

Study Guide

Minnesota
OPERA

The Giver Opera Box
Study Guide

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome Letter.....	3
Lesson Plans with Related Academic Standards.....	4
Lesson Plans.....	5-24
1 - Growing Up Is Hard to Do...5	
2 - Prioritizing Values...7	
3 - Utopia vs. Dystopia, part 1...9	
4 - In Their Shoes...13	
5 - Utopia vs. Dystopia, part 2...16	
6 - Soundtrack...19	
7 - The Music of Susan Kander...21	
8 - Opera: Become a Songwriter...22	
9 - Opera: From Page to Stage...24	
Study Guide Evaluation	25
Acknowledgment	26



October, 2011

Dear Educator,

The Giver by Lois Lowry is a treasured book by young readers around the world. It tells the story of young Jonas coming of age in a dystopian society that has limited people's ability to see color, hear music or feel emotion, all in an effort to shield them from pain. It's a powerful story that does what great literature should do by engaging the reader to see the world around them differently. But why turn this book in an opera?

Opera is the original multi-media art form. Its combination of music, theater, and storytelling make it a perfect fit for the multi-media age we live in. Even more powerful is that this opera is uniquely composed by and for young people. With this piece students can experience firsthand the power and beauty of opera and student audiences can see the story told through a different medium. It's the combination of opera's interdisciplinary nature with the richness of Lowry's novel that should excite educators to include this work in the classroom.

Developing new audiences through the creation of new work is a long held belief at Minnesota Opera. We believe that to engage new audiences and opera must be created by contemporary artists writing about contemporary stories. Based on the success of Ricky Ian Gordon's *The Grapes of Wrath*, the Minnesota Opera began the New Works Initiative, a fundraising campaign designed to commission new operas and mount productions of significant contemporary works. And it is what *The Giver* that the Minnesota Opera begins to expand its goal to reach young audiences.

This Study Guide is a starting point of ideas and methods to teach both the story and the opera. Use it and modify it to fit your school. And enjoy the richness that opera – by and for kids – can bring to your classroom.

Sincerely,

Jamie Andrews
Community Education Director
612-342-9573
andrews@mnopera.org

The Giver Opera Box
Lesson Plans with Related Academic Standards

The lessons in this *Study Guide* are aligned with the current Minnesota Academic Standards, Language Arts K-12, Arts K-12, and the National Standards for Music Education. It is not the intention of these lessons to fully satisfy the standards. This list only suggests how the standards and lesson objectives may be applied.

Lesson Title	Minnesota Academic Standards: Language Arts K-12	Minnesota Academic Standards: Arts K-12	National Standards for Music Education
1- Growing Up Is Hard to Do	RL.6-8.1 RL.6-8.3 W.6-8.4 SL.6-8.1		8,9
2- Prioritizing Values	W.6-8.4 SL. 6-8.1		8,9
3-Utopia vs. Dystopia, part 1	RL.6-8.1 RL.6-8.2 SL.6-8.1 L.6-8.6		8,9
4-In Their Shoes	RL.6-8.1 RL.6-8.3 W.6-8.3 W.6-8.4 SL.6-8.1		8,9
5-Utopia vs. Dystopia, part 2	RL.6-8.2 W.6-8.1 W.6-8.4 SL.6-8.1 SL.6-8.3 SL.6-8.6		8,9
6-Soundtrack	RL.6-8.4 W.6-8.3 W.6-8.4		6,7,8,9
7-The Music of Susan Kander	SL.6-8.1 SL.6-8.2 SL.6-8.7 W.6-8.4 W.6-8.9	Music 9.1.1.3.1 Music 9.1.1.3.2 Theater 9.1.1.4.2 Music 9.4.1.3.1 Music 9.4.1.3.2 Theater 9.4.1.4.1 Theater 9.4.1.4.2	6,7,8,9
8-Opera: Become a Songwriter	RL.6-8.1 RL.6-8.6 W.6-8.3 W.6-8.4 SL.6-8.1	Music 9.1.3.3.1 Music 9.1.3.3.2 Theater 9.1.3.4.1 Theater 9.1.3.4.2 Music 9.4.1.3.1 Music 9.4.1.3.2 Theater 9.4.1.4.1 Theater 9.4.1.4.2	6,7,8,9
9-Opera: From Page to Stage	RL.6-8.5 RL.6-8.7 W.6-8.4 SL.6-8.1	Music 9.1.3.3.1 Music 9.1.3.3.2 Theater 9.1.3.4.1 Theater 9.1.3.4.2 Music 9.4.1.3.1 Music 9.4.1.3.2	8,9

The Giver Opera Box
Lesson Plan

Lesson 1 (RL.6-8.1, RL.6-8.3, W.6-8.4, SL.6-8.1)

Pre-Reading: Growing Up Is Hard to Do

45 minutes

Objectives

Students will identify examples of the “growing up is hard to do” theme in literature.

