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And in case you think we forgot the librarians, be sure to check out the Library Applications page, shown on the table of contents in each guide.

From all of us at Junior Library Guild, we wish you and your students good reading and great learning . . . with JLG Selections and JG Guides.
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About the Author

Before becoming a writer of novels, **Suzanne Collins** was an adult playwright and a writer for a number of critically acclaimed children’s television shows. Since then she has written a popular fantasy book series for middle-graders, entitled *The Overland Chronicles*, as well as the children’s picture book, *When Charlie McButton Lost Power*, illustrated by Mike Lester.

Ms. Collins’s most recent series is a fictional trilogy that is nearing completion. *The Hunger Games* was the first title in the series, and *Catching Fire* is the second. Both are about a girl named Katniss who lives in the futuristic country of Panem. The author’s inspiration for this series is rooted in Greek mythology and ancient Roman history. Says Ms. Collins in an interview released by her publisher,

> In keeping with my classical roots, I send my tributes into an updated version of the Roman gladiator games, which entails a ruthless government forcing people to fight to the death as popular entertainment. The world of Panem, particularly in the Capitol, is loaded with Roman references. Panem itself comes from the expression “Panem et Circences,” which translates to “Bread and Circuses.”

The audiences for both the Roman games and reality TV are almost characters in themselves. They can respond with great enthusiasm or play a role in your elimination.

The Hunger Games series is considered **dystopic fiction**, a type of fiction that features a world in which people live in miserable conditions and that often involves war, oppression, violence, suffering, lack of freedom, and poverty. Though these issues are tough, Ms. Collins thinks many young adults are able to handle the concepts presented in her books. Her hope is that readers will come away from *The Hunger Games* and *Catching Fire* with “questions about how the elements of the book relate to their own lives—and, if they’re disturbing, what they will do about them.”

**Sources**


Everett, Sheila Maria.” A Conversation: Questions and Answers: Suzanne Collins, Author of The Hunger Games.” Scholastic, Inc.
Prereading Activities

Book Summary

_Catching Fire_, by Suzanne Collins, is the second in a series of books that starts with _The Hunger Games_. Both books take place in North America after a long string of natural disasters. Encroaching ocean tides have changed the face of the continent, and wars have led to political restructuring of the region. Where once there were Mexico, the United States, and Canada, now there is a new country called Panem.

The ruling elite of Panem live luxuriously in the Capitol, a city west of the Rocky Mountains, while Panem’s other inhabitants struggle to exist in the Capitol’s thirteen surrounding districts. Citizens in Districts 1 through 12 live in service to the Capitol, and those in District 13 are believed to have been wiped out, because they rebelled against Panem’s government.

Life in the districts is focused purely on survival. Each district has a specific industry that makes it useful to the Capitol, and the livelihood of the district’s people depends on their ability to work in that industry. Citizens have little knowledge of what goes on in neighboring districts, and cruelly enforced laws ensure their dependence on the Capitol for food and supplies.

_The Hunger Games_ is the story of Katniss, a sixteen-year-old girl who lives in District 12. In this district, once called Appalachia and now nicknamed “The Seam,” coal mining is the industry. However, Katniss makes her living as an outlaw. She provides for her family by hunting wild game outside district boundaries and selling it on the Black Market—that is, until she’s caught up in the Capitol’s most insidious strategy for terrorizing the districts.

Every year, the Capitol forces districts to participate in a televised event called The Hunger Games. The Games commemorate the Dark Days, a period of rebellion that ended with the destruction of District 13. They celebrate the Capitol’s complete control over the districts, and they continue a punishment that has been passed down for seventy-four years. Each district must provide two tributes, one boy and one girl, to fight to the death in an arena match. Out of twenty-four tributes, only one survives.

Tributes for the Hunger Games are determined through a drawing of names, called The Reaping. But Katniss becomes a tribute by volunteering; she takes her sister’s place when her sister’s name is drawn. Katniss competes in the Games alongside Peeta, the male tribute from her district. The two become the first joint victors in the Games, when a concocted budding romance between them captures the hearts of some viewers in the Capitol. Katniss and Peeta make a suicide pact, so they won’t have to fight each other, and Game organizers are forced to declare them both winners to avoid audience disapproval.

