The Hunger Games
Education Resource Kit

THE HUNGER GAMES, GARY ROSS, 142 MINS, USA, 2012.
The Hunger Games

FILM SYNOPSIS

In a dystopian society where the privileged are entertained by the suffering of the powerless, Katniss Everdeen must use all her strength and intelligence to survive the Hunger Games, a televised fight to the death.

*The Hunger Games* film is based on the book *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins.

BEFORE WATCHING THE FILM

From Book to Film

- Ask students to read the Suzanne Collins books, *The Hunger Games* before watching the film.
  - The film has been given an M rating by the Australian Classification Board. The book explores some dark themes and the film adaptation would have to dramatise some graphic and violent scenes. What do you think would need to be added or removed from the narrative explored in the book to fit this M classification?
  - Analyse the novel’s descriptions of Katniss, Peeta, Gale, Prim, Effie and Haymitch. Do you think the actors chosen fit these descriptions of these characters?
  - ACTIVITY: Arrange the class into groups and assign each group a chapter of the book. Ask them to complete the following activities:
    - What happens in this part of the story? Write out a list of key plot points that happen in this chapter.
    - Using a photographic device (camera, smart phone, tablet device) take a range of photos of your group acting out events from these key plot points. This will be used as a photo storyboard to show what happens in the chapter. Write descriptions below each photo.
    - Create a short film using this storyboard as a pre-production tool. Write a script to accompany these images and follow the production and pre-production process for filmmaking (for more information and interactive resources look at [www.generator.acmi.net.au](http://www.generator.acmi.net.au)).
  - Think about the relationships between Katniss and Gale and Katniss and Peeta explored in the novel. Who does Katniss love? Why do you think she loves this person?
  - Does Katniss truly begin to want a relationship with Peeta, or is she playing a role to gain a strategic advantage?
  - Why does the author spend so much time describing the dresses Cinna creates for Katniss?

FREE FOR EDUCATIONAL USE - Education Resource – The Hunger Games
AFTER WATCHING THE FILM

Initial response to the film

- Which aspects of the film stand out? Which scene was the most memorable?
- How did the story make you feel? Did it make you happy, angry, upset or sad? Why?
- What did you think about the ending? Why?
- What was the message of the film?

Narrative

- *The Hunger Games* book and film are from Katniss’ viewpoint. This is done in the film by manipulating what we see and hear so that the story is told from Katniss’ perspective. For example, when Katniss is stung by the Tracker Jacker wasps, the image and sound become distorted as Katniss’ vision and hearing become impaired by the Tracker Jacker venom. How does this narrative perspective affect our interpretation of the film?

ACTIVITY: There are some moments in the film in which we are given the perspective from another tribute. For example, when Rue dies we are shown a point of view shot from her perspective as she looks up to the trees and passes away.

- Write a short creative piece that presents the viewpoint of another tribute.

ACTIVITY: The film deliberately draws attention to the behind the scenes nature of reality television, showing the control room of the Hunger Games, the cameras within the arena and the structure and format of the show, including grand entrances and interviews. Thinking specifically about reality television, did these scenes remind you of any popular reality television shows?

- List and describe the differences and similarities between the Hunger Games broadcast and reality television programs we watch today. You may like to present this in a Venn diagram.

ACTIVITY: Break students into small groups or pairs and assign each group a district. Ask each group to research that district, thinking about how it is portrayed in the film and book:

- You have been asked to create a poster based on your district to be put up around the Capitol. Your poster must portray the main aim of each district (these are listed below) as well as advertise the district’s tributes with the aim of gaining sponsors.
- District 1: Making Luxury items for the Capitol
- District 2: Manufactures weaponry, trains and supplies Peacekeepers.
- District 3: Making various mechanical products, Electronics and Firearms
- District 4: Fishing and supplying Seafood
- District 5: DNA Manipulations and Mutations
- District 6: Medical Research
- District 7: Lumber
- District 8: Textiles
- District 9: Hunting
- District 10: Livestock
- District 11: Agriculture
- District 12: Coal Mining

**ACTIVITY:** Make a show bag for the 74th Annual Hunger Games. What would you include in your show bag? You might like to include: applications for sponsors, information about the arena, tributes, districts, control room and gamemaker, marketing material, novelty items or lollies branded with the Hunger Games logo.

**ACTIVITY:** Thinking about narrative structure of the film, do you think there is a resolution at the end of the movie? Why, why not? How did the ending make you feel? For those who have not read the books, what do you think will happen in the sequel?