Students will make text-to-self connections.

Materials

Search online for copies of the poem by Billy Collins, “On Turning Ten”

Search online for copies of the short story by Sandra Cisneros, “Eleven”

Writing paper

Procedures

1. Read the Collins poem and Cisneros short story revolving around a “growing up” or “coming of age” theme and discuss what our modern-day rituals are. What evidence do we use to show a child has become an adult?
2. The protagonists in these two pieces seem to feel melancholy about becoming older and losing their childhood. As a class, brainstorm a list of pros and cons to becoming older.
3. Finish up with students writing journals exploring their feelings about growing up. What are they looking forward to? What are they dreading? When will they feel they have grown up enough?

Extension Activity:

1. Display list of Life Stages (on following page) in the novel without explaining them.
2. Discuss the following: What do students think of the list? Are there any similarities or differences to our own ways of marking the journey from child to adult? How would students describe a community that created these milestones?

Assessment

Have students who are comfortable share their journal responses with the rest of the class. You should hear some of the whole-class discussion ideas reflected in the response.

Life Stages

Time Period	How the Community Marks the Passage of Time
Newborns	nurtured for a year, given comfort objects
Ones	50 each year, named and given to family units
Fours, Fives, Sixes	jackets buttoned down the back to learn interdependence
Seven	front-buttoned jacket with pockets as sign of independence
Eight	start community volunteer hours, comfort object taken away
Nine	girls remove hair ribbons, all get bicycles as symbol of moving out into the community and away from family unit
Twelve	last year of growing up ceremony, assigned to jobs, don't keep track of age anymore
Childless Adults	while still productive they move to a separate place in community
Old Age	live in House of the Old and be cared for until released

The Giver Opera Box
Lesson Plan

Lesson 2 (W.6-8.4, SL.6-8.1)

Pre-Reading: Prioritizing Values
30 minutes

Objectives

Students will assess which values are most important to them.
Students will make text-to-self connections by recognizing that trade-offs have to be made in life.

Materials

Values cards: Use the definitions that follow to create enough cards for every student in your class to have 4-5 of them. You could just print off the definitions and paste them on note cards.
Writing paper

Procedures

1. Discuss with the class how we make trade-offs every day and have to prioritize what we value. If we spend a lot of time pursuing one value or talent, we have less time to pursue or develop others.
2. Show students the full list of values and definitions for the activity. Clarify any meanings. Pass out 4-5 values cards to each student.
3. Direct students to move about the classroom trading their cards with others to gather those values they most want. Limit this to 10 minutes.
4. Once back in their seats, have students respond to these questions in writing:
 What is one trade that you never would have made if it had been real life? Why?
 What is one trade that you actually would have made? Why?
5. As a class, discuss the various sources (family, friends, media, teachers, etc.) that influence what we decide to value and how we prioritize those ideals.
6. Collect the cards and the written responses.

Extension Activity:

1. *Display the full list of values and definitions again.*
2. *On a sheet of paper, have students list their top 5 values.*
3. *Below that, students should draft a list of 10 rules that would govern their idea of a perfect society. The rules should reflect their values.*
4. *Students could turn these drafts into posters to be hung around the classroom.*

Assessment

Listen to the discussions students have as they are trading cards. Are they thinking deeply about their values? Step in to re-direct if conversations get off task.
The written responses should answer both questions and provide 3-4 sentences of explanation for each one.

