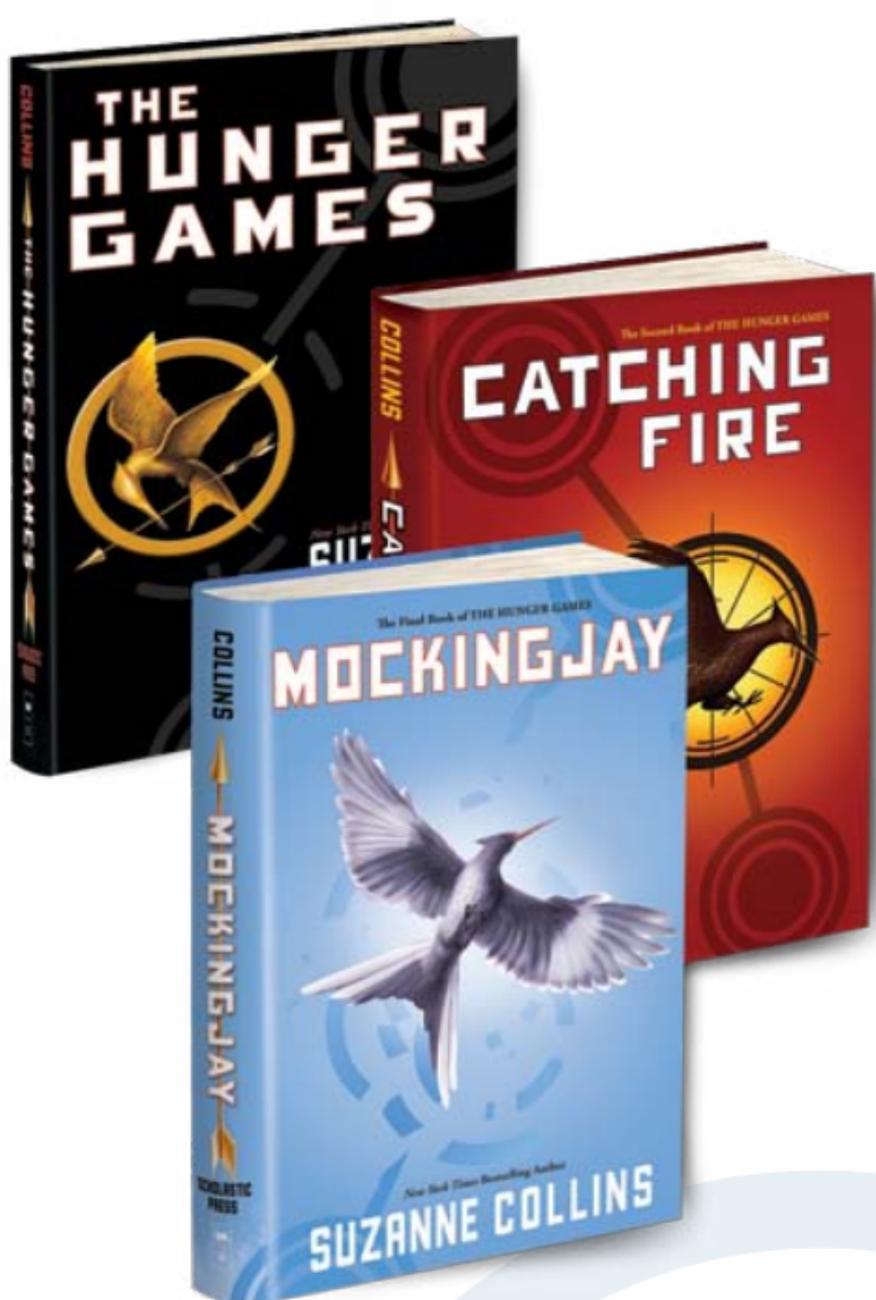


THE HUNGER GAMES TRILOGY



SUZANNE COLLINS

ABOUT THE BOOKS

In a future with unsettling parallels to our present, the nation of Panem consists of an all-powerful Capitol, surrounded by 12 oppressed Districts that provide all its needs. Just as the Romans gave their population “panem et circenses”—bread and circuses—to control them by keeping them entertained, so has the Capitol devised the Hunger Games, a survival contest on live TV in which teenagers fight to the death.