**ACTIVITY:** Think about the use of symbols and icons in the film. Define these terms. What symbols are used in the film? (Examples are the Mockingjay and three finger peace gesture). What icons are used in the film? (An example is Katniss as ‘The Girl on Fire’). How do these symbols and icons augment the interpretations we make of the film?

**Genre**


- Science fiction often uses a futuristic setting to comment on the present day. What does *The Hunger Games* suggest about the present day?

**ACTIVITY:** Each genre has a set of codes of conventions that allow us to categorise films into that specific genre. *The Hunger Games* uses codes and conventions from the following genres: action, science fiction, thriller and reality television. Break students into groups and ask each group to research the codes and conventions from one of these genres. Each group should:
o link these codes and conventions to specific scenes, camera techniques, narrative elements and character traits used in *The Hunger Games*;

o discuss and write a detailed analysis of one scene from the film that displays the codes and conventions of the genre;

o show the scene they used for detailed analysis to the class;

o present their findings to the class; and,

o ask the class if they agree with their conclusions.

- **ACTIVITY:** *The Hunger Games* is an extremely dark narrative. There are some changes to the original narrative in the film adaptation but overall it maintains the grim and violent atmosphere of the book.

  o Ask students to create a parody of one of the scenes from *The Hunger Games* which aligns more closely to the comedy genre. This could be done by writing a script, performing a scene in front of the class or even following the pre-production, production and post-production process of film making to create a short film parody.

**Characterisation**

*Katniss*

- Why do you think it is so important for the tributes to be dressed up and shown off in the Capitol before they enter the Hunger Games arena?

- In what ways does Katniss’ hunting experience prepare her for the Games, and in what ways does it fail to prepare her?

- How does Katniss’ role in her family affect her behaviour in the Games?

- What is Katniss’ greatest strength in *The Hunger Games*, and what is her greatest weakness?

- Why did Katniss shove Peeta after his interview with Caesar?

- Think of a time when you have witnessed something you didn’t want to see, how would Katniss be feeling witnessing the death of a fellow tribute? Would you feel the same way?

- Think about a time where you or someone you know was betrayed. How do you think Katniss felt when Peeta betrayed her?

- Would you trust Peeta after he allied with the Careers, but then saved your life? Why/why not?

*Peeta*

- Why did Peeta confess his love for Katniss during his interview with Caesar?

- What is Peeta’s most endearing action in the film? What was his most betraying action?
• Why did Peeta choose to side with the Careers? Would you try to ally with these ruthless tributes or go off on your own? Why/why not?

*Haymitch*

• Is Haymitch a good mentor to Katniss and Peeta? Why/why not?
• Why do you think Haymitch is reluctant to acknowledge the Hunger Games and his role as a mentor?

*Rue*

• Why is Rue drawn to Katniss?
• Why does Katniss feel the need to protect Rue? Does she remind you of another character in the film?
• If you were Katniss and you had just seen Rue lose her life, would you stay back and rest or immediately seek revenge? Why?
• Why do you think Katniss placed flowers around Rue’s body?

*Cinna*

• What is Cinna’s role in the narrative?
• Cinna is the one person at the Capitol that does not congratulate Katniss on being selected to represent her District. What does this say about his character?

*Dystopian Society*

• What is a dystopian society? As a class discuss this term and how it relates to *The Hunger Games* narrative.
• If you were Katniss or Peeta, what would you be outraged by? Have you ever been outraged by anything in our world?
• What created the dystopia you see in *The Hunger Games*? Why is District 12 so terribly poor compared to the Capitol? Is this similar to our world? In what ways has The Capitol kept the people from uprising for 74 years?
• How does the use of entertainment and media desensitise viewers from violent events? Think about how television is used in *The Hunger Games* to desensitise the viewers of The Capitol but deeply saddens the people in the outer districts.
• How did it feel to watch teens killing teens? Did anyone cheer in the audience? Why? Did you feel the same way *reading* about the tributes’ deaths as you did *watching* them die? How was it different?
• Why is it so wrong to have a room full of adults sitting in safety deciding the fate of young people who are killing each other? Is this how wars are fought?
• How did Katniss’ trick with the berries defy The Capitol? What are other acts of civil disobedience that you can think of in our world?

• On the train ride back to District 12 Peeta asks, “What do we do now?” Katniss responds, “We try to forget.” Do you think people who have killed in times of war or people who have been targeted by others can ever forget?