LIFE

An appreciation and respect for all living things

COMPASSION

Understanding the suffering of others and wanting to do something about it

FREEDOM

The power to act, speak or think without externally imposed restraints

CREATIVITY

A high degree of innovation and originality

ACCOUNTABILITY

Being obliged to answer for one's own actions

WORK

Deriving great value from your job

COOPERATION

Working together for a common purpose

LOYALTY

Faithfulness to another person or group

WEALTH

Desire for substantial monetary income

SECURITY

Having the essentials you need to live and be safe

RECOGNITION

To receive special attention, to feel important

BEAUTY

An appreciation for and seeing the beauty in all things

JUSTICE

Fairness, balance, equality

INDEPENDENCE

Freedom from control or influence of another or others, self sufficient

RESPONSIBILITY

Being answerable to someone for something or being responsible for one's own conduct

POWER

Ability to lead, direct, persuade, control

RESPECT

Unbiased consideration and regard for the rights, values, beliefs and property of all people

HONESTY

A high regard for fairness, straightforwardness, sincerity, truthfulness

EMPATHY

Feeling concern for and understanding another's situation or feelings

INTEGRITY

The quality or state of being of sound moral principle; uprightness, honesty

LOVE

Strong personal feelings of caring and affection

FAITH

A strong belief in a supernatural power or powers that control human destiny

KNOWLEDGE

Seeking and learning new information and insights

WISDOM

The ability to apply knowledge, experience, understanding, common sense and insight

The Giver Opera Box
Lesson Plan

Lesson 3 (RL.6-8.1, RL.6-8.2, SL.6-8.1, L.6-8.6)

Pre-Reading: Utopia vs. Dystopia, part 1

25 minutes to introduce, ongoing during reading

Objective

Students will define the notions of “utopia” and “dystopia” and identify examples in a text.

Materials

2-sided blank copies of the Frayer Model

Possible answers for the Frayer Model follow

Procedures

1. Write out definitions for “utopia” and “dystopia” on the board. Discuss and clarify with the class.
2. Divide the class into groups of no more than 4. Each group is going to create Vocabulary Tableaux for the concepts of “dystopia” and “utopia.” Each group needs to become living statues and develop 2 different frozen scenes to show the meaning of each term.
3. Allow about 5 minutes for groups to discuss and practice, then have each group perform their tableaux in front of the class. Solicit responses from the audience about what each tableau shows, and how well each depicts the accurate meanings of the terms.
4. Pass out the blank copies of the Frayer Model. Have students record the definition of utopia on one side and dystopia on the other.
5. As a class, discuss and record characteristics, examples and non-examples of each term based on other texts students have read or seen.
6. Continue the activity throughout the reading of the novel by asking students to record examples from *The Giver* of both dystopian and utopian ideas.

Activity Extension (W.6-8.7):

Have students work in pairs/triads to conduct brief research one of these American attempts at Utopian communities:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_American_Utopian_communities

The research should answer questions like...

Where was the community?

Who started it and why?

What utopian ideals did the community try to follow?

What problems did the community encounter as they tried to create the perfect society?

