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The Hunger Games (Book 1)



Synopsis

In the ruins of a place once known as North America lies the nation of Panem, a shining Capitol surrounded by twelve outlying districts. Long ago the districts waged war on the Capitol and were defeated. As part of the surrender terms, each district agreed to send one boy and one girl to appear in an annual televised event called, "The Hunger Games," a fight to the death on live TV. Sixteen-year-old Katniss Everdeen, who lives alone with her mother and younger sister, regards it as a death sentence when she is forced to represent her district in the Games. The terrain, rules, and level of audience participation may change but one thing is constant: kill or be killed.

Book Information

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Age Range: 12 - 17 years

Grade Level: 7 and up

Customer Reviews

Starred Review. Reviewed by Megan Whalen Turner If there really are only seven original plots in the world, it's odd that boy meets girl is always mentioned, and society goes bad and attacks the good guy never is. Yet we have Fahrenheit 451, The Giver, The House of the Scorpion, and now, following a long tradition of Brave New Worlds, The Hunger Games. Collins hasn't tied her future to a specific date, or weighted it down with too much finger wagging. Rather less 1984 and rather more Death Race 2000, hers is a gripping story set in a postapocalyptic world where a

replacement for the United States demands a tribute from each of its territories: two children to be used as gladiators in a televised fight to the death. Katniss, from what was once Appalachia, offers to take the place of her sister in the Hunger Games, but after this ultimate sacrifice, she is entirely focused on survival at any cost. It is her teammate, Peeta, who recognizes the importance of holding on to one's humanity in such inhuman circumstances. It's a credit to Collins's skill at characterization that Katniss, like a new Theseus, is cold, calculating and still likable. She has the attributes to be a winner, where Peeta has the grace to be a good loser. It's no accident that these games are presented as pop culture. Every generation projects its fear: runaway science, communism, overpopulation, nuclear wars and, now, reality TV. The State of Panem—which needs to keep its tributaries subdued and its citizens complacent—may have created the Games, but mindless television is the real danger, the means by which society pacifies its citizens and punishes those who fail to conform. Will its connection to reality TV, ubiquitous today, date the book? It might, but for now, it makes this the right book at the right time. What happens if we choose entertainment over humanity? In Collins's world, we'll be obsessed with grooming, we'll talk funny, and all our sentences will end with the same rise as questions. When Katniss is sent to stylists to be made more telegenic before she competes, she stands naked in front of them, strangely unembarrassed. They're so unlike people that I'm no more self-conscious than if a trio of oddly colored birds were pecking around my feet, she thinks. In order not to hate these creatures who are sending her to her death, she imagines them as pets. It isn't just the contestants who risk the loss of their humanity. It is all who watch. Katniss struggles to win not only the Games but the inherent contest for audience approval. Because this is the first book in a series, not everything is resolved, and what is left unanswered is the central question. Has she sacrificed too much? We know what she has given up to survive, but not whether the price was too high. Readers will wait eagerly to learn more. Megan Whalen Turner is the author of the Newbery Honor book *The Thief* and its sequels, *The Queen of Attolia* and *The King of Attolia*. The next book in the series will be published by Greenwillow in 2010. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Grade 7 Up -In a not-too-distant future, the United States of America has collapsed, weakened by drought, fire, famine, and war, to be replaced by Panem, a country divided into the Capitol and 12 districts. Each year, two young representatives from each district are selected by lottery to participate in The Hunger Games. Part entertainment, part brutal intimidation of the subjugated districts, the televised games are broadcasted throughout Panem as the 24 participants are forced

to eliminate their competitors, literally, with all citizens required to watch. When 16-year-old Katniss's young sister, Prim, is selected as the mining district's female representative, Katniss volunteers to take her place. She and her male counterpart, Peeta, the son of the town baker who seems to have all the fighting skills of a lump of bread dough, will be pitted against bigger, stronger representatives who have trained for this their whole lives. Collins's characters are completely realistic and sympathetic as they form alliances and friendships in the face of overwhelming odds; the plot is tense, dramatic, and engrossing. This book will definitely resonate with the generation raised on reality shows like 'Survivor' and 'American Gladiator.' Book one of a planned trilogy. Jane Henriksen Baird, Anchorage Public Library, AK Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

The book came packaged nicely and arrived on time. As a huge Hunger Games fan, I was extremely excited to receive this book. I've been completely obsessed with Hunger Games for several years, never miss any books or movies of it. The author's imagination is amazing which draw me into the story so completely that it's hard to put the book down. Trust me, you won't be disappointed. All in all, this is a really good book which are a great gift for every Hunger Games fan!