_Catching Fire_ picks up where _The Hunger Games_ left off. Katniss’s victory in the arena has made her a celebrity, but this carries a tremendous weight. She’s sickened by what she had to do to stay alive, and she’s isolated from the people she loves most. What is more, she has angered Capitol officials, who suspect her suicide pact with Peeta was merely a stunt to make the government look bad—which is probably accurate. Even Katniss is unsure whether love or strategy played a bigger part in her relationship with Peeta during the Games. Now forced to live her life on camera, Katniss may never be allowed to sort out her true feelings for Peeta—or for Gale, the boy she left behind when she became a tribute. Even worse, she fears the government will punish her by harming her friends and family. How will she be able to keep everyone safe while trapped in the public eye?
Understanding Genre: Dystopian Fiction
Yu will probably need to do some research to find out about this genre, which is also known as speculative fiction. The Internet may be helpful.

1. What are the characteristics of dystopian fiction?

Possible response: Dystopian fiction is about characters struggling to live in oppressive societies. Often the characters lack human rights and suffer through war, violence, hunger, and catastrophic environmental conditions.

2. Reread the Catching Fire book summary. Why is Catching Fire an example of dystopian fiction?

Possible response: Catching Fire is an example of dystopian fiction, because it takes place in the future, after natural disasters and encroaching tides have caused changes to North America. Its main character, Katniss, is one of many living in a post-war society marked by oppression, hunger, and violence, at the hands of a government that enslaves them.

3. Though this story takes place in the future, the culture it describes is not completely different from ours. How is it similar?

Possible responses: People still work in coal mining, which is a present-day occupation. Also, people like to watch reality-based game shows on television and follow the lives of celebrities.

4. How might dystopian fiction be an effective format for commenting on current issues?

Possible response: Dystopian fiction can show how actions taken today might affect future events for the worse.
Prereading Activities

Making Predictions
Reread the Book Summary for Catching Fire. Then make predictions based on evidence from the text and/or from your prior knowledge or personal experience.

1. Do you think Katniss will be able to keep her friends and family safe from Panem’s government? Answers will vary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I predict:</th>
<th>Based on what evidence?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Possible prediction: Yes; Katniss will do something to trick the government.</td>
<td>On page 5, the Book Summary suggests that Katniss outsmarted the government during the Hunger Games. Perhaps she can outsmart them again.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Think about the title, Catching Fire. What do you think “catching fire” has to do with what the story is about? Answers will vary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I predict:</th>
<th>Based on what evidence?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Possible prediction: Katniss will use her celebrity and her time on camera to spread an idea or information that protects herself and loved ones from Panem’s government.</td>
<td>When ideas become popular, they’re said to “catch like wildfire.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Set a purpose for reading based on your predictions above.

   Possible purpose: I want to find out what Katniss can do to keep her family and friends safe from the government, while being watched on camera.
Before You Read

Introducing Vocabulary: Greek and Latin Roots

A root word is the basic part of a word that has meaning. Prefixes and suffixes are sometimes added to the root word to adapt the meaning in some way. Each of the following vocabulary words contains a root word from the Greek or Latin language. Find two other words containing the same root. Choose Word 1 from the box below and find Word 2 using a dictionary, a word-origins book, or the Internet. Then write their shared root word, along with its meaning, on the line provided.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>solely</th>
<th>dynamite</th>
<th>approximate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mental</td>
<td>phobia</td>
<td>renegade</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. claustraphobic  Word 1: **phobia**  Word 2: **hydrophobia**
   Root Word and Meaning: *phob* means “fear”

2. mentor  Word 1: **mental**  Word 2: **mention**
   Root Word and Meaning: *ment* means “mind”

3. proximity  Word 1: **approximate**  Word 2: **proximal**
   Root Word and Meaning: *prox* means “near”