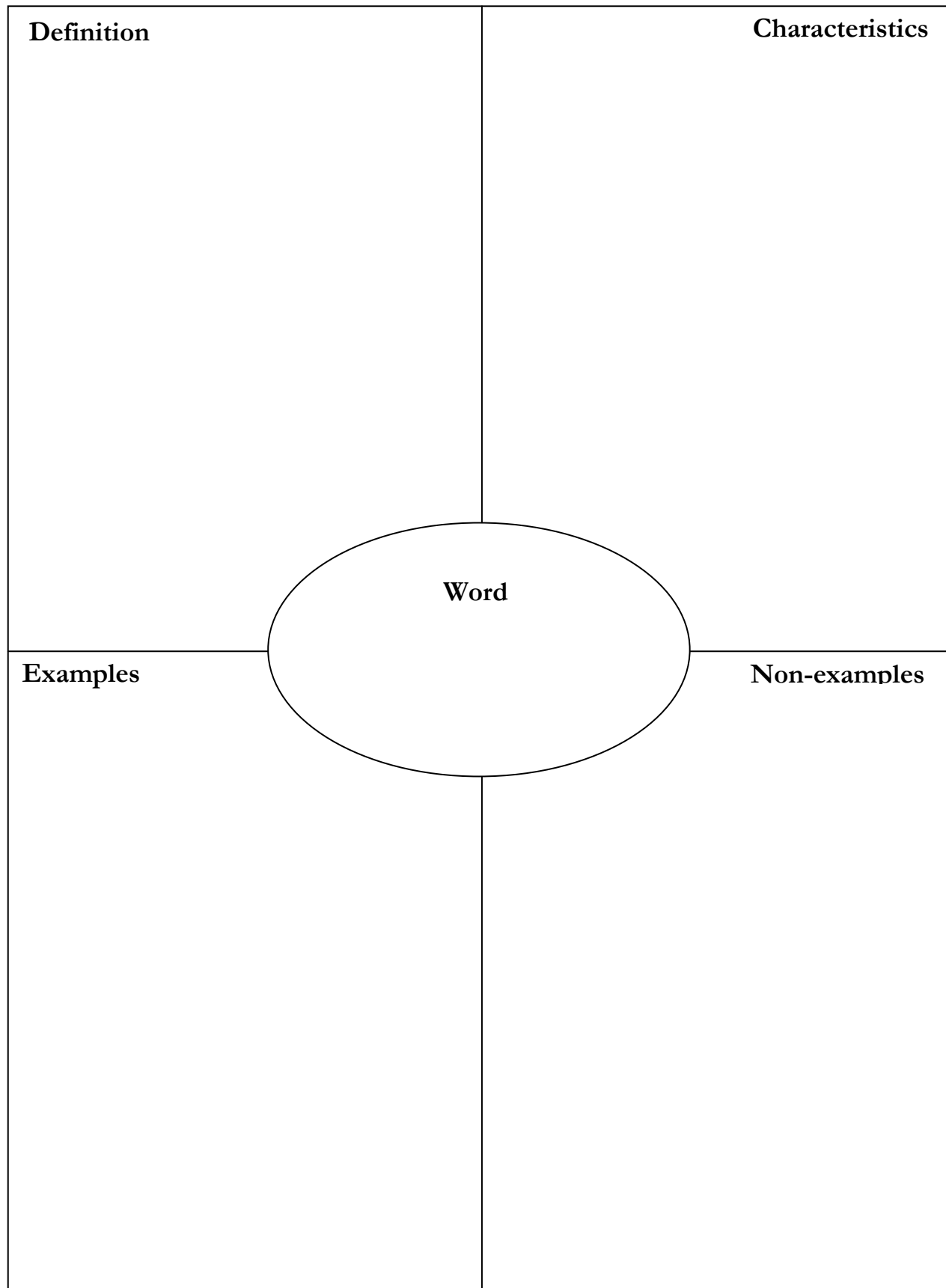
How long did the community last? Why did it come to an end?

Students should synthesize their findings in 1-2 short paragraphs that could be posted around the classroom.

Assessment

Collect the Frayer Models and check that students have recorded accurate information.

During the reading, check student examples of dystopian and utopian ideas in the text.



<p>Definition</p> <p>an ideal place or state; any visionary system of political or social perfection</p>	<p>Characteristics</p> <p>Extremely hopeful, dream-like</p> <p>Blue sky, people lazily lounging around, not a care in the world, off somewhere a bird is singing and life is grand.</p> <p>aspiration for absolute equality and for a better tomorrow</p> <p>Derived from two Greek words. The first is “Outopia” meaning “no place” and the second is “Eutopia” meaning “good place”. The name itself seems to imply the futility of such a place or such an existence. The word “utopia” has come to mean a perfect but unreachable society.</p>
<p>Word</p> <p>UTOPIA</p>	
<p>Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garden of Eden • Living on a tropical island • Being wealthy enough you don't have to work • Disney World • Modern-day communes <p>Real-life utopian communities in America: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_American_Utopian_communities Harmony www.esoteric.msu.edu/Versluis.html New Harmony http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Harmony,_Indiana Economy Village www.post-gazette.com/pg/09321/1014046-57.stm</p>	<p>Non-examples</p> <p>Everyday life in Minnesota Your school</p>

<p>Definition</p> <p>a society in a repressive and controlled state; a planned structured society in which the conditions of life are deliberately made miserable for the benefit of a select minority or some unnatural societal goal</p>	<p>Characteristics</p> <p>Extremely ominous, nightmarish</p> <p>aspiration for absolute equality and for a better tomorrow</p> <p>Dystopian fiction: -necessarily told from a malcontent point of view. The narrator is often speaking as a member of the society, originally content with their position until an epiphany causes them to realize that everything isn't perfect.</p> <p>-often explores the concept of humans abusing technology and humans individually and collectively coping, or not being able to properly cope with technology that has progressed far more rapidly than humanity's spiritual evolution.</p> <p>Dystopian societies are often imagined as police states, with unlimited power over the citizens.</p>
<p>Word</p> <p>DYSTOPIA</p>	
<p>Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Prohibition ● Slavery ● <i>The Hunger Games</i> ● <i>The Matrix</i> series 	<p>Non-examples</p> <p>Everyday life in Minnesota</p> <p>Your school</p>

The Giver Opera Box
Lesson Plan

Lesson 4 (RL.6-8.1, RL.6-8.3, W.6-8.3, W.6-8.4, SL.6-8.1)

Post-reading: In Their Shoes
30 minutes, plus writing time

Objectives

Students will write creatively from the perspective of a character exploring the idea of “values” in the text.

