

APPENDIX 1

The Giver's Synopsis

Jonas, twelve old boy who lives in a rigidly controlled society. In his “community”, there is no suffering, hunger, war, color, sex, music, or love. Everything is controlled by “the Comittee”, right down to who you will marry, who you receive as children, and what you will be “assigned” as a job, and everyone is essentially just like everyone else. It seems that no one has really left the area, except to visit other neighboring communities. To get “released” is a big deal. It only happens to sick infants or really old people, or to people who break the rules.

For Jonas, it is s almost time for him to get assigned a profession. There is a big ceremony which the decisions are announced. Jonas watches all his friends get their jobs (Recreation Director, Caretaker for the Old), but then he is skipped over. The Comittee explains that Jonas has been selected to be The Receiver of the Memory, which is a big deal.

Jonas’s family has been taking care of a sick baby named Gabriel with this same unusual characteristic. If the baby does not get better within a year or two, he is going to be released from the community.

Then Jonas starts his training, which consists of receiving a series of memories from the old Receiver, who is now referred to as The Giver. These are not just any old personal memories; rather, the old man is passing on to Jonas all the memories of humanity, going way back. The memories are from before their community was established, back when there was color and sex and love and music and emotions and hills and snow and sunshine, all of which are notably absent from Jonas's world. The very first memory he receives is that of sledding down a hill in the snow. While Jonas gets to experience lots of fun things like Christmas and birthday parties, he also has to deal with the bad memories, like sunburn, loss, death, and warfare.

Needless to say, this completely changes the way Jonas looks at his world. He realizes that no one around him has ever felt any real emotions at all. A year into his training, Jonas discovers that the process of “release” which is performed on people who break the rules, babies who are sick, and folks who are very old, is

really nothing more than a lethal injection. This does not go over too well. He and The Giver devise a plan: Jonas will fake his own death and run away to Elsewhere, the land outside the communities, which is, for all intents and purposes, very similar to *our* world (in other words, it has music and color and joy, but also violence and poverty). Once Jonas leaves, the memories which The Giver has passed to him will be released to the general community, at which point they will all just have to deal with the pain, and also they will be free, because they will understand what it means to have choices.

While he is getting ready for the big escape night, Jonas finds out that the little baby with light eyes, Gabriel, is going to be “released” the next morning. He has to make an improvised, fast-paced, and thrilling bicycle escape, taking the baby with him. Jonas is still biking away from the community with Gabriel. They are basically starving to death. Jonas keeps trying to transmit memories to memories of sunshine and, you know, not starvation, in order to keep them going. Finally, it starts snowing and Jonas gets to the base of a familiar-looking hill. He ditches the bike and walks up with Gabriel, still trying to cling on to pleasant memories. When he gets to the top, the sled (from the first memory he received from the Giver) is waiting for him. He climbs into it and pushes off down the hill, fully convinced that at the bottom is Elsewhere.

APPENDIX 2

Lois Lowry's Biography

Author Lois Lowry was born on March 20, 1937, in Honolulu, Hawaii. She published her first novel, *A Summer to Die*, in 1977. After this serious drama, Lowry showed her lighter side with 1979's *Anastasia Krupnik*, which became the first in a series of humorous books. Lois Lowry is one of America's most popular and versatile children's book authors. She has written in a variety of fictional forms, from the WWII tale *Number the Stars* to the lighthearted adventures of *Anastasia Krupnik* to the fantastical *The Giver*. She won her first Newbery Award for the 1989 novel *Number the Stars*. In 1993, Lowry received the honor a second time for *The Giver*, which would eventually become a 2014 film. More recent works include *Son* (2012) and *Gooney Bird and All Her Charms* (2013).

Lowry's career reached new heights with the 1989 historical novel *Number the Stars*. The book explores the Nazi takeover of Denmark during World War II. Four years later, Lowry published one of her best known novels, *The Giver*. The story takes the reader to a future community where there's no war and poverty but everyone's lives are tightly controlled. A young teen named Jonas becomes an apprentice to the title character, the only person with access to memories of the past. *The Giver* was seen as controversial by some for its violent themes, sexual content and depiction of infanticide and euthanasia. Others, however, heaped praise on this remarkable work, and Lowry won the 1994 Newbery for the novel. Over the years, Lowry added to this examination of a dystopian future with *Gathering Blue* (2000), *The Messenger* (2004) and *Son* (2012).

Although her novels cover a variety of topics and range in tone from serious to humorous, they share many of the same themes: individuality, freedom, and the importance of memory. Through her writing, Lowry communicates the message that people must be aware that everything they do affects other people, the environment, and the world.

APPENDIX 3

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