4. dynamic  Word 1: **dynamite**  Word 2: **dynamo**
   Root Word and Meaning: *dyn* means “power”

5. solitude  Word 1: **solely**  Word 2: **solitary**
   Root Word and Meaning: *sol* means “alone”

6. negate  Word 1: **renge**  Word 2: **negative**
   Root Word and Meaning: *neg* means “no”
After You Read
Checking Predictions
Before reading, you made a prediction about how the title *Catching Fire* relates to what the story is about. Based on what you have read so far, is your prediction accurate? If not, how has your prediction changed? *Answers will vary. Accept any supported by evidence in the story.*

Possible responses: There are many ways to interpret the title. For example, it could refer to feelings of discontent spreading among the districts. Or students may note President Snow’s referral to Katniss as “the girl who was on fire” (page 23) and say *fire* is a symbol for Katniss, who is caught, or entrapped, by her public persona and Panem’s government.

Analyzing the Writing: Sequence
1. As Katniss narrates her story, does the main action of her narration take place in the present or in the past? How do you know?

   The main action of the story takes place in the present. Katniss narrates in a stream of consciousness style, using present-tense verbs and reacting to events as she experiences them.

2. A *flashback* is an interruption in the action of the story to tell about events that took place earlier. In *Catching Fire*, how are flashbacks incorporated into the story?

   Flashbacks are incorporated into the story as memories Katniss has of past events.

3. Why is it important for the story *Catching Fire* to include flashbacks?

   The flashbacks give readers background about the experiences and relationships that made Katniss what she is and created the situation in which she currently finds herself.
4. **Foreshadowing** is a hint in the text about events that will take place in the future. Reread page 21. How does Katniss’s conversation with President Snow foreshadow what happens in District 11 later, in Chapter 4?

   Possible response: In Chapter 4, people in District 11 openly defy Panem’s ______ government by saluting Katniss. Earlier President Snow hinted that Katniss’s stunt with the berries might encourage acts of defiance among people in the districts.

**Getting to Know the Characters: Internal and External Conflict**

An **internal conflict** is a problem a character experiences within himself or herself, such as indecision or grief about a loss. An **external conflict** is a problem caused by actions taken against a character by others in the story or by forces of nature, such as weather or animals.

In the chart below are examples of conflict Katniss experiences in Chapters 1–4. Complete the chart by telling whether each conflict is **internal** or **external** and then explaining your answer. **Note:** Some conflicts can have both internal and external causes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conflict</th>
<th>Internal, External, or Both?</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Katniss’s friendship with Gale is changing.</td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>Internal: Katniss is unsure how she feels about Gale. External: Gale has distanced himself from Katniss, because he wants more than friendship.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katniss’s loved ones are unsafe.</td>
<td>External</td>
<td>President Snow has acted against Katniss by threatening her loved ones.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katniss must marry Peeta.</td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>Internal: Katniss is unsure of her feelings about Peeta. External: President Snow has acted against Katniss by forcing her into a marriage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katniss’s friend Rue died during the Hunger Games.</td>
<td>Internal</td>
<td>Katniss feels guilt, because she was unable to prevent Rue’s death, and sorrow, because she misses her friend.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katniss has a new life in Victor’s Village.</td>
<td>Internal</td>
<td>Katniss feels out of place in her new home, frustrated by her lack of freedom there, and guilty about the acts that earned her place in the village.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Science Connection

Natural Disasters
In the summary for *Catching Fire*, it says that
Panem was created after a series of natural
disasters. Find out what kinds of natural disasters
lead to the encroachment of ocean tides and share
your findings with classmates.

Melting glaciers, climate change, and volcanoes are among examples of
natural disasters that can cause catastrophic change to the environment.

Responding to the Story
1. Katniss describes feelings for both Peeta and Gale that could be identified as
romantic love. However, she seems confused by these feelings and reluctant to
admit to them. Why might this be?

Possible answer: Katniss fears romantic love, because, in her mind, it leads to
marriage, which she doesn’t want. So she’s never given time to considering how
being in love might feel. She would rather stay focused on surviving and protecting
her friends and family.