Materials

Writing paper
The Giver novel
“Life Stages” list
Copies of “In Their Shoes” assignment handout

Procedures

1. As a class, make a list of what Jonas’s community values. Look carefully at the rules revealed during the novel (i.e. *“precision of language”*, *“hair-ribbons are to remain tied,”* *“snacks are to be eaten, not boarded”*, *morning dream telling, reporting stirrings*). Also look at the list of Life Stages. Use those ideas as the spring board to create the list of community values (possible responses include conformity, precision, following authority, hard work, honesty, health, dependence, interdependence, service).
2. Distribute the “In Their Shoes” assignment handout and discuss the requirements.
3. Think-pair-share: Allow students time to think quietly for a few minutes about the character they’d like to choose and the event about which they’d like to write. Then have students pair up with a person next to them and swap their ideas. Come back together as a whole class and do a general survey of who’s choosing what character (have students raise hands as you run through character possibilities).
4. Students should write out detailed responses to the pre-writing prompts to help them get in character.
5. Papers could be written out of class.

Activity Extension:

Students could pair up and structure their writing as a series of letters back and forth with each other’s characters.

Assessment

- length of 1-2 pages
- well-developed with a beginning, middle, and conclusion
- relevant descriptive details
- well-structured event sequences
- point of view and perspective are consistent
- values of the community are clearly illustrated

Life Stages

Time Period	How the Community Marks the Passage of Time
Newborns	nurtured for a year, given comfort objects
Ones	50 each year, named and given to family units
Fours, Fives, Sixes	jackets buttoned down the back to learn interdependence
Seven	front-buttoned jacket with pockets as sign of independence
Eight	start community volunteer hours, comfort object taken away
Nine	girls remove hair ribbons, all get bicycles as symbol of moving out into the community and away from family unit
Twelve	last year of growing up ceremony, assigned to jobs, don't keep track of age anymore
Childless Adults	while still productive they move to a separate place in community
Old Age	live in House of the Old and be cared for until released



IN THEIR SHOES

Tasks:

- Rewrite an important event in the novel from the perspective of one of the minor characters—Asher, Fiona, Lilly, Mom, Dad.
- You will have to create details in the style of your character’s personality to fill in the gaps that are left once Jonas’s thoughts are removed from the story.
- Consider and include what your chosen character is thinking and feeling about the event. Your character’s reactions should reflect the values of Jonas’s community, which eventually come into conflict with his own priorities.
- If you can, include small pieces of dialogue or action from *The Giver* text to show connection to the original story.
- You will be writing this in first person point of view. Become the character!
- Possible scenes include The Ceremony of Twelve, the morning dream-telling, commenting on Jonas’s strange and changing behavior once he begins his training as Receiver of Memory, or discovering that Jonas and Gabe are missing.

Assessment:

- length of 1-2 pages
- well-developed story with a beginning, middle, and end
- relevant descriptive details
- well-structured event sequences
- point of view and perspective are consistent
- values of the community are clearly illustrated

Pre-writing:

Before writing your story from the perspective of a character from the book, you need to deepen your understanding of his or her motivation and personality. Consider these questions and any others you think of:

- What is the character thinking?
- What feelings might he have that he is not directly showing or telling us?
- What is his greatest wish?
- If he could change the situation what do you think he would do?
- How has the past affected him?
- What are his hopes and dreams?
- Who is important in his life and why?

The Giver Opera Box
Lesson Plan

Lesson 5 (RL.6-8.2, W.6-8.1, W.6-8.4, SL.6-8.1, SL.6-8.3, SL.6-8.6)

Post-reading: Utopia or Dystopia?, part 2

40 minutes

Objectives

Students will deepen their understanding of the utopian/dystopian motif in literature.

Students will support their opinion with specific examples from a text.

Materials

Signs posted in the four corners of the classroom reading, “Strongly Agree,” “Agree,” “Disagree,” “Strongly Disagree.”

