

"The Giver," Vocabulary from Chapters 19-23



30 words

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

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

1. **puncture**

1.

pierce with a pointed object; make a hole into

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

*To his surprise, his father began very carefully to direct the needle into the top of the newchild's forehead, **puncturing** the place where the fragile skin pulsed.*

2. **receptacle**



a container that is used to put or keep things in

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

*He turned aside and dropped the syringe into a waste **receptacle**.*

3. **numb**



so frightened as to be unable to move; stunned or paralyzed with terror; petrified

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

*I do know that I sat here **numb** with horror.*

4. **wretched**



very unhappy; full of misery

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

***Wretched** with helplessness.*

5. **bitter**



harsh or corrosive in tone

NOTES:

The chosen definition focuses on how The Giver's voice sounds to Jonas. But "bitter" also means "marked by strong resentment or cynicism" and "expressive of severe grief or regret"—these definitions could describe the feelings The Giver has, because his own daughter, unable to handle the pain of being chosen as a Receiver, was pushed to apply for release (without knowing exactly what it is).

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

*The Giver turned to him. "Well, there you are, Jonas. You were wondering about release," he said in a **bitter** voice.*

6. emerge



come up to the surface of or rise

NOTES:

The description almost sounds as if Jonas were giving birth, but what's emerging from him is not a crying baby but a crying realization that everything he had always known about life in the community is wrong. This pushes him to make plans to start a new life in order to save lives and to force the community to emerge from their own ignorance of the truths.

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

*Jonas felt a ripping sensation inside himself, the feeling of terrible pain clawing its way forward to **emerge** in a cry.*

7. mimic



imitate (a person or manner), especially for satirical effect

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

*"I will take care of that, sir. I will take care of that, sir," Jonas **mimicked** in a cruel, sarcastic voice.*

8. efficient



being effective without wasting time or effort or expense

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

*She's very **efficient** at her work, your red-haired friend.*

9. rueful



feeling or expressing pain or sorrow for sins or offenses

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

*The Giver gave a **rueful**, anguished, empty laugh.*

10. emphatically



without question and beyond doubt

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

*Jonas shook his head **emphatically**. "No, Giver," he said. "I want you to keep that, to have with you, when I'm gone."*

11. plea



a humble request for help from someone in authority

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

*He knew the answer even as he made the final **plea**.*

12. stealthy



marked by quiet and caution and secrecy; taking pains to avoid being observed

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

It was terribly dangerous because some of the work crews were still about, but he moved stealthily and silently, staying in the shadows, making his way past the darkened dwellings and the empty Central Plaza, toward the river.

13. **condemn** ✓

pronounce a sentence on (somebody) in a court of law

NOTES:

"Condemn" also means "declare or judge unfit for use or habitation"—although this often applies to buildings, it could apply to Jonas, since a useless member of the community would receive condemnation ("strong disapproval") before being condemned to a sentence of release.

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

He thought of the rules he had broken so far: enough that if he were caught, now, he would be condemned.

14. **languid** ✓

lacking spirit or liveliness

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

*Before he had left the dwelling, he had laid his hands firmly on Gabe's back and transmitted to him the most soothing memory he could: a slow-swinging hammock under palm trees on an island someplace, at evening, with a rhythmic sound of **languid** water lapping hypnotically against a beach nearby.*

15. **fugitive** ✓

someone who is sought by law officers; someone trying to elude justice

NOTES:

"Fugitive" also means "someone who flees from a situation that is uncongenial" ("very unfavorable to life or growth")—both definitions fit, since the community sends search planes after the lawbreakers, who are running towards an Elsewhere that would not have Receivers and releases.

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

*Together the **fugitives** slept through the first dangerous day.*

16. **augmented** ✓

added to or made greater in amount or number or strength

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

*The journey had become automatic: the sleep by day, hidden in underbrush and trees; the finding of water; the careful division of scraps of food, **augmented** by what he could find in the fields.*

17. **intently** ✓

with strained or eager attention

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

*But he was alert at night, too, on the road, always listening **intently** for the sound of the engines.*

18. **vigilant**



carefully observant or attentive; on the lookout for possible danger

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

*As he pedaled through the nights, through isolated landscape now, with the communities far behind and no sign of human habitation around him or ahead, he was constantly **vigilant**, looking for the next nearest hiding place should the sound of engines come.*

19. **haphazard**



marked by great carelessness

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

*They came less often, and flew, when they did come, less slowly, as if the search had become **haphazard** and no longer hopeful.*

20. **peril**



a source of danger; a possibility of incurring loss or misfortune

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

*But now there were new fears; the unfamiliar landscape held hidden, unknown **perils**.*

21. **relentless**



never-ceasing

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

*The most **relentless** of his new fears was that they would starve.*

22. **meager**



deficient in amount or quality or extent

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

*They finished the **meager** store of potatoes and carrots they had saved from the last agricultural area, and now they were always hungry.*

23. **subside**



wear off or die down

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

*But when the memory glimpses **subsided**, he was left with the gnawing, painful emptiness.*

24. **yearn**



desire strongly or persistently

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

*Once he had **yearned** for choice. Then, when he had had a choice, he had made the wrong one: the choice to leave.*

25. **feeble**



lacking strength or vigor

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

Gabriel moved feebly against him and whimpered briefly into the silence that surrounded them.

26. **obscure**



make less visible or unclear

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

*But now the rapidly deepening snow **obscured** the narrow road and made the ride impossible.*

27. **lethargy**



weakness characterized by a lack of vitality or energy

NOTES:

"Resignation" means "the act of giving up" or "acceptance of despair"—it is an emotional obstacle that is harder to overcome than physical lethargy, but Jonas, with the help of his warm memories and the reminder that Gabe is depending on him, finds the courage and strength to shake off both.

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

*Warming himself ever so briefly had shaken away the **lethargy** and resignation and restored his will to survive.*

28. **impede**



be a hindrance or obstacle to

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

*But the hill was treacherously steep; he was **impeded** by the snow and his own lack of strength.*

29. **trudge**



walk heavily and firmly, as when weary, or through mud

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

*The top of the hill seemed so far away, and he did not know what lay beyond. But there was nothing left to do but continue. He **trudged** upward.*

30. **incision**



a depression scratched or carved into a surface

EXAMPLE SENTENCE:

*The runners sliced through the snow and the wind whipped at his face as they sped in a straight line through an **incision** that seemed to lead to the final destination, the place that he had always felt was waiting, the Elsewhere that held their future and their past.*