I had heard so much about this book that I just had to get it. I bought this one and the second one in the trilogy, *Catching Fire*, at the same time and read them both in a little more than a day =) The Hunger Games gives us a look in a possible future of the society and world we live in today. We follow Katniss about a century after environmental catastrophes have changed the face of North America and the former United States is now Panem, a nation divided into 12 districts and a Capitol. Katniss lives in district 12 and has been taking care of her mother and little sister since her father died years ago. Living in poverty, Katniss relies on unconventional methods to feed her family with the help of her best friend Gale. 74 years before the Districts rebelled against The Capitol and lost. As a lesson to its citizens The Capitol holds The Hunger Games every year. The Hunger Games are a reality show where 2 children of each district enter an arena and the last one left alive will be set for life. Yes, you read that right, the last one left alive! They have to kill each other! I have to say I was pleasantly surprised by how amazing this book is. Suzanne has created such a believable world and characters that is just so easy to get lost in their lives. It is shocking and disturbing to realize how credible is this tragic future created by her. How easy it is to believe that our utter disregard for the Earth can lead us to such a life and our society's love for reality TV and

obsession with perfection can lead us to a society as such described in *The Capitol*, where people look like freaks by over using plastic surgery. I fell completely in love with Katniss. She is such a great heroine and you can't help but root for her every step of the way. Her love and devotion for her sister is heart breaking and seeing her putting herself on the line so that her little sister doesn't have to go the brutal Games is an inspiration. I was utterly disturbed by this future world. The idea that watching kids killing each other is entertainment disgusted me. This book brought me to tears so many times. It is impossible to read it and not commit yourself to it completely! There is also romance in this book and what every fan of this series is going to ask is which Team are on? Team Peeta or Team Gale? *The Hunger Games* is a must read for any YA lover out there. Its fun, emotional, entertaining, politically engaged, disturbing, action packed, it has got it all. I did not put down this book for a second! If you haven't read *The Hunger Games*, what are you waiting for? Originally Posted at Welcome to Larissa's Bookish Life

It's not that I fell victim to the hype; "*The Hunger Games*" was recommended by a coworker at least a couple of years back - the recent release of the film is what moved it up on my reading list. The story represents for me something of a parallel universe that takes Reality TV to the next level. It reads like a fusion of sci-fi adventure and romance, neither genre alone is typically enough to draw much interest from me; but the subtext, as I read it, provided a much richer experience of the story. I couldn't help thinking about the similarities between "*The Games*" and the Reality TV show, "*Survivor*". Both are televised events featuring contestants (tributes) who compete for a prize (fame and fortune) by voting off all other competition (or killing them). Through this lens, the story becomes a cautionary tale warning us of the dangers of a society desensitized to violence; where viewing the most atrocious scenes of human debasement becomes entertainment for the nation. Where the manipulation of human emotion - by The Gamemakers (entertainment industry) and tributes (the romance back-story of Katniss and Peeta or any number of "*Survivor*" contestants who've manipulated fellow players to stay in the game) - is commonplace; expected even and ultimately, if you're really good at it, rewarded with the prize. Today's prize is a million dollars and the potential to earn more if your celebrity status is sealed due to a particularly vile form of manipulation and cruelty. Some years from now, the prize could be your life. The potency of the former statement is magnified when I recall my feelings towards one of this season's "*Survivor - One World*" contestants. While I don't recall the guy's name; I clearly recall his persona and particular brand of cruelty. A young, privileged, southerner and - by all indications of how he played the game - well versed in the ways of subjugation and manipulation to get what he wants; to win.

During a tribal counsel; he attacked a fellow contestant with the most despicable assaults to the other guy's profession (a comedian), economic status (underemployed, barely making it - could really use a million dollars!) and character (called him lazy, needing to get a "real job"). His tone was sharp, sassy even; condescending and belittling beyond the point of cruel and rife with racial stereotype. In the following episode, he fell ill with appendicitis. I relished in his pain; told myself I could care less if he died and in that moment realized the failure of my humanity. In that moment, I was one of the people from the Capitol. Both stories will forever be connected in my memory, the preferred being Collins' imagined portrayal of the ultimate survival game. Her writing is accessible and efficient - perfect for a teen/young adult read - while well paced and sufficiently nuanced (there are elements of government control, genetic engineering and social repression here as well) for a broader audience. Although I don't plan to watch another episode of "Survivor", I'm sure to read the next installments of Collins' trilogy; imagined, fictional cruelty is much more entertaining than the real life version. A Recommended read, Enjoy!

The Hunger Games is a riveting story that hooks you in the first few pages. I couldn't put it down the first time and read it just as eagerly the second time. The characters are complex and likable, the story is well paced with action and good dialog with just enough romance to soften it. The concept is devastating and has the reader caring about these people and this world right from the onset. Katniss is good to the core, but is unpolished and awkward enough to be believable and likable (I don't like it when authors create heroines that are seemingly perfect). Peeta is strong in all the ways Katniss is not, which makes for an interesting relationship. Even the side characters are interesting and complex. It is very well written and so easy to fall into and forget where you really are. I highly recommend reading The Hunger Games!

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