Writing paper

Student notes on examples of utopian and dystopian ideas in *The Giver* (from previous lesson)

Procedures

1. Tell the class that they will be engaging in a Four Corners Debate. You will be reading statements to them, and their job is to position themselves under/near the poster the most closely aligns with their own way of thinking. Once the groups are formed, you will select 2-3 students from each section to explain why they chose their position.
2. Read through these suggested statements, allowing time for students to move and explain their positions between each one:
 - Jonas’s family cared about him.
 - The Giver was unfair to make Jonas feel pain.
 - Jonas dies at the end of the story.
 - I would like to live in a community like Jonas’s.
3. Read one last statement: Jonas’s community is a utopia (or conversely, a dystopia). After students move, give them 3-4 minutes as a group to discuss their position and come up with 4-5 specific reasons for their position. This time, select 3-4 students from each corner (as time allows) to explain. You may allow groups to pose questions to each other to elicit further explanation or to challenge points.
4. Students should return to their seats and take out their notes on examples of utopian and dystopian ideas in *The Giver*.
5. Students will write a one-paragraph response either agreeing or disagreeing with the statement that Jonas’s community is a utopia (or dystopia, whichever you used earlier). The paragraph should take a clear position and provide a minimum of 4 specific pieces of support.

Activity Extension (RL.6-8.9):

Students interested in reading other novels with dystopian settings could select a novel from the following list.

Assessment

Collect the responses and evaluate them for establishing a position on the issue and the specificity, accuracy and relevancy of the support.

If you liked The Giver, try...

Gathering Blue and *The Messenger*, Lois Lowry

Discover what happens to Jonas and Gabe.

Rash, Pete Hautman

Set in a future where concerns about safety are taken to the extreme. Getting angry could land you 3 years of hard labor in Alaska.

Fahrenheit 451, Ray Bradbury

In this future, books are illegal, and firemen come to your house to burn any they find.

The Hunger Games trilogy, Suzanne Collins

Children are made to fight to the death as entertainment for a privileged few.

The Maze Runner series, James Dashner

A group of kids is trapped in the Glade, with the only way out through an ever-changing labyrinth. No one knows how they got there or how to get out.

Uglies quarter, Scott Westerfield

All sixteen-year-olds are given an operation to make them pretty, but what happens if they don't want the operation? It's not so easy to escape.

Chaos Walking Trilogy, Patrick Ness

Set in a parallel world, men are cursed with being able to hear each other's thoughts constantly. When one boy hears something different and sets out to find what it is, he is hunted by a maniacal preacher set on taking over the world.

City of Ember series, Jeanne Duprau

Society has moved underground to escape the ravages of war. Now, however, their resources are at an end. How will they survive?

The Shadow Children Sequence, Margaret Peterson Haddix

A futuristic country suffers food shortages due to a drought and the effects of the government's attempts to control resources as a way to solidify its power. The Population Police enforce the government's Population Law, killing or imprisoning "shadow children," any third child in a family.

The Giver Opera Box
Lesson Plan

Lesson 6 (RL.6-8.4, W.6-8.3, W.6-8.4)

Post-reading: Soundtrack

20 minutes, continues outside of class

Objectives

Students will identify essential events in the plot of a text.

Students will determine the mood of each event.

Materials

Writing paper

Sample music selection (optional)

Outside of class—computer, CDs, CD burner

Copies of “Soundtrack” assignment handout

Procedures

1. As a class, define the term “mood.”

Suggested definition: the feeling created by a literary work; conveyed by the author’s use of setting, theme, voice, and tone (the writer’s attitude toward the subject; often confused with mood)

2. Review the parts of the plot diagram, such as exposition, conflict, rising action, climax, falling action and resolution.

3. Distribute the “Soundtrack” handout and discuss requirements as a class.

4. Optional time in class for students to begin brainstorming.

Assessment

-minimum of 7 major events

-one song with artist for each event

-explanation for each song includes descriptions of the mood of the event and song

-work is neatly typed



SOUNDTRACK



Objective

Students will identify the mood of important plot events and develop a list of songs to reflect those moods.

Process

1. Brainstorm a list of 7-8 important scenes from throughout the novel, being sure to include all the parts of plot—exposition, rising action/conflict, climax, falling action, resolution.
2. For each event, write 2-3 adjectives to describe the mood of the event (joyous, sinister, anxious, exciting).
3. Then list a song or two that illustrates each mood. Think about the song's tempo, melody, lyrics, instrumentation, and so on as you make your choices. Songs can be anything from classical to country to pop.
4. For each song, write a 2-3 sentence explanation of why the song fits the scene. Use the adjectives you used to describe the mood in your explanations. Feel free to include excerpts of lyrics if that's where the connection is.
5. When you are done, you should have at least 7 events with one song for each, plus the explanations.