2. In what ways has Katniss’s family been hurt by Panem’s government, and how
might these experiences reinforce Katniss’s feelings about getting married and
having children?

Possible answer: The government forced her father to work in the coal mines,
where he was killed, and it would have forced her sister into the Hunger Games if
Katniss hadn’t taken her place. After Katniss’s father’s died, her mother became
deeply depressed and never really recovered. These things help prove to Katniss
that marriage and children make people too vulnerable to the government’s cruelty.

3. Effie, Octavia, Venia, and Flavius all live and work in the Capitol. How are their
lives different from Katniss’s, and how does this affect their values and interests?

Possible answer: Effie and the stylists have lives of ease in the Capitol; they aren’t
struggling to survive the way Katniss is. For this reason, they are able to focus on
superficial interests. Their values are entertainment and self-beautification.
4. Effie, Octavia, Venia, and Flavius seem to genuinely care about Katniss; however, they support the Hunger Games and lack empathy toward the tributes who go to die in them. Do you think this is because they are evil, or could it be they’re just very child-like? Explain your answer.

Answers will vary. Some students may see them as callous and phony, while others may think they're basically good but horribly out of touch with the reality of the Games. In either case, a level of ignorance on their part is apparent. Whether this ignorance is willful or due to skewed information they have received from the government is unknown.
Before You Read

Making Predictions
In Chapter 4, Katniss unintentionally inspires an act of defiance by in District 11 and then sees a man murdered by two Peacekeepers. How do you think people in District 11 will react?

Answers will vary. Some students will anticipate rebellion from District 11, because of President Snow’s hint about uprisings in the districts. However, others may predict punishment for District 11 that renders them powerless.

Introducing Vocabulary: Idioms
The following phrases are examples of idioms. An idiom is an expression whose meaning can’t be figured out from the literal meanings of the words that make it up.

Example: He got up on the wrong side of the bed.
Literal meaning: There is a right side and a wrong side of the bed (which makes no sense).
Meaning of the idiom: He woke up feeling grumpy.

Below are more idioms from Catching Fire. Use context clues to help you determine the meaning of the idiom and then write the meaning on the line provided.

1. “weather the ups and downs” (page 70): to deal with the positive and negative situations

2. “being straight with each other” (page 70): being honest with each other

3. “turn this tide” (page 72): change or reverse the expected outcome

After You Read

Checking Predictions
Earlier you made a prediction about whether or not Katniss would be able to protect her family and friends from Panem’s government. What have you read so far that supports your prediction?

Answers will vary.
Analyzing the Writing: Symbolism

A symbol is an object or action that stands for something more than its literal meaning. In *Catching Fire*, the mockingjay and its tune are recurring symbols that mean different things to different people. Explain what the mockingjay means to each person or group of people below. (Note: Refer to Chapters 1–7 for answers.)

1. Katniss’s mother (page 41): The mockingjay stands for good luck.

2. Rue (page 41): Katniss’s mockingjay pin made Rue believe Katniss was someone she could trust.

3. People in District 11 (page 61): Whistling the mockingjay’s tune typically signals the end of a workday. However, in Chapter 4 it also signals a salute to Katniss that is an open act of defiance.

4. People in the Capitol (page 78): Katniss believes people in the Capitol wear the mockingjay because it’s trendy and it represents Katniss’s on-screen romance with Peeta during the Games.

5. Plutarch Heavensbee (pages 82–83): The fact that he showed a mockingjay to Katniss seems significant. It could stand for either mockery or support of Katniss.

6. Katniss (pages 85 and 91–92): The mockingjay reminds her of Rue, who was her friend and a pure spirit. The mockingjay also stands for a spy tactic that backfired on the government.

7. Madge (pages 87 and 91–92): The mockingjay stands for good luck, and it also reminds her of her aunt, who used to wear it on a pin.
Getting to Know the Characters: Archetypes

The word archetype comes from the Greek word archetypos, which means “the first of its kind.” There are many archetypes, or models, for storytelling that have been around for as long as stories have been told. Character archetypes represented in Catching Fire include The Hero, The Devil, and The Mentor.

