The Giver
Adapted by Eric Coble
From the book by Lois Lowry
*Especially for Grades 4 and up

By the Barter Players, Barter Stage II, Fall 2016
On tour January thru March 2017

(NOTE: standards listed below are for reading The Giver, seeing a performance of the play and completing the study guide.)

Virginia SOLs
English –4.5, 5.1, 5.4, 5.5, 5.7, 5.9, 6.2, 6.4, 6.5, 6.7, 6.9, 7.1, 7.4, 7.5, 7.7, 7.9, 8.2, 8.4, 8.5, 8.7, 8.9, 9.1, 9.3, 9.4, 9.6, 10.1, 10.3, 10.4, 10.6
Theatre Arts – M.6, M.7, M.8, M.9, M.13, M.14, TI.6, TI.7, TI.8, TI.9, TI.11, TI.12, TI.15, TII.2, TII.12, TII.14, TII.15, TIII.6, TIII.12

Tennessee and North Carolina Common Core State Standards
English/Language Arts - Reading Literacy: 4.1, 4.3, 4.4, 4.6, 5.1, 5.3, 5.4, 5.6, 6.1, 6.4, 6.6, 6.7, 6.9, 7.1, 7.4, 7.7, 7.9, 8.1, 8.4, 8.6, 8.7, 9-10.1, 9-10.4, 9-10.9
English Language Arts – Writing: 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.7, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.7, 5.9, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.7, 6.9, 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 7.7, 7.9, 8.1, 8.2, 8.3, 8.7, 8.9, 9-10.1, 9-10.2, 9-10.3, 9-10.7, 9-10.9

TCAPS
Theatre – 4.6.1, 4.6.4, 4.7.1, 4.7.2, 4.8.1, 5.6.1, 5.6.4, 5.7.1, 5.7.2, 5.8.1
Theatre 6-8: 6.1, 6.2, 7.1, 7.2  Theatre 9-12: 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 7.1, 7.2

North Carolina Essential Standards
Theatre Arts –4.A.1, 5.A.1, 5.AE.1, 5.CU.1, 6.C.1, 6.C.2, 6.A.1, 6.AE.1, 7.C.1, 7.C.2, 7.A.1, 7.AE.1, 8.C.1, 8.C.2, 8.A.1, 8.AE.1, 8.CU.1, 8.CU.2, B.C.1, B.C.2, B.A.1, B.AE.1, B.CU.1, B.CU.2, I.A.1, I.AE.1, I.CU.2

Setting
Place: in and around the Community. Time: soon.
Characters

*Jonas* – an eleven-year-old boy, about to turn twelve
*Father* – Jonas’s father, works at the Nurturing Center
*Mother* – Jonas’s mother, an official in the Justice Dept.
*The Giver* – an old man who holds all the memories
*Lily* – Jonas’s younger sister
*Asher* – Jonas’s best friend
*Fiona* – another friend of Jonas’s
*Chief Elder* – the Master of Ceremony
*Rosemary* – a girl from the Past

Note: Cast Size and Doubling of Actors
This production of *The Giver* features only six actors, with some actors playing more than one role. Doubling of actors requires distinction between characters. In this production, characters will be distinguished by costume, voice and other physical character traits.

Vocabulary Words
Define the meaning of the following words then use them correctly in a sentence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>community</th>
<th>release</th>
<th>unpredictable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>gender</td>
<td>anxiety</td>
<td>obsolete</td>
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<tr>
<td>apprehensive</td>
<td>selection</td>
<td>assimilate</td>
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<tr>
<td>assignment</td>
<td>receiver</td>
<td>wisdom</td>
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<td>nurture</td>
<td>integrity</td>
<td>perceive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>comfort</td>
<td>magnitude</td>
<td>precision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>discipline</td>
<td>comprehend</td>
<td>expertise</td>
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<tr>
<td>hoard</td>
<td>prohibit</td>
<td>serene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>buoyancy</td>
<td>transmit</td>
<td>distraction</td>
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<tr>
<td>impulse</td>
<td>exhilarate</td>
<td>chaos</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Synopsis

A long time ago, the community decided to be ruled by a Committee of Elders. The Committee of Elders controls everyone and everything, blasting rules and reprimands from loudspeakers. Each peer group is identified by its age and must follow specific rules designed for that group. When children become Eights, they begin mandatory volunteering and are closely observed by the Committee of Elders so that the committee can assign a lifelong profession to each child at the Ceremony of Twelve, which takes place every year during the December Ceremony.

_The Giver_ begins with Jonas’ apprehension about his Ceremony of Twelve, when he will be assigned his lifelong job. Unlike his friends, Fiona and Asher, who’s Assignments are almost predictable, Jonas has no idea what his own Assignment will be. At the Ceremony, Jonas learns that he has been selected to become the next Receiver of Memory, the highest position in the community.

