

Follow, Follow, Follow: Conforming to Society

Task 2: Exploring Identity

Activity 1: Exploring Identity Through Characterization in Novels

Directions:

You will select one novel excerpt from the list below. Each novel deals with themes of conformity and individuality. You will need to identify figurative language and analyze the characters and themes of the novel excerpt to complete this activity. After reading, complete all parts of the activity.

Choose one of the following novel excerpts:

- Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury
- The Giver by Lois Lowry

Author	Ray Bradbury	Title	Fahrenheit 451
1. How does the use of figurative language in the passage help convey the character's desire to be like everyone else?			
Provide a specific example from the passage that illustrates the character's desire to conform.		In 2 or more sentences, explain how this example uses figurative language to help convey the character's desire to be like everyone else.	
Answers will vary. Ex: "He began throwing dust and dirt on the fire. The other men helped, and Montag helped, and there, in the wilderness, the men all moved their hands, putting out the fire together."		The image of Montag joining in with the other men to complete a task confirms his role within their group. They were working as a unit to survive so that they could carry the knowledge for when it was needed.	
2. Using an adjective, describe a character from the text. Use a specific detail from the text to support your response.			
Identify an adjective that describes the character		In 1-2 sentences, provide specific detail from the text to support how the adjective describes the character.	
Answers will vary. Ex: tired		He was tired from running from the government. He was tired after coming to the realization that society was not headed in the right direction.	
3. Choose a character from the text that deals with pressures to conform. Explain, with evidence from the text, how the theme of conformity is revealed through that character.			

Answers will vary.

Ex: Montag has left his old life of being a fireman behind and is trying to become a thinker, a person who can help save society. Towards the end of the novel, when Montag meets up with the band of “hobos” he wants to set the world “on fire” so to speak and share his newly gained knowledge. Granger, the leader of the hobo says to Montag, “we have a better way.” Granger then explains to Montag how the band of hobos is going to infiltrate society once “the war” starts and how society is going to value them again.

Author	Lois Lowry	Title	The Giver
1. How does the use of figurative language in the passage help convey the character’s desire to be like everyone else?			
Provide a specific example from the passage that illustrates the character’s desire to conform.		In 2 or more sentences, explain how this example uses figurative language to help convey the character’s desire to be like everyone else.	
Answers will vary. Ex: “He hunched his shoulders and tried to make himself smaller in the seat. He wanted to disappear, to fade away, not to exist. He didn’t dare to turn and find his parents in the crowd. He couldn’t bear to see their faces darkened with shame.”		In this example, the vivid imagery provides an example to which the audience can easily relate. Everyone has felt a moment when they’re feeling ostracized for some reason, and Jonas is trying to fade into the scenery and draw as little attention as possible, as he contemplates why he was overlooked. Using imagery that the audience can easily understand helps make a connection to the main character.	
2. Using an adjective, describe a character from the text. Use a specific detail from the text to support your response.			
Identify an adjective that describes the character		In 1-2 sentences, provide specific detail from the text to support how the adjective describes the character.	
Answers will vary. Ex: Embarrassed, worried, confused		Jonas’ number has been noticeably skipped while his peers’ have all received an Assignment from the Chief Elder. “Jonas bowed his head and searched through his mind. <i>What had he done wrong?</i> ”	

3. Choose a character from the text that deals with pressures to conform. Explain, with evidence from the text, how the theme of conformity is revealed through that character.	
Answers will vary. Ex: Jonas feels pressure, while waiting for his number to be called. His number is skipped, and he goes through all of the possible reasons why that may have happened. He is hoping that a mistake was made but the Chief Elder does not make errors. His number has been intentionally skipped. He never thinks that there is a positive reason for this alienation, and he does not want to be different from his peers. As the Chief Elder describes the task with which he has been assigned, he grows increasingly concerned and uncomfortable. "Alone? Apart? Jonas listened with increasing unease." Although the task he has been given is one of prestige, he senses he is being ostracized and would far rather be like his peers.	