Catching Fire

by Suzanne Collins



About the Book

Katniss and Peeta have returned to their home District, but the return is hardly triumphant. Haunted by nightmares of the brutal deaths in the arena, Katniss is confused by her feelings for Peeta, while her relationship with her hunting partner and oldest friend, Gale, is changed in subtle ways. Most challenging, though, is her relationship to the leaders in the Capitol. Her act of defiance in attempting a double suicide at the end of the Games forced them to allow both her and Peeta to live, and there are intimations that Katniss has now become a symbol for rebellion in the Districts. The Victory Tour, designed to remind the people in the Districts of the power of the Capitol, may be having quite a different effect this year.

Then the President announces plans for the Quarter Quell, the 75th anniversary Games. Every 25 years the Capitol devises a new twist for the reaping, and this year they announce that the tributes will be chosen from among the victors of previous Games. This ensures that Katniss will have to return to the Games since she is the only female victor from her District. Thrown into the arena once more with Peeta, her strategy must be different this year, but even Katniss doesn?t realize all the implications of these Games and the outside forces that are gathering strength to undermine the entire society.

Discussion Guide

1. How did Katniss?s participation in the Games change her relationship with Gale? Why does she say, ?The Games have spoiled even that?There?s no going back.?

2. What emotions does Peeta stir in Katniss? Though she is stiff and formal with him, what are her true feelings? How did the events in the first Games affect their relationship?

3. Why does President Snow come to Katniss?s home? What does he mean when he says, ??you have provided a spark

which left unattended may grow into an inferno ?? What, exactly, was the significance of the handful of poisonous berries at the end of **The Hunger Games**?

4. How do the events of the Victory Tour affect Katniss and Peeta, their relationship to each other, and their feelings about their future?

5. Why does the Capitol devise a special reaping procedure for every 25th Game? Do you believe the requirements for this Quarter Quell were decided in the past or were they designed for this Game to force Katniss and Peeta back to the Arena?

6. What is the significance of the mockingjay image? What does it mean to the people in the Districts and the people in the Capitol? Why does Plutarch Heavensbee show Katniss the hidden mockingjay image on his watch? Discuss how the mockingjay species developed and how Katniss happened to wear the pin during the first Games.

7. Why does Gale refuse Katniss?s offer to try to escape into the wild? What does he mean when he says, ?It can?t be about just saving *us* anymore?? How does Gale?s whipping change Katniss?s thinking about escape and her feelings for Gale?

8. What makes Katniss say, ?No wonder I won the Games. No decent person ever does.? Is she being too hard on herself? What makes her realize that fighting the Capitol is more important than running away? What is the importance of her meeting with Bonnie and Twill in the forest?

9. Why does the Capitol push plans for the wedding of Katniss and Peeta if they know that they will be returning to the Games in the Quarter Quell? What does the Capitol hope to gain by sending previous victors back to the Games? Is it really, as Katniss says, a way to show ?that hope was an illusion??

10. What do Katniss and Peeta learn when they watch the video of Haymitch?s Hunger Games, the 2nd Quarter Quell? How does it affect their understanding of Haymitch and the mockingjay symbol? How did Haymitch trick the Capitol?

11. How do both Peeta and Katniss mock the Gamemakers during the ?talent show? portion of the training? Why do they each take the chance of offending those who will control the Games? How does this change their feelings for each other?

12. Discuss the effect on Katniss of what happens to Darius and Cinna. Why are the Capitol officials attacking those who have befriended her? Why is Cinna attacked just before Katniss is placed in the Arena?

13. Why is Katniss determined to keep Peeta alive during the Games, even at the expense of her own life? When does she realize the importance of forming alliances with the other tributes? Why does Finnick save Peeta?s life? When does Katniss realize that her first impression of Finnick was wrong?

14. Describe the relationship between Katniss and Johanna. What made Katniss realize that Wiress and Beetee would be helpful allies in the Arena? What important contribution does each one of the allies make to keep the group alive? What is the role of the unseen ?sponsors??