1. *The Hero* is the character with whom the audience identifies the most. This character is courageous, and his or her primary purpose is to protect other characters in the story. Often, this protection involves self-sacrifice.

   a. In what ways is Katniss a hero? Katniss was a courageous victor in the Hunger Games, and now she makes sacrifices to continue protecting her loved ones.

   b. Does Katniss want to be a hero? No; she has been forced into situations that bring out her heroism.

2. *The Devil* is the character with whom *The Hero* is most at odds. *The Devil* is nearly impossible to defeat, and his or her primary goal is to destroy.

   a. How does President Snow represent this character? His goal is to pose a constant threat to people in the districts, and his power seems all but absolute.

   b. *The Devil* is the hero of his or her own story. How is this true of President Snow? He believes his control of the districts prevents the collapse of Panem.

3. *The Mentor* is the character that advises and motivates *The Hero*. He or she does this by sharing wisdom and giving gifts that help *The Hero* realize his or her goals.

   a. In what ways is Haymitch a mentor? He advised Katniss and gave her gifts that saved her during the Hunger Games, and he continues to help as a victor.

   b. In some stories, *The Mentor* is a fallen hero with a dark side. How is this true of Haymitch? Haymitch is surly, and he copes with the difficulties of being a victor by drinking heavily.
**Responding to the Story**

1. Reread the conversation between Haymitch and Katniss on page 82. Here Haymitch explains a complicated choice he had to make during the last Hunger Games. Do you think Haymitch has had to make choices like this before? How might this have affected him over the years?

   Haymitch became a mentor after winning the last Quarter Quell, 25 years ago. It's likely he's had to make many complicated choices over the years, most of which resulted in his failure to save lives. This is sure to have taken a terrible toll on Haymitch, as is evidenced by his excessive drinking and self-imposed isolation.

2. Reread the last paragraph on page 71. Here Katniss describes a mood in Districts 8, 4, and 3 that she knows she can't hold back. Do you think President Snow overestimates her power in the districts, or is it possible he's controlling Katniss for other reasons? Explain your answer.

   Answers will vary. It seems unlikely that Snow would misjudge Katniss's power in the districts. However, he may have more motives for controlling Katniss than she knows about. For example, he may have concerns about people in the Capitol, who are so intrigued by Katniss that they seek her out and mimic her by wearing mockingjays. Perhaps her obedience to President Snow is an example for them.

3. In Chapter 7, Gale agrees to try to escape with Katniss but then changes his mind. Do you think his reason for staying in District 12 is valid? Why or why not?

   Answers will vary. Students may feel conflicted about Gale's decision, because, though fighting for the greater good is decidedly more heroic than trying to escape, it would mean almost certain death and may not accomplish the change he envisions.
Before You Read
Making Predictions
At the end of Chapter 7, Katniss finds Gale bound to a post in the town square. Do you think Katniss has any hope of rescuing him?

Possible prediction: It seems unlikely that Katniss can help Gale, especially if his arrest was ordered by President Snow, who may be hurting Gale to punish Katniss.

Introducing Vocabulary: Portmanteau Words
A portmanteau word is created by blending two words into one. The new, blended word carries the meaning of both the words used to create it. For example, a portmanteau word you probably know is smog, which is a combination of the words smoke and fog. Another is chortle, which is a combination of the words chuckle and snort.