CRITICAL ACCLAIM FOR THE HUNGER GAMES

“I was so obsessed with this book.”

—Stephenie Meyer, author of the *Twilight Saga*

“I couldn’t stop reading... addictive.”—Stephen King,
Entertainment Weekly

“Brilliantly plotted and perfectly paced.”
—*The New York Times*

THE HUNGER GAMES

The Hunger Games begins with 16-year-old Katniss and her friend Gale hunting in the woods around their impoverished District 12. When her younger sister Prim is chosen to be a “tribute” in the annual “reaping,” Katniss volunteers to go to the Games in her place, along with Peeta, the baker’s son. Once in the Games, Katniss must marshal all her skills to stay alive. In the end she outwits the Capitol by attempting a double suicide, which forces Capitol leaders to allow both her and Peeta to live.

CATCHING FIRE

In *Catching Fire*, Katniss has become a symbol of defiance. It’s now the Quarter Quell, the 75th anniversary Games. Every 25 years the Capitol devises a new twist, and this year the tributes will be chosen from the victors of previous Games. Katniss is thrown into the arena once more with Peeta, but again she manages to thwart the Capitol’s plans and escapes—but Peeta is taken prisoner.

MOCKINGJAY

In *Mockingjay*, Katniss becomes the face of a full-scale rebellion in TV “propos” (propaganda movies) filmed by the rebels. Determined to be the one to kill President Snow, Katniss once again finds herself in an arena—only this one represents a life or death struggle for the entire society. Katniss faces critical choices: Whom should she trust? What should her role be? Do ends justify means? What is right and wrong? What truths must she follow?

DISCUSSION POINTS

THE HUNGER GAMES

1. Why are the “tributes” given stylists and dressed so elaborately for the opening ceremony? Does this remind you of ceremonies in our world?
2. When Peeta declares his love for Katniss, does he really mean it, or did Haymitch create the “star-crossed lovers” story for the show?
3. 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? Is he able to stay true to himself during the Games?
4. What skills help Katniss stay alive? Her knowledge of nature? Her trapping ability? What personality traits keep her going? Her intelligence? Her self-control?
5. Why do Katniss and Rue become partners? What does Katniss gain from this friendship? How does this partnership differ from the other groups?
6. In what ways do the Gamemakers control the “entertainment” value of the Games? How does it affect the tributes to know they are being manipulated to make the Games more exciting for sponsors and viewers?
7. When does Katniss first realize that Peeta really does care for her? When does she realize her own feelings for him? Did Haymitch plan all along to keep them alive by stressing the love story? Are they actually in love?
8. Discuss other cultures in history that have staged fights-to-the-death as entertainment. How are they similar to aspects of our popular culture today that are reflected in the story?

CATCHING FIRE

1. How does Katniss's participation in the Games change her relationship with Gale?
2. How does the Victory Tour affect Katniss and Peeta, their relationship to each other, and their feelings about their future?
3. Why does the Capitol devise a special reaping for every 25th Game? Do you believe the requirements for this Quarter Quell were decided in the past or were they designed for this Game to force Katniss and Peeta back to the arena?
4. How did the mockingjay species develop? What is the significance of the mockingjay image?
5. What makes Katniss say, "No wonder I won the Games. No decent person ever does"? Is she being too hard on herself? If so, why? Can a decent person win the Games?
6. Why is Katniss determined to keep Peeta alive, even at the expense of her own life? Why does Finnick save Peeta's life? When does Katniss realize that her first impression of Finnick was wrong?
7. What is more harmful to the players in the Game: the physical traumas like the fog and rain of fire, or the emotional trauma of hearing the jabberjays?
8. What does Haymitch mean when he tells Katniss, "You just remember who the enemy is—that's all"? Who *is* the enemy?
9. Why were Katniss and Peeta not aware of the plans for the rebellion? Why were they kept in the dark when other tributes knew about it?
10. What is the meaning of the title "Catching Fire"?

