The Hunger Games
Part I Discussion Questions

1. The story is set in the future, so when Katniss references her ancestors, she is referring to us. What has happened to North America? How might we have contributed to the destruction of it?

2. Gale makes the comment that the Capitol wants the districts to be divided, that it is to their advantage. What does he mean by this?

3. Katniss lives in the “Seam” of district 12. Why do you think it is named the “Seam”? What is a seam and how might it apply to her neighborhood?

4. Would you volunteer for your little sister (or brother, or older sibling, or friend)? Why or why not? What does it tell you about Katniss?

5. Why couldn’t Katniss’s mother take care of Katniss or her sister Prim? If they lived somewhere other than the Seam, would things have been different for her mother?

6. How do you feel about the victors of the Hunger Games earning free food for their fellow citizens? What problems might arise?

7. Why doesn’t Katniss want to get close to any of the tributes, including Peeta?

8. Why is it ironic that Effie calls district 12 barbaric?

9. Do you think it is merely coincidence that the red-headed Avox girl is serving the district 12 tributes, the nearest district from where she was captured? Could it be possible that the Capitol knows Katniss was in the woods that day? Why or why not?

10. Compare the modern conveniences in the Capitol with the primitive living conditions of District 12. List them.

11. Why the stark contrast between the two? What other differences do you see between the Capitol and District 12?

12. How would you respond to Katniss’s private session if you were a Gamemaker? Why?

13. Why does Haymitch have difficulty coaching Katniss for her interview? How would you coach her if you were him?

14. Describe Caesar Flickerman. Does he remind you of any current TV personalities or talk show hosts?

15. What do you think Peeta’s motivation is with his announcement at the end of part 1?
Part II Questions

1. Peeta says that he doesn’t want to lose himself once the Games begin and that he wants to prove he’s not just a “piece in their Games.” What does he mean by this?

2. What is the purpose of a district token? Can you think of any events in real life where people might bring a token with them? Explain.

3. How will the Capitol and audience be able to locate the tributes in the arena? What does this remind you of?

4. How do you feel about Capitol residents touring the past arenas? How does it make Katniss feel? Can you think of places that people vacation to that might be similar to the Hunger Games arenas? Why do people visit them? Are we any different than the Capitol residents in this regard? Why or why not?

5. Would you join an alliance or play the game on your own? Why?

6. Where are the cameras? They aren’t visible to Katniss, therefore they aren’t visible to the readers. Where do you think they are hidden? Or are they so high-tech that they are invisible? Elaborate.

7. What is the Capitol’s attitude about living things? What about their creations, like the muttations? The Capitol people/government left the male jabberjays to die out and did not destroy the tracker jacker nests around the districts (only those near the Capitol). What does this say about the Capitol?

8. Peeta aligns with the Careers and Katniss eventually aligns with Rue. What are the benefits of alliances? What are the downfalls?

9. How do the conditions in District 11 differ from those in District 12? Explain

10. Why doesn’t the Capitol want the viewers to learn about the other districts? How does it benefit the Capitol?

11. Why does Rue like mockingjays? Why does Katniss like mockingjays? How are the two girls similar to the bird?

12. Describe the Careers’ survival skills. In what ways are they superior to Katniss’s and the other tributes? In what ways are they lacking?

13. What does the word “rue” mean? What does it mean to “rue the day”? How is this symbolic of the events at the end of part II?

14. If Katniss had given Rue her knife when they separated, would things have turned out differently for Rue? Why or why not?

15. Analyze the meadow song Katniss sings to Rue. She says it’s often sung to crying babies (think about “Rock-a-bye, Baby” or other lullabies). How does the song fit the moment? How does it relate to Rue?

Part III Questions

1. Katniss’s first reaction when she hears the news about the rule change is to call out Peeta’s name, despite the dangers of alerting the tributes to her presence. Our first reactions are usually are truest; so how does Katniss really feel about Peeta? Is it true that she thinks she must seek him out because no one in district 12 would forgive her. Or is there more to it?

2. Katniss is constantly thinking about how the audience is perceiving her, whereas Peeta (we think,
3. Why is Katniss willing to go to the feast to get the medicine for Peeta?

4. In order to go to the feast, Katniss must drug Peeta. Of course, we know it’s never a good idea to drug your friends. Is this an exception? Does it make that act morally acceptable? Why or why not.

5. Further discuss the moral dilemma Katniss faces with saving Peeta’s life with the phrase: “The end justifies the means.” She reasons that the means to get the medicine (knocking Peeta out) justifies the end result (saving his life). How do we use this reasoning in real life? Do lawmakers/politicians make decisions based on this? How? (Give examples.)

6. Discuss the issue of “paybacks.” List examples of characters who feel as though they owed another character something.

7. Why do you think some characters (like Katniss and Thresh) feel as though they “owe” someone for kindness, and others (like Peeta) never expect “payment” for their kindness shown.

8. Katniss wonders if her family will stay at home to watch the feast or go to the town square, where it will be broadcast and certainly school will be canceled so people can view it live. Where do you think her mother and sister will watch it? What does it say about their society that it is not only mandatory viewing, but worthy of canceling school for? What sort of events do we cancel school for or have a holiday break? Does this reflect our community’s priorities? Why/why not?

9. What psychological impact could the wolf mutts have on a tribute? Why? Is this worse than the physical threat? Explain.

10. Why does Katniss wait so long to kill Cato? How does she feel when she finally does?

11. Right before the rule change is announced Katniss is looking around for a stick for Peeta’s tourniquet and finds her arrow instead (page 342). We know why Katniss picks up the arrow, but the audience does not hear her thought process. From their viewpoint, what might it look like instead?

12. Katniss’s first reaction to the second rule change (which revokes the first rule change) is to shoot Peeta when she sees his hand grabbing the knife. When she realizes that he does not intend to defend himself or kill her, she feels ashamed of her gut reaction to kill him. Do you think she could really kill him, as she almost did? Why or why not?

13. Why is the moment with the berries an act of rebellion against the Capitol?

14. How we behave when we are placed into uncomfortable or terrible situations says a lot about our character. Which tributes showed humanity toward others, showed they had good character, in the arena? Which tributes gave in to cruelty and went along with the inhumanity of the Games? How did they show their true colors?

15. When the victors greet their mentor, escort, and stylist, why do they wear the same outfit they wore when they entered the arena? How might this be perceived by the Capitol audience?

16. What will happen next? Will Katniss and Peeta begin a relationship? How will Gale react? How will their lives change?
End of Novel Discussion Questions - Making Connections

1. Who is your favorite character in *The Hunger Games*? Why? What made you like this character?

2. Who was your least favorite character in *The Hunger Games*? Why? What did this character do to make you dislike him/her?

3. Which character reminds you of someone you know? Why? Explain why the character reminds you of that particular person.

4. Which character can you most relate to in *The Hunger Games*? Give specific examples from the novel.

5. If you could be any character in the novel, which character would you choose to be and why?

6. What quality or trait of that particular character (in #5) is one that you would like to develop within yourself? Why? How does that character demonstrate that trait/quality in the novel?

7. What happened in *The Hunger Games* that reminds you of your own life or something you have experienced? Explain by telling what happened in the book then what happened to you (or how it reminds you of something in your life).

8. What is the most important choice made by a character in the novel? Why does that character make that choice? Would you make the same choice? Why or why not.

9. Would you change the ending of *The Hunger Games*? If yes, tell your ending and why you would change it. If no, explain why the ending is perfect the way it is.

10. Which character matures the most in *The Hunger Games*? Give specific examples of how that character changes.