For Catching Fire, author Suzanne Collins created portmanteau words to name some of the beings found in Panem. She defines each portmanteau word in context. However, the words she blends to create it also carry connotations, or associated images and feelings, that help readers further understand the being the word names. Complete the chart below by deciding what two words the author used to create each portmanteau word and then telling what connotation the new word creates. The first one is done for you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Portmanteau Word and Its Definition</th>
<th>Two Words Blended and Their Definitions</th>
<th>Connotation Created by the Portmanteau Word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Morphling: a person addicted to the drug called morphling</td>
<td>Morphine: a drug used to kill pain. Changeling: a child secretly exchanged for another at birth</td>
<td>A person addicted to morphing is trying to escape pain and has an altered, child-like quality while on the drug.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muttation: a genetically engineered or enhanced animal</td>
<td>Mutt: a mixed-breed dog Mutation: an organism whose genes are altered</td>
<td>A muttation carries the traits of more than one animal, due to changes in its genes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jabberjay: a genetically enhanced male bird that can repeat long passages of human speech</td>
<td>Jabber: talk ceaselessly Blue jay: a type of bird</td>
<td>Like blue jays, jabberjays have a reputation for stealing; they take information and blab it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mockingjay: the species of bird created when jabberjays mated with mockingbirds</td>
<td>Mocking: imitating or treating with contempt Jabberjay: a genetically enhanced male bird</td>
<td>Mockingjays mock Panem’s government, by representing survival in new form of a species meant for extinction.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
After You Read

Checking Predictions
Earlier you made a prediction about whether or not Katniss would be able to rescue Gale. Was your prediction accurate? Why or why not?

Possible response: My prediction was partly correct. Katniss did not rescue Gale on her own, but her status as victor influenced the Peacekeeper’s decision to let him go.

Analyzing the Writing: Setting, Imagery, and Mood

Setting is the time and location in which a story takes place. Imagery is descriptive language that appeals to the senses. Mood is the emotion an author communicates in his or her writing.

1. In what setting does Katniss feel safest, and why does she feel safe there?

Katniss feels safest in the woods outside District 12, because it reminds her of her father and Gale, she’s able to fend for herself there, and she’s away from the public eye.

2. Reread the second paragraph on page 134. What are some examples of imagery that appeal to the senses of sight, touch, hearing, and smell?

Sight: “glares of the winter sun”; “thin stream of smoke”; “indentation of recent footprints”

Touch: “soaked with sweat”; “numb with cold”

Hearing: “click of a weapon”

Smell: “smell of steaming pine needles”

3. At what point in the second paragraph on page 134 does the mood change, and how does it change?

Possible response: The mood changes when Katniss hears the click of a weapon.

At this point she goes from feeling safe in the woods to feeling hunted.
Getting to Know the Characters: Relationships and Their Effect on Plot
1. At the end of Chapter 7, Katniss was planning an escape from District 12. What has changed her mind?

   Possible response: Katniss realizes she loves Gale, and she doesn’t want to leave him.

2. Katniss’s revelation about her feelings for Gale has sparked a new understanding of her reasons for wanting to escape. Why does this new understanding make her feel ashamed?

   Possible response: Katniss realizes that her plan to escape was a selfish reaction to being frightened, and she feels ashamed that she ever considered leaving Gale and others in her District behind.

3. How does Gale inspire Katniss to redefine her course in life? In what way does she want to be like Gale?

   Gale’s courage in facing his enemies and fighting for change inspires Katniss to find courage within herself and become someone of worth to her district.

4. Does Katniss’s desire to protect her family complicate or simplify her resolve to fight the Capitol? Explain your answer.

   Possible response: Katniss’s desire to protect her family does complicate her resolve to fight, until realizes her family has already been hurt by the Capitol, and the best way to protect them is to try to change things for the better.

Responding to the Story
1. In Chapter 8, Katniss realizes her true feelings for Gale, after imagining how she would have felt if Gale had been a tribute in the Games. What is an example from your own life of something you came to understand by imagining a situation from someone else’s perspective?

   Answers will vary.
2. Katniss’s change of heart about staging a rebellion causes her to see Peeta in a new light. What role does she envision for him? Do you think he would accept that role?

Possible response: Katniss thinks Peeta should be a leader for the rebellion, because he’s so good with words. Katniss is probably right that Peeta would never imagine that role for himself. However, he is also someone who doesn’t shrink from doing whatever he can to help people. So, he might accept the role, if it were offered to him.

3. In what ways is District 12 more like District 11 by the end of Chapter 9, and what do you think is the cause of these changes?