15. What is more harmful to the players in this Game --- the physical traumas like the fog and rain of fire, or the

emotional trauma of hearing the jabberjays?

16. What does Haymitch mean when he tells Katniss before the Game begin, ?You just remember who the enemy is ? that?s all.? Who *is* the enemy? Have the other tributes been trying to keep Peeta or Katniss alive? Which of them is most important to the rebellion?

17. Why were Katniss and Peeta not aware of the plans for the rebellion? Why were they kept in the dark when other tributes knew about it?

18. What is the meaning of the title? How many different ways can you identify the theme of ?catching fire? in this volume?

Comparing *The Hunger Games* and *Catching Fire*:

1. Discuss the differences between the Games in the first volume and the second --- the training sessions, the interviews, the set-up of the Arena, the strategies that Katniss and Peeta use. How is each of them changed by the time they spend in the Arena?

2. What are the forces that contribute to the rebellion in **Catching Fire**? Were they already starting to happen in **The Hunger Games**? What clues can you find in the books about the rebellion?

3. Why are all citizens of Panem required to watch The Hunger Games on television? How does this affect the people? Why haven?t they rebelled earlier against the brutality of the Games? Discuss the effect of television and reality TV in your own life.

4. What are your predictions for the third volume in the series?

5. Compare the society in Panem (the government, its tight control on the population, and the growing rebellion) to others that you have studied or encountered in books or films. Consider historical and contemporary nations as well as fictional worlds. What does Panem have in common with these cultures, and how does it differ? What can we learn about our own world from studying and reading about historical and fictional societies?

Author Bio

Bestselling author Suzanne Collins first made her mark in children"s literature with the *New York Times* bestselling *Underland Chronicles* series for middle grade readers. Her debut for readers aged 12 and up, THE HUNGER GAMES, (September 2008), immediately became a *New York Times* bestseller, appealing to both teen readers and adults. It was called "addictive" by Stephen King in *Entertainment Weekly*, and "amazing" by Stephenie Meyer on her website, and was named a *New York Times* Notable Book of 2008 and a *New York Times Book Review* Editors' Choice.

CATCHING FIRE (September 2009), the second book in *The Hunger Games* trilogy, debuted at #1 on the *USA Today* bestseller list and simultaneously appeared at #1 on the *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal* and *Publishers Weekly* bestseller lists. It was named a *Time Magazine* Top Ten Fiction Book of 2009, a *New York Times Book Review* Editors' Choice, and a *People Magazine* (Top 10) Best Book of 2009.

The final book in the trilogy, MOCKINGJAY (August 2010), debuted at #1 on all national bestseller lists during its first week on sale. In a starred review, *Publishers Weekly* said it "accomplishes a rare feat, the last installment being the best yet, a beautifully orchestrated and intelligent novel that succeeds on every level." In April 2010, Suzanne Collins was named to the *TIME* 100 list of "the world's most influential people."

The Hunger Games movie opened on March 23, 2012. Produced by Lionsgate Films and directed by Gary Ross, the movie stars Jennifer Lawrence (Katniss), Josh Hutcherson (Peeta) and Liam Hemsworth (Gale).

Suzanne Collins has also had a successful and prolific career writing for children's television. She has worked on the staffs of several Nickelodeon shows, including the Emmy-nominated hit "Clarissa Explains It All" and "The Mystery Files of Shelby Woo." She received a Writers Guild of America nomination in animation for co-writing the critically acclaimed Christmas special, "Santa, Baby!"

Critical Praise

"Whereas Katniss kills with finesse, Collins writes with raw power."

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Publication Date: October 8, 2013
Genres: Fantasy, Science Fiction, Young Adult 13+
Paperback: 400 pages
Publisher: Scholastic Paperbacks
ISBN-10: 0545603684
ISBN-13: 9780545603683