Jonas begins training under the present Receiver of Memory, an older man whom Jonas calls The Giver. The Giver lives alone in private rooms that are lined with shelves full of books. Jonas’ training involves receiving, from The Giver, all of the emotions and memories of experiences that the people in the community chose to give up to attain Sameness and the illusion of social order. The first memory that Jonas receives is a sled ride down a snow-covered hill, something he has never experienced before. Eventually, through memories, The Giver teaches Jonas about color, love, war, and pain. Jonas begins to understand the hypocrisy that exists in the community. He also realizes that people have given up their freedoms to feel and think as individuals, choosing instead to be controlled by others.

One day, Jonas asks The Giver if he can watch a video of a release his father performed on an infant earlier that morning. He watches and is horrified when he realizes that a release is really forced death by lethal injection. Jonas discusses his feelings with The Giver, and they decide on a plan that will force the people to give up Sameness. However, before they can carry out their plan, Jonas learns that Gabriel, an infant who has been staying with Jonas’ family, is scheduled to be released — killed – because he still cries through the night. To prevent Gabriel’s death, Jonas kidnaps Gabriel and together they escape to Elsewhere. By leaving the community, all of the memories that Jonas has received from The Giver will be transmitted back to the citizens, forcing them to experience feelings and emotions and to remember their past.

Jonas travels for days and days with Gabriel, who is dying from starvation and the cold weather. Finally, they come to the top of a hill where there is snow and a sled. They get on the sled and ride downhill toward music and Christmas lights.
Biography of the Author – Lois Lowry

Lois Lowry was born on March 20, 1937 in Honolulu, Hawaii. She learned to read at an early age, and she loved to create stories in her mind as a child. As a college student, she studied writing with the hope of becoming a novelist, but married before finishing her degree, and stayed at home to raise her four children. Eventually, she returned to school to complete her degree at the University of Southern Maine in 1972. During this time, Lowry started publishing short stories. Her first novel, *A Summer to Die*, was published in 1977. Over the next few years, Lowry published several more books, including the *Anastasia Krupnik* series. In 1990, Lowry received the Newbery Medal for Children’s Literature for her book *Number the Stars*. She received it again in 1993 for *The Giver*.

One of America’s most celebrated young adult novelists, Lois Lowry has engaged millions of readers with her careful and sensitive stories dealing with major issues like death, cancer, and the Holocaust. She lives in Cambridge, MA where she remains an active writer.

Biography of the Playwright – Eric Coble

Eric Coble was born in Edinburgh, Scotland and bred on the Navajo and Ute reservations in New Mexico and Colorado. His plays have been produced Off-Broadway and on four continents, including productions at Manhattan Class Company, the Kennedy Center, Alabama Shakespeare Festival, Cleveland Play House, Actors Theatre of Louisville, Alliance Theater, Stages Repertory, and the Contemporary American Theater Festival. His awards include the AT&T Onstage Award and National Theatre Conference Playwriting Award. Mr. Coble is a member of the Cleveland Play House Playwrights Unit, and writes, acts, and plays with his family in Cleveland, Ohio.
A Brief History

Barter Theatre was founded during the Great Depression by Robert Porterfield, an enterprising young actor. He and his fellow actors found themselves out of work and hungry in New York City. Porterfield contrasted that to the abundance of food, but lack of live theatre, around his home region in Southwest Virginia. He returned to Washington County with an extraordinary proposition: bartering produce from the farms and gardens of the area to gain admission to see a play.

Barter Theatre opened its doors on June 10, 1933 proclaiming, “With vegetables you cannot sell, you can buy a good laugh.” The price of admission was 40 cents or the equivalent in produce, the concept of trading “ham for Hamlet” caught on quickly. At the end of the first season, the Barter Company cleared $4.35 in cash, two barrels of jelly and enjoyed a collective weight gain of over 300 pounds.

Playwrights including Noel Coward, Tennessee Williams and Thornton Wilder accepted Virginia ham as payment for royalties. An exception was George Bernard Shaw, a vegetarian, who bartered the rights to his plays for spinach.

Today, Barter Theatre has a reputation as a theatre where many actors performed before going on to achieve fame and fortune. The most recognized of these alumni include Gregory Peck, Patricia Neal, Ernest Borgnine, Hume Cronyn, Ned Beatty, Gary Collins, Larry Linville and Frances Fisher. The list also included James Burrows, creator of Cheers, Barry Corbin, and the late Jim Varney.

Robert Porterfield passed away in 1971. His successor, Rex Partington, had been at Barter in the 1950s as an actor and in the 1970s as stage manager. Rex returned as chief administrator from 1972 until his retirement in 1992. In March 2006, he passed away.