Possible response: Security is tighter, food is scarcer, and wages are smaller. Katniss thinks these changes are punishment for her failure to quiet rebellion in the districts; however, her mother and Haymitch both remember a time when the Capitol terrorized District 12 in a similar way. It is unclear what the causes were then or now.

4. Why does Katniss think it would be difficult to start an uprising in her district?

Possible response: Most people in her district are unaccustomed to breaking the law and fearful of being associated with those who might attract attention from the Capitol.
Before You Read

Making Predictions

At the end of Chapter 9, Katniss encountered a woman in the woods, who showed her a piece of bread with a mockingjay stamped in it. Why do you think this woman is in the woods? Answers will vary.

Answers will vary. Students may think that her show of the mockingjay signifies that she came to the woods to find Katniss or that she is among others in the woods who are there to help District 12 rebel against the Capitol.

After You Read

Checking Predictions

1. Was your prediction above accurate? Why or why not? Answers will vary.

   Possible response: I thought she came to the woods to find Katniss, but she actually escaped to the woods after the uprising in District 8. Now she is on her way to District 13.

2. Reread page 168. How does this affect the prediction about District 11 you made earlier?

   Answers will vary. The uprising in District 11 will either confirm or refute their predictions.

Getting to Know the Characters: Motivation and Its Effect on Plot

1. When Katniss meets Bonnie and Twill in the woods, she decides to help them reach District 13, even though she doesn’t believe it exists. What motivated her to do this?

   Katniss understood that Bonnie and Twill’s lives in District 8 have been completely destroyed and the idea of reaching District 13 gives them hope.

2. Some characters’ motives are made public in the story, while others’ motives are kept private. What is President Snow’s public motive for punishing District 12 with strict laws and food shortages?

   Possible response: President Snow’s public motive for punishing District 12 is that Katniss failed to subdue rebellion in the districts.
3. Reread the last paragraph on page 149. Why is it reasonable to suspect that President Snow has private motives for punishing District 12?

Possible response: Katniss thinks President Snow has been playing her for a fool. There is nothing she could have done to keep some of the districts from rebelling.

4. Katniss thinks it is unlikely that the original rules for the Third Quarter Quell involved reaping tributes from the districts’ pool of victors. What does she think motivated the new rules?

Katniss thinks President Snow is taking away the districts’ victors as a way of showing them there is no hope they could ever win a rebellion against the Capitol.

5. What motivates Katniss to decide to fight for Peeta’s life in the Third Quarter Quell?

Katniss feels she owes it to Peeta to keep him alive, because in the Hunger Games, the focus was on keeping Katniss alive. Also, she thinks the Capitol has marked her for death, and to try to keep herself alive is pointless.

Responding to the Story
1. What helps convince Katniss of the possibility that District 13 exists, and why is Haymitch still skeptical when Katniss tells him about it?

Katniss observes that Bonnie and Twill were right about the same tape of the District 13 Justice Building being shown over and over, during televised reports. Haymitch thinks the Capitol simply uses the same tape, because it is easier than flying reporters and camera crews to District 13.

2. Suppose District 13 does exist. Do you think this could really escape the attention of the Capitol? Why would the Capitol ignore a settlement in District 13?

Answers will vary. Some students may say the Capitol could ignore it, if the settlement was small and cut off from resources needed to survive, while others may think the threat of a nuclear attack from District 13 is real enough that the Capitol has agreed to peacefully coexist with District 13.
3. A quality of the Games that may be eerie for readers is the way they are promoted as a source of entertainment in the Capitol—it is very similar to the way “reality television” is promoted in our culture. For example, in Chapter 12, Katniss reveals that viewers in the Capitol have been voting on a wedding dress for her to wear when she marries Peeta. What are some other activities surrounding the Games that make you think of our entertainment industry?

**Possible response:** Tributes in the games have stylists and handlers who make the tributes into celebrities. As celebrities, tributes are expected to dress up, do photo shoots, go on publicity tours, and create stories for themselves that appeal to viewers and keep them hooked on watching the Games.
Before You Read
Making Predictions
Do you think Katniss and Haymitch will be able to keep Peeta alive during the Quarter Quell? Why or why not?

