven foreign editions. In the award-winning ***The Hunger Games***, for which rights have been sold for 35 foreign language editions to date, Collins continues to explore the effects of war and violence on those coming of age. Also a successful writer for children's television, Collins lives with her family in Connecticut.

From: <http://www.readinggroupguides.com>

Discussion Questions

1. How does Katniss feel about the country of Panem? Why does she need to make her face "an indifferent mask" and be careful what she says in public?
2. Describe the relationships of Katniss with Gale, with Prim, with her mother. How do those relationships define her personality? Why does she say about Peeta, "I feel like I owe him something, and I hate owing people." How does her early encounter with Peeta affect their relationship after they are chosen as tributes?
3. How does the fact that the tributes are always on camera affect their behavior from the time they are chosen? Does it make it easier or harder for them to accept their fate? How are the "career tributes" different from the others?
4. Why are the "tributes" given stylists and dressed so elaborately for the opening ceremony? Does this ceremony remind you of events in our world, either past or present? Compare those ceremonies in real life to the one in the story.
5. When Peeta declares his love for Katniss in the interview, does he really mean it or did Haymitch create the "star-crossed lovers" story? What does Haymitch mean when he says, "It's all a big show. It's all how you're perceived." Why do they need to impress sponsors and what are those sponsors looking for when they are watching the Games?
6. Before the Games start, Peeta tells Katniss, "...I want to die as myself ... I don't want them to change me in there. Turn me into some kind of monster that I'm not." What does this tell you about Peeta? What does he fear more than death? Is he able to stay true to himself during the Games?
7. Why does Katniss ignore Haymitch's advice to head directly away from the Cornucopia? Did she do the right thing to fight for equipment? What are the most important skills she has for staying alive — her knowledge of nature? — her skill with bow and arrow? — her trapping ability? What qualities of her personality keep her going - her capacity for love? — her intelligence? — her self-control?
8. Why does Peeta join with the Career Tributes in the beginning of the Games? What does he hope to gain? Why do they accept him when they start hunting as a group? Why do groups form in the beginning when they know only one of them will be able to survive?
9. What makes Katniss and Rue trust each other to become partners? What does Katniss gain from this friendship besides companionship? Is Katniss and Rue's partnership formed for different reasons than the other groups'?

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value of the Games. How does it affect the tributes to know they are being manipulated to make the Games more exciting for the gamblers and viewers? Does knowing that she is on live TV make Katniss behave differently than she would otherwise?

11. When does Katniss first realize that Peeta does care for her and is trying to keep her alive? When does she realize her own feelings for him? Did Haymitch think all along that he could keep them both alive by stressing the love story? Are they actually in love?

12. What do you think is the cruelest part of the Hunger Games? What kind of people would devise this spectacle for the entertainment of their populace? Can you see parallels between these Games and the society that condones them, and other related events and cultures in the history of the world?

13. In 1848, Karl Marx wrote in *The Communist Manifesto*, "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles." Discuss this statement as it applies to the society and government of Panem. Do you believe there is any chance to eradicate class struggles in the future?

14. Reality TV has been a part of the entertainment world since the early days of television (with shows such as Candid Camera and the Miss America Pageant), but in the 21st century there has been a tremendous growth of competitive shows and survival shows. Discuss this phenomenon with respect to *The Hunger Games*. What other aspects of our popular culture do you see reflected in this story? (Questions from Scholastic's [Teacher Book Wizard](#))

From: <http://www.litlovers.com>

Resources for additional information about book discussion choices and authors:

Books & Authors (Access through links to MeL Databases on Library's webpage.)
<http://bna.galegroup.com/bna/>

LitLovers.com
www.litlovers.com

Overbooked.com
<http://www.overbooked.com>

Penguin.com (USA)
<http://www.us.penguin.com/static/pages/bookclubs/index.html>

Reading Group Center
<http://reading-group-center.knopfdoubleday.com>

Reading Group Guides
<http://www.readinggroupguides.com>

Suggested print resources:

The Book Club Companion: A Comprehensive Guide to the Reading Group Experience
Diana Loevy
374.22 Loevy 2006

The Book Group Book: A Thoughtful Guide to Forming and Enjoying a Stimulating Book Discussion Group
Ellen Slezak (editor)
374.22 Book 2000

Good Books Lately: The One-Stop Resource for Book Groups and Other Greedy Readers
Ellen Moore and Kira Stevens
374.22 Moore 2004

Read It and Eat: A Month-by-Month Guide to Scintillating Book Club Selections and Mouthwatering Menus
Sarah Gardner
028.9 Gardner 2005

The Reading Group Handbook: Everything You Need to Know, From Choosing Members to Leading Discussions
Rachel W. Jacobsohn
374.22 Jacobsohn 1994

What Do I Read Next? (Multi-volume set, annual editions)
Gale Research Inc.
R 016.813 What