# The Giver: Maturation Of The Main Character

Lois Lowry’s novel the giver revolves around jona, a protagonist. He changes from being a typical boy of twelve to being a boy with past generations knowledge and wisdom. He’s got emotions he doesn’t know how to handle. At first, he wants to share his changes with his family by transmitting memories to them, but he soon realizes this will not work. After he feels pain and love, Jonas decides that the whole community needs to understand these memories. Therefore, Jonas leaves the community and his memories behind for them to manage. He hopes to change the society so that they may feel love and happiness, and also see colour. Jonas knows that memories are hard to deal with but without memories there is no pain and with no pain, there is no true happiness. Jona lives in a fairly strict and judgemental community which is run by a selection of elderly. As the novel goes on, he starts to uncover a dark truth about his now dystopian community. A dystopian community is a place where no-one would want to live, a place in which one’s rights and freedoms would be gone, a place where the environment would be devastated. A utopian place is ideally perfect in respect of politics, laws, customs and conditions. The word utopia has come to mean a perfect but unreachable society, something that we strive for but can never quite attain, in this case Jona’s community is not perfect as it has strict social control, people are unfairly punished, and the natural world is banished or distrusted. I agree that the novel the giver is set in a dystopian place as its social control is particularly harsh, an example of this is the unfair punishment in the rules of the society.

One dystopian characteristic Lois Lowry employs into the novel is the unfair punishment that is given to those who may go by the government. The community is very strict, and differences and misbehaviour are not tolerated. Some examples of unfair consequences are the inability to keep your feelings to yourself, and extreme punishment for imprecise language. Asher received a spanking each time he used the incorrect word to ask for a snack, to the point where he actually stopped talking. He was three years old. Obviously, the incident traumatized him. There is absolutely no compassion in this community. He asked for a “smack,” so they smacked him. Someone clearly thought it'd teach him to use the correct word, but it only frightened him into not talking. Hitting a toddler for using the incorrect language is extreme. It tells you quite a lot about the community. The most extreme example of unfair consequences is clearly release. Release is just brutal. The community uses it for babies who don’t reach their growth targets or happen to be born as identical twins (they release the smaller or weaker one). Adults can be released for reasons most people would consider harsh too. (Ch.1) If you break 3 rules, you will be released. However, if you are doing one thing, they consider really terrible (like accidentally fly a plane over the community and scaring everyone), then you can be released.

Killing somebody for such little reasons, other than murder or some other terrible crime, is something we would consider an unfair consequence.

they are so serious about the three-rule thing that we even learn that Jonas worries about being released when he takes Gabriel and leaves.

He is extraordinarily necessary to the community, but he is convinced that if he is caught, he will be released.

Social control plays a major role in the community and is closely linked to unfair punishment. In the Community within the Giver, the Elders have an enormous amount of power. They control every aspect of people's lives. There is a daily committee that investigates changes, but they seem to have little actual power, as they just deliberate and make suggestions but pass few changes. The Committee of Elders is another story. They do have power. One task they are assigned is choosing assignments for eleven-year olds at the Ceremony of Twelve. It was a secret choice, made by the leaders of the community, the Committee of Elders, who took the responsibility so seriously that there were never even any jokes made about Assignments. (Ch. 2, p. 15) Jonas has seen the Elders looking at him, deciding what capacity he had for different jobs.

He knew, too, that the Elders were meeting for long hours with all of the instructors that he and the other Elevens had had during their years of school. (pp. 15-16) The Committee of Elders also matches men and women to be mothers and fathers in family units (no one actually has his or her own child).

Their Match, which like all Matches had been monitored by the Committee of Elders for three years before they could apply for children, had always been a successful one. (pp. 48-49). Therefore, the Elders essentially manage each aspect of life.

The last characteristic Lois uses in the novel the giver is how she describes the environment that Jonas and his family breath in. the natural world is banished, there are no living things besides from the people, the community is a place where there is no pain, no feelings, no colour and no emotions. When a teenager starts to experience certain feelings (this is known as a stirring) there is a certain pill that is "needed" to take away those feelings from one another, "he remembered that there was a reference to the stirrings in the book of rules… you're ready for the pills…that's the treatment for stirrings. (page 55, 56) In the effort to attain a perfect society, anything that might stimulate strong feelings has been eliminated. The people do not see colour, they must not use emotional words; they adhere to Sameness in order to avoid conflicts. Individuality is sacrificed to conformity. In the long history of mankind, the strongest feelings in anyone have been those generated by hormones; for this reason, the Community strictly controls these Stirrings in order to maintain peace and contentment. But it is Stirrings, more than any other quality in people, that truly makes them human, bringing them all the emotions that compose their very souls.