Product

1. Type up your complete list of events, song titles with artists and explanations.
2. Optional: Burn a CD with the actual songs from your list.

Assessment

- minimum of 7 major events
- one song with artist for each event
- explanation for each song includes descriptions of the mood of the event and song
- work is neatly typed

The Giver Opera Box
Lesson Plan

Lesson 7 (SL.6-8.1, SL.6-8.2, SL.6-8.7, W.6-8.4, W.6-8.9)

Opera: The Music of Susan Kander

30-40 minutes, depending on clips used

Objectives

Students will identify the musical characteristics of the songs of Susan Kander.

Materials

Internet and ability to project or listen to online clips:

<http://www.susankander.net/info.asp?pgs=works>

Writing paper

Procedures

1. As a class, listen to/view excerpts from **two** different Kander pieces.

Suggested pieces:

One False Move (4 video clips under a minute each), teenagers singing the opera

She Never Lost a Passenger: The Story of Harriet Tubman (6 video clips, about 2 minutes each), professionals singing

Two Tricky Tales (4 audio clips, under 2 minutes each), spoken story with music accompaniment

Somebody's Children (6 audio clips), professional singers with children

Write the following questions on the board. For each piece played, ask students to jot down brief responses to each question:

What instruments can be heard?

How is the accompaniment different from the vocal line?

How does the melody reflect the words that are being sung?

What mood is created by the excerpt? Is it consistent throughout, or does it change?

How?

2. Ask the class to compare and contrast the pieces. Create a class list of the responses.

3. Repeat steps 1 and 2 for two more Kander pieces (see above suggestions). Have students write down their compare/contrast responses as opposed to sharing them out loud as a class. This could take the form of a paragraph, double bubble map, Venn diagram, or T-chart. Collect and evaluate.

Assessment

Product should include at least 2 similarities and 2 differences between the pieces.

The Giver Opera Box
Lesson Plan

Lesson 8 (RL.6-8.1, RL.6-8.6, W.6-8.3, W.6-8.4, SL.6-8.1)

Opera: Become a Songwriter
30-40 minutes

Objectives

Students will analyze characters' personalities and their motivations for acting as they do.
Students will employ the power of music to convey important ideas from a text.

Materials

Writing paper
Class set of *The Giver*
Copies of "Characterization" chart
Song lyrics for Bruce Springsteen's *The Ghost of Tom Joad*, Harry and the Potter's *The Human Hosepipe*, and Taylor Swift's *Love Story*
Optional, not included: recordings of the sample songs

Procedures

1. Introduce the activity by showing students the example song lyrics (and playing the songs, if available). Ask students what they notice about the lyrics. How well do they convey information about a character?
2. Set students up in pairs or triads.
3. Either assign a *Giver* character to each group or allow students to choose about whom they'd like to write.
4. Once students are set, distribute copies of the "Characterization" chart and *The Giver* novels to each student. Explain that students are to record specific passages from the novel that develop their character using the listed methods. (It is up to the instructor to decide how important it is that the students complete the whole chart correctly. For the rest of the activity, it may not be necessary.)
5. Students should review the passages from the novel and select information that reveals the core or most significant aspects of the character.
6. Students should then select a well-known melody (children's songs, holiday carols, pop songs) and write 2 verses and chorus (3 verses if in triads) about their chosen character.
7. As they craft their lyrics, students should put the information gleaned from the book into their own words.
8. Have students perform their songs in front of the class.

Assessment

Pairs—2 verses, chorus
Triads—3 verses, chorus
Song conveys and provides examples of character's personality.

CHARACTERIZATION

Method	Example	Example
What the author tells the reader directly (Trait is explicitly stated.)		
Physical description (Trait is explicitly stated.)		
How others describe the character (Trait is explicitly stated.)		
What the character says or thinks (What trait is revealed?)		
What the character does (What trait is revealed?)		
How others react toward the character (What trait is revealed?)		

The Giver Opera Box
Lesson Plan

Lesson 9 (RL.6-8.5, RL.6-8.7, W.6-8.4, SL.6-8.1)

Opera: From Page to Stage

Objectives

Students will compare and contrast the ways a novel conveys a narrative versus a stage version.