Richard Rose was named the producing artistic director in October 1992. In that time, attendance has grown from 42,000 annual patrons to more than 163,000 annual patrons. Significant capital improvements have also been made. Including maintenance to both theatres, and in 2006, the addition of The Barter Café at Stage II and dramatic improvements to Porterfield Square.

Barter represents three distinct venues of live theatre: Barter Theatre Main Stage, Barter Theatre Stage II and The Barter Players. Barter Theatre, with over 500 seats, features traditional theatre in a luxurious setting. Barter Stage II, across the street from Barter Main Stage and beyond Porterfield Square, offers seating for 167 around a thrust stage in an intimate setting and is perfect for more adventurous productions. The Barter Players is a talented ensemble of actors, producing plays for young audiences throughout the year.

History is always in the making at Barter Theatre, building on legends of the past; Barter looks forward to the challenge of growth in the future.
WORD SEARCH

Find the following words below:
Questions/Activities

1. After you read the book *The Giver* and see The Barter Player’s production of the play, **write a paper comparing and contrasting the two.** Which did you prefer and why? Which chapters from the book were left out of the play? Why do you think this was done? **Working in groups, pick one these chapters and turn it into a dramatic scene.** Write a script, assign the parts, design costumes and props and sound effects, rehearse it and present it to your class. Is it easy to adapt a book or story into a play? **Discuss.**

**Everyone’s A Critic!**

2. **Write a critique** of The Barter Player’s production of *The Giver.* Include the production values (set, costumes, lights, props, sound, etc.), each actor’s performance and the script. What did you like? What didn’t you like? How would you have designed/directed/acted it differently?

“If you were to be lost in the river, Jonas, your memories would not be lost with you. Memories are forever.”

3. What is your favorite memory? Why is it your favorite? What did it make you feel? How does this compare to your least favorite memory? **Discuss.**

**ACTIVITY**

Draw a picture of your favorite memory. Be sure to use every color you remember from that moment. On another piece of paper, make a list of the sounds, smells, tastes, and touches that accompany this memory. Now imagine that you can remember that moment only in black and white, without any of the accompanying senses. How does that affect your emotional connection to that moment? **Discuss.**
“The life where nothing was ever unexpected. Or inconvenient. Or unusual. The life without color, pain or past.”

4. As explained by The Giver, society’s decision to establish Sameness was based on its desire to remain safe from the pains that humanity can suffer. What would you be willing to give up to end suffering in the world? Is suffering an integral part of the human condition? What is the relationship between pain and pleasure? Can you have one without the other? Discuss.

Pick one of the following scenes and rewrite it from the point of view of the given character:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scene</th>
<th>Point-of-view</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Ceremony of Twelve</td>
<td>Fiona</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jonas and the geraniums</td>
<td>Asher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rosemary’s release</td>
<td>Rosemary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Read your scene aloud in class then discuss how point-of-view affects a story.

5. What does the sled symbolize in this story? After meeting with The Giver, what are the emotions Jonas associates with riding a sled? Discuss.

“Even trained for years as they all had been in precision of language, what words could you use which would give another the experience of sunshine?”

6. Imagine that you have a blind friend who asks you to describe a sunset. What words would you use? How can the other senses be used to describe something visual? Make a list of these words – how do they compare to the others in your class? Discuss.
ORAL PRESENTATION
Pick one of the topics below. Research it thoroughly and, using visual aids, present your findings to the class.

How color is created
How memory works
History of stuffed animals
apples       Lois Lowry
dystopian literature

PERSUADE ME!
Imagine you are Jonas and you discover that your father is about to “release” one of the identical twins. Write a letter to the Committee of Elders persuading them to change the policy on identical twins. Explain how being identical complies with the community’s desire for “sameness.” Be sure to give reasons why identical twins could be useful to society.
7. Jonas, The Giver, Gabe, and Rosemary all have pale eyes, while almost everyone else in the community has dark eyes. What do you think this means? Discuss.

8. In Jonas’s community, what does it mean to be “released?” Does that word mean the same thing to Jonas’s father as it does to Jonas? At the end of the book, has Jonas found release? Discuss.

9. How did Jonas help Gabe fall asleep at night? What was keeping Gabe awake and fretful? If you could give a memory to someone to help them sleep, what would it be? Discuss.

10. What does Jonas insist The Giver keep for himself? Why do you think Jonas insists on this?

Write it!

In The Giver, the people in Jonas’s community use different words – what they call precision language. For example, a baby is referred to as a “newchild,” stuffed animals are referred to as “comfort objects,” and a switch is referred to as a “discipline wand.” Create new words for everyday items around you then write a short story incorporating them. Make certain that those who read your story are able to ascertain what these items are by how they are used/described.
Suggested Reading

Other books by Lois Lowry:

Gathering Blue
Son
Messenger
Number the Stars
Anastasia Krupnik
A Summer to Die
Gooney Bird Greene
Gossamer
Autumn Street
The Silent Boy
All About Sam