

Creative Title: “Not the Same Old Dystopia” by Mrs. Blattner

Genre: Science Fiction/Fantasy

Paragraph 1: Introduction

The Giver by Lois Lowry, is a fantasy/science fiction novel. This landmark dystopian fiction is the winner of the 1994 Newberry Medal. In 1993, when the book first came on the scene, it was controversial. *The Giver* was frequently challenged, mostly for being considered “unsuited to age group,” followed by complaints of “violence”. *The Giver* paved the way for other dystopian books to follow, like, *The Uglies* (series) (2005) by Scott Westerfeld, *The Hunger Games* (series) (2010) by Suzanne Collins, *Divergent* (series) (2011) by Veronica Roth, and *The Maze Runner* (series) (2009) by James Dashner, to name a few.

Paragraph 2: Brief Summary

Jonas’s world is perfect. There is no sickness, pain, or hunger. Everyone is the same. No one person is better than the other. Clothing, meals, and rites of passage are scheduled, precise. The biggest change happens at the Ceremony of Twelve, when Jonas is chosen as the new Receiver of Memory, marking the beginning of his life’s pursuit. As Jonas begins training with The Giver, the keeper of truest memories, he discovers both pain and pleasure. After Jonas dives deeper into his training, he begins to unravel the flaws of his world and to contemplate the dangers of enforcing and preserving perfection. How will Jonas, alone, hold the truth?

Paragraph 3: Opinion

The opening of the novel moves a bit slowly, as Lowry lays the groundwork for the rules and structure of the Community in exact layers. Hang in there until Jonas attends the Ceremony of Twelve. Jonas has eight rules he must follow, and a few of them are quite surprising to him, including, “From this moment you are exempted from rules governing rudeness...;” “...You are prohibited from dream telling;” and “You may lie”. The rules create intrigue and launch us on a quest to uncover the truth of Jonas’s world. Not only this, but the reader will also feel connected to Jonas, a multi-dimensional character with a strong moral compass and compassion. Like Jonas, the reader will feel conflicted as each thread of the Community’s perfect tapestry is unraveled. Unlike current and popular dystopian novels, *The Giver* is a subtle treatment of what must be sacrificed to create a panacea, which could be viewed by some readers as lacking in intensity or action. Don’t let the understated hues of Jonas’s world trick you. Serious themes are presented with a fresh and sometimes grim perspective, like aging, death, sickness, and war. Overall, *The Giver* offers a complex society that reveals the underbelly of perfection and sameness, which ultimately leaves the reader thinking and inquisitive. To quench your curiosity about what happens to Jonas, seek out the companion novels in the quartet, including *Gathering Blue*, *Messenger*, and the most recent, *Son*.

Paragraph 4: SHORT Recommendation

Readers who enjoy dystopian literature and books that make you think will appreciate the complexity of Jonas’s world and his struggle to preserve humanity while being true to himself.

4.5 Stars