

## The Giver

**Read the following passage and answer the question that follows.**

Break for midday meal. Jonas realized he was hungry. He and his groupmates congregated by the tables in front of the Auditorium and took their packaged food.

Yesterday there had been merriment at lunch, a lot of teasing and energy. But today the group stood anxiously, separate from the other children. Jonas watched the new Nines gravitate toward their waiting bicycles, each one admiring his or her nametag. He saw the 5  
Tens stroking their new shortened hair, the females shaking their heads to feel the unaccustomed lightness without the heavy braids they had worn so long.

"I heard about a guy who was absolutely certain he was going to be assigned Engineer," Asher muttered as they ate," and instead they gave him Sanitation Laborer. He went out the next day, jumped into the river, swam across, and joined the next community he came 10  
to. Nobody ever saw him again."

Jonas laughed. "Somebody made that story up, Ash," he said. "My father said he heard that story when he was a Twelve."

But Asher wasn't reassured. He was eyeing the river where it was visible behind the Auditorium. "I can't even swim very well," he said. "My swimming instructor said that I 15  
don't have the right boyishness or something."

"Buoyancy," Jonas corrected him.

"Whatever. I don't have it. I sink."

"Anyway," Jonas pointed out, "have you ever once known of anyone - I mean really known for sure, Asher, not just heard a story about it - who joined another community?" 20

"No," Asher admitted reluctantly. "But you can. It says so in the rules. If you don't fit in, you can apply for Elsewhere and be released. My mother says that once, about ten years ago, someone applied and was gone the next day." Then he chuckled. "She told me that

because I was driving her crazy. She threatened to apply for Else- where."

"She was joking." 25

"I know. But it was true, what she said, that someone did that once. She said that it was really true. Here today and gone tomorrow. Never seen again. Not even a Ceremony of Release."

Jonas shrugged. It didn't worry him. How could someone not fit in? The community was so meticulously ordered, the choices so carefully made. Even the Matching of Spouses 30 was given such weighty consideration that sometimes an adult who applied to receive a spouse waited months or even years before a Match was approved and announced. All of the factors - disposition, energy level, intelligence, and interests - had to correspond and to interact perfectly. Jonas's mother, for example, had higher intelligence than his father; but his father had a calmer disposition. They balanced each other. Their Match, which like 35 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.

Like the Matching of Spouses and the Naming and Placement of new children, the Assignments were scrupulously thought through by the Committee of Elders.

He was certain that his Assignment, whatever it was to be, and Asher's too, would be the 40 right one for them. He only wished that the midday break would conclude, that the audience would reenter the Auditorium, and the suspense would end.

As if in answer to his unspoken wish, the signal came and the crowd began to move toward the doors.



**Question: Based on the extract above, what are your impressions of the Community? Explain with evidence from the passage. Use TWO PEALs and explain with relevant evidence from the passage.**

<b>POINT</b>	
<b>EVIDENCE + ANALYSIS</b>	
<b>LINK</b>	

<b>POINT</b>	
<b>EVIDENCE + ANALYSIS</b>	
<b>LINK</b>	

### **Suggested Answer:**

**Point:** One impression I have of the community is that it is extremely regimented. People comply with having a strict order imposed upon them, even when it involves something as personal as their external appearance.

**Evidence + Analysis:** The words “new shortened hair” remind the reader that the ten year old kids have no choice over their hairstyles, and are compelled to conform to the standardised hair length rule. The words “unaccustomed lightness without the heavy braids they had worn so long” also remind the reader that all the kids have to comply with the hairstyle rule, whether they all wear braids or all cut their hair short. In addition, people also accept jobs that are given to them without protest. The word “assigned” shows us that a job allocation is made and that the community readily accepts it with the exception of a few dissenters whose stories are quickly turned into rumours and urban legends. Hence, it is evident that people in the community are strictly organised and systematically led.

**Link:** Another impression I have of the community is that people are clinical in the way they regard familial relationships.

**Evidence + Analysis:** The sentence “All of the factors - disposition, energy level, intelligence, and interests - had to correspond and to interact perfectly.” is reflective of the fact that the leadership spends time on ensuring the perfect match, rather than allowing couples to interact, learn about each other, compromise and grow as they would in a regular relationship. The word “perfectly” sums up the idea that relationships must be without fault in order to be a “successful one”. In addition, the words “apply for children” imply that children have to be registered or bid for, which suggests that children do not result from love, but from a calculated, considered process that aims to remove any room for error. The words “scrupulously thought through” confirms this dispassionate approach to the way relationships are formed.

**Link:** Hence, it is clear that the community takes an unsentimental view of as well as an impersonal approach to familial relationships.