Materials

Copies of Libretto 1 and Libretto 2, “The Ceremony of Twelve – Processional”

Writing paper

Optional, an assortment of props

Procedures

1. Discuss with students the elements that create the narrative in a story (i.e. dialogue, description, characters’ thoughts, author’s narration, etc.) Would the same elements serve the same function in a stage version? Suggest that attempting to act out a section of *The Giver* will give students a better understanding of how the dramatic form can contribute to the meaning of the text.

2. Divide the class into the following roles:

Jonas

Asher

Fiona

Chief Elder

Chorus of Elders (about 10 students, reading together)

Kids/People Chorus (about 10 students, reading together)

Distribute copies of Libretto 1. Instruct students that a *libretto* is the opera version of a script. Read and act out the text, letting students figure out independently where to stand and how to deliver the lines.

3. When the scene is finished, have a class discussion about what worked well during the read-through and what needed fixing. How could the problems be solved? Would including stage directions in the libretto have helped? Was the story telling as clear as it could have been? How could the narrative be clarified? (Possible suggestions include reading with inflection, changing pitch or volume when delivering the lines, adding appropriate gestures, rehearsing blocking [where to stand], using props, etc.)

4. Distribute copies of Libretto 2. Allow a few minutes for students to rehearse their lines, their blocking, and select props if available, and then perform the scene again.

5. Upon completion, ask students to discuss how the second performance compared to the first. Did the changes they made in their staging make the story clearer? Suggest that in an opera, there is even another layer of meaning that can be conveyed by the music.

Activity Extension

Students could stage their favorite scene from the novel. They would write the script including stage directions and lasting under 3 minutes. They would then direct their classmates in the staging of the scene.

Assessment

Ask students to write a reflection comparing and contrasting the novel version of the scene and their staged version. They should list at least 3 similarities and 3 differences.

Opera Box Evaluation: <i>The Giver</i>
--



1-I teach this subject and grade level(s): _____

2-In general, I found the *Opera Box* useful. YES NO

3-I used the *Opera Box* to do the following: (*circle all that apply*)

 Introduce my students to opera Continue my students' study of opera

 Prepare students for a live performance Meet a Minnesota Academic Standard

4-I lesson plan(s) I found most useful: (*circle all that apply*)

 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

5-I taught *The Giver* as an interdisciplinary project: YES NO

 6.1 If you circled YES above, what subject areas did you collaborate with? _____

7-I would like to receive training related to the content in the *Opera Box*. YES NO

8-Items I would like to have in a future *Opera Box*: _____

9-I would attend a summer seminar or workshop about *how* to teach opera with graduate credit available.

 YES

 NO

10-I used, or directed my students to, Imagineopera.org website. YES NO

11-Please offer any further comments or suggestions below.

Acknowledgments

We would like to gratefully acknowledge **Jane Kolp-Andrews** for her incredible effort and dedication in creating *The Giver* lesson plans. Her knowledge in teaching language arts, interdisciplinary teaching, and the middle school student has made this collection of lessons unique.

We also would like to acknowledge the following educators who help guide the creation of all Minnesota Opera Teacher Guide. Without their comments and ideas, this project would never have gotten off the ground.

Marcia Aubineau (University of St. Thomas, St. Paul)

Dr. Doug Orzolek (University of St. Thomas, St. Paul)

David Sander (Dramaturg, Minnesota Opera)

Lani Willis (Marketing and Communications Director, Minnesota Opera)

Minnesota Opera's Education Department is supported through the generous contributions from the following sponsors:

<p><i>Gifts of \$20,000+</i> 3M Ameriprise Financial Comcast Medtronic Foundation Travelers UnitedHealth Group</p>
<p><i>Gifts of \$10,000-\$19,999</i> Fred C. and Katherine B. Andersen Foundation Best buy Children's Foundation Anna M. Heilmaier Charitable Foundation Twin Cities Opera Guild</p>
<p><i>Gifts of \$1000-\$9999</i> Beim Foundation Bobby and Steve's Auto World Youth Foundation Harlan Boss Foundation for the Arts Cleveland Foundation COMPAS Enterprise Holdings Foundation The Pentair Foundation RBC Foundation - USA Sewell Family Foundation Target Ted & Dr. Roberta Mann Foundation Xcel Energy Foundation</p>

The Education and Outreach Program is funded, in part, by the William Randolph Hearst Foundation through gifts made to the William Randolph Hearst Endowment for Education.