MOCKINGJAY

1. What influences Katniss's decision to become the Mockingjay?
2. What is needed for Katniss to create a truly effective "propo"?
3. Discuss the role of television "propaganda" in today's society and the techniques that are used to influence our thinking.
4. Discuss the changing relationship between Katniss and Gale. What does Gale say is the "only way I get your attention"? Does he truly love her?
5. Discuss the "hijacking" of Peeta's brain. Discuss Katniss's comment, "It's only now that he's been corrupted that I can fully appreciate the real Peeta."
6. What are Coin's motives in ordering Peeta to join Katniss's squad?
7. Do you believe it was the rebels who killed the children with the exploding parachutes? If so, how does that make you feel about whether this was justified as a means of winning the war?
8. Why does Katniss vote for another Hunger Games? To save the lives of more people? Or does she secretly anticipate sabotaging the plan?
9. Why does Katniss assassinate Coin? To avenge Prim, or because she believes it is for the greater good of the country? Or both?
10. Gale tells Peeta that Katniss will pick whichever one of them she can't survive without. In the end, why is that one Peeta and not Gale?

COMPARISONS

You can have interesting discussions comparing the themes in *The Hunger Games* to those in the following books.

Fallen Angels, by Walter Dean Myers (Scholastic Press/Scholastic, 1988). About teenage soldiers in Vietnam.

Sunrise Over Fallujah, by Walter Dean Myers (Scholastic Press/Scholastic, 2008). Young soldiers in Iraq face many dilemmas.

Feed, by M. T. Anderson (Candlewick, 2004). A “feed” is embedded in the brain of every citizen.

GemX, by Nicky Singer (Holiday House, 2008). A future society is divided into the “Enhanced” and the “Natural Born.”

Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows, by J.K. Rowling (Arthur A. Levine Books/Scholastic, 2007). Harry confronts the forces of good and evil.

King of the Middle March, by Kevin Crossley-Holland (Arthur A. Levine Books/Scholastic, 2004). A young man in the Crusades faces moral choices.

Private Peaceful, by Michael Morpurgo (Scholastic Press/Scholastic, 2003). Two brothers face harsh army discipline in World War I.

The Uglies, by Scott Westerfeld (Simon Pulse, 2005). In a future society, there is a compulsory operation at the age of 16 to create a uniform standard of “beauty.”

Unwind, by Neal Shusterman (Simon & Schuster, 2007). In a future world, teens selected for “unwinding” have their body parts harvested.

Beyond the Myth: The Story of Joan of Arc, by Polly Schoyer Brooks (Sandpiper, 1999). A young girl becomes the symbol of a rebellion.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Photo credit: Todd Plitt



Author **Suzanne Collins** remembers in third grade reading the story of Theseus, in which King Minos of Crete demanded that Athens periodically send seven boys and seven girls to be thrown in the Labyrinth and sacrificed

to the Minotaur. “Even as a third grader,” she says, “I could appreciate the ruthlessness of this message. Mess with us and we’ll do something worse than kill you. We’ll kill your children.” Suzanne was also fascinated by gladiator movies. The idea for *The Hunger Games* came to Suzanne when she was channel surfing between reality TV shows and actual war coverage.

Suzanne Collins has had a prolific career writing for children’s television. She first made her mark in children’s literature with the *New York Times* bestselling series *The Underland Chronicles*. In *The Hunger Games*, Collins continues to explore the effects of war and violence on those coming of age. In a starred review, *Publishers Weekly* described the final book in the trilogy, *Mockingjay*, as “a beautifully orchestrated and intelligent novel that succeeds on every level.” Collins lives with her family in Connecticut.

THE HUNGER GAMES

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CATCHING FIRE

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MOCKINGJAY

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A more detailed discussion guide is available at
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