

"The Giver," Vocabulary from Chapters 14-18



30 words

September 26, 2013 By [Vocabulary.com](#) (NY)

As you read Lois Lowry's "The Giver," learn this word list that focuses on pain and courage. Here are links to our lists for the novel: [Chapters 1-4](#), [Chapters 5-8](#), [Chapters 9-13](#), [Chapters 14-18](#), [Chapters 19-23](#)

agony

1.

intense feelings of suffering; acute mental or physical pain

NOTES:

"Agony" is from the Greek "agon" which means "struggle" and can be seen in the words "protagonist" and "antagonist." Usually, a protagonist is agonized because of a struggle with a specific antagonist. Here, Jonas is struggling with the pain of a memory of a broken leg. The antagonists that cause Jonas agony are not identifiable humans he can fight; rather, they are the world's memories of the past and his present community's attitudes and approaches towards life.

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

In his **agony** he perceived the word "fire" and felt flames licking at the torn bone and flesh.

2. writhe



to move in a twisting or contorted motion, (especially when struggling)

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

Then, suddenly, he was in the Annex room again, **writhing** on the bed.

3. brutal



harsh

NOTES:

"Brutal" also means "resembling a brute or beast; showing lack of human sensibility"—this definition is the opposite of what the brutal pain does to Jonas: while it may temporarily reduce him to a screaming pile of flesh and bone, it also makes him more aware of what being human means and feels like. The Giver explains, "It gives us wisdom."

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

The **brutal** slice of pain was gone.

4. deliverance



recovery or preservation from loss or danger

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

There was always a daub of anesthetic ointment, or a pill; or in severe instances, an injection that brought complete and instantaneous **deliverance**.

5. linger



leave slowly and hesitantly

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

*But this ache **lingered**.*

6. unendurable

incapable of being put up with

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

*It was not **unendurable**, as the pain on the hill had been.*

7. desperately

in intense despair

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

*The realization made him feel **desperately** lonely, and he rubbed his throbbing leg.*



8. forsake

leave someone who needs or counts on you; leave in the lurch

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

*Again and again he dreamed of the anguish and the isolation on the **forsaken** hill.*



9. fracture

breaking of hard tissue such as bone

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

*The agony of the **fractured** leg began to seem no more than a mild discomfort as *The Giver* led Jonas firmly, little by little, into the deep and terrible suffering of the past.*



10. assuage

provide physical relief, as from pain

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

*It was not enough to **assuage** the pain that Jonas was beginning, now, to know.*



11. excruciating

extremely painful

NOTES:

"Torturous" and "excruciating" are synonymous adjectives with different roots: "torturous" comes from the Latin "torquere" which means "to twist" (and can also be seen in "contorted"); "excruciating" comes from the Latin "cruciare" and "crux" which mean "to crucify on a cross"—this could suggest that the Receiver is a Christ-like figure, since both were chosen to take on the painful burdens of the larger community.

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

*"Why?" Jonas asked him after he had received a torturous memory in which he had been neglected and unfed; the hunger had caused **excruciating** spasms in his empty, distended stomach.*



12. **burden** ✓

an onerous or difficult concern

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

*"But then everyone would be **burdened** and pained. They don't want that. And that's the real reason The Receiver is so vital to them, and so honored. They selected me—and you—to lift that **burden** from themselves."*

13. **ominous** ✓

threatening or foreshadowing evil or tragic developments

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

*Now it was **ominous**. It meant, he knew, that nothing could be changed.*

14. **rigid** ✓

fixed and unmoving

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

*The Giver was **rigid** in his chair, his face in his hands.*

15. **contorted** ✓

twisted (especially as in pain or struggle)

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

*The Giver looked up at him, his face **contorted** with suffering.*

16. **anguish** ✓

extreme distress of body or mind

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

*"Put your hands on me," he directed, aware that in such **anguish** The Giver might need reminding.*

17. **brace** ✓

prepare (oneself) for something unpleasant or difficult

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

*Jonas **braced** himself and entered the memory which was torturing The Giver.*

18. **parched** ✓

dried out by heat or excessive exposure to sunlight

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

*"Water," the voice said in a **parched**, croaking whisper.*

19. carnage



the savage and excessive killing of many people

NOTES:

"Grotesque" means "distorted and unnatural in shape or size" (often to a monstrous degree)—this is a fitting adjective for the colors of carnage, especially to a boy who is unused to seeing color and images of war.

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

*The colors of the **carnage** were grotesquely bright: the crimson wetness on the rough and dusty fabric, the ripped shreds of grass, startlingly green, in the boy's yellow hair.*

20. immobilize

cause to be unable to move

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

*One of Jonas's arms was **immobilized** with pain, and he could see through his own torn sleeve something that looked like ragged flesh and splintery bone.*

21. implore



call upon in supplication; entreat

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

*Finally, when the container was open, he extended his arm slowly across the blood-soaked earth, inch by inch, and held it to the lips of the boy. Water trickled into the **implored** mouth and down the grimy chin.*

22. stench



a distinctive odor that is offensively unpleasant

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

*Overwhelmed by pain, he lay there in the fearsome **stench** for hours, listened to the men and animals die, and learned what warfare meant.*

23. solitude



the state or situation of being alone

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

*Although he had through the memories learned about the pain of loss and loneliness, now he gained, too, an understanding of **solitude** and its joy.*

24. permeate



spread or diffuse through

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

*And his new, heightened feelings **permeated** a greater realm than simply his sleep.*

25. shudder



tremble convulsively, as from fear or excitement

NOTES:

Jonas is shuddering because he is struggling not to cry. Having experienced war through a memory, he is distraught at the sight of children giggling while they pretend to kill and die. Although crying is often seen as weakness, Jonas shows courage when he walks into the center of the field, stands alone against the players, and displays an intense emotion that the others don't know how to respond to.

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

*Then they were all silent, standing awkwardly, and the only sound was the sound of Jonas's **shuddering** breaths.*

26. **dejected** ✓

affected or marked by low spirits

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

*"Me," Jonas said in a **dejected** voice. He was not looking forward to the end of the training, when he would become the new Receiver. It was clear to him what a terribly difficult and lonely life it was, despite the honor.*

27. **falter** ✓

be unsure or weak

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

*His voice **faltered** and trailed off.*

28. **insist** ✓

be emphatic or resolute and refuse to budge

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

*She **insisted** that I continue, that I not spare her.*

29. **inflict** ✓

impose something unpleasant

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

*I couldn't bring myself to **inflict** physical pain on her.*

30. **devastate** ✓

overwhelm or overpower

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

*I was so **devastated** by my own grief at her loss, and my own feeling of failure, that I didn't even try to help them through it.*