Answers will vary. Some students may think there is only hope of one victor in the Games and that in order for Katniss to successfully complete her task as a hero, she will have to be the survivor. However, because *The Hero* often makes sacrifices in order to protect others, some students may think that Katniss can die and still complete her task, if in giving her life, she helps Peeta become a leader in the districts’ rebellion.

After You Read
Checking Predictions
What have you read in this section that supports your prediction about whether or not Katniss and Haymitch can keep Peeta alive in the Quarter Quell?

Answers will vary. Students who predicted success for Katniss and Haymitch will find support in Haymitch’s clever win of the Second Quarter Quell. However, those who predicted failure may also find support, in Peeta upsetting the Gamemakers during his private session with them, at the end of Chapter 16.

Getting to Know the Characters: Traits
Our main understanding of Katniss’s character traits comes from what she says about herself in the narration of her story. However, we can also gain an understanding of who she is through her interactions, judgments, and impressions on others.

1. How does Katniss react when Chaff and Finnick flirt with her, and what does this say about her character?

   Possible response: Katniss is startled by Chaff’s flirtation and disgusted by Finnick’s. This shows readers that Katniss doesn’t like to be treated as a sexual object.
2. Who of the victors does Katniss like the most, and why does she connect with them?

**Possible response:** Katniss likes Wiress and Beetee, because they’re pleasant, they don’t pry into her private life, and they are intelligent. She also respects Mags for her survival skills and for taking the place of another tribute during the reaping, like Katniss once did to save Prim.

3. Which of the victors that Katniss meets does she like the least, and why?

**Possible response:** She likes Finnick and Johanna the least. She thinks Finnick is arrogant and shallow, and Johanna is vicious and show-offish. Katniss doesn’t trust either of them.


**Possible response:** Others think Katniss is pure, and this seems a pretty accurate judgment of her character. Katniss has her faults, but she always strives to do the right thing, and she doesn’t get caught up in petty or shallow pursuits.

**Responding to the Story**

1. In Chapters 14–16, what are some things the Capitol does to Katniss in an effort to defeat her psychologically—to break her spirit?

**Possible response:** Katniss isn’t allowed to say goodbye to their loved ones before going to compete in the Quell, and the Capitol assigns Darius to be Katniss’s Avox.

2. Why might Panem’s government be continuing its course with the Quarter Quell, despite the disapproval of people living in the Capitol?

**Answers will vary.** Students may think that government officials are concerned enough about uprisings in the districts that they are willing to risk the disapproval of their Capitol viewership. Some may also suspect that there is dissent in the Capitol the government wants to subdue.
3. Why does the mockingjay pin that Madge gave Katniss take on new meaning for Katniss after she sees tapes of the Quarter Quell that Haymitch competed in?

Possible response: Katniss finds out that Maysilee Donner, who originally wore the pin Madge gave Katniss, was one of the tributes who had been murdered in the last Quarter Quell.

4. What was the purpose of Katniss’s stunt during her private session with the Gamemakers?

Possible response: Katniss’s purpose was two-fold. She wanted to do something that would draw attention to herself and away from Peeta, and she wanted to communicate to the Gamemakers that they are no safer from the Capitol than she is.
Before You Read
Making Predictions
How do you think the Gamemakers will react to Katniss’s Seneca Crane effigy? Do you think it will have the desired effect, or do you think it’s possible Peeta has upset them more than Katniss?

Answers will vary. Possible response: Yes; Katniss’s stunt is so over-the-top that it will draw attention away from Peeta and force Gamemakers to make an example of her in some way.

After You Read
Checking Predictions
What were the reactions to Katniss’s Seneca Crane stunt? Did they draw attention away from Peeta, as hoped?

Answers will vary. Gamemakers had equal reactions to Katniss and Peeta’s stunts. As it turns out, both were given ratings as competitors that will make them targets in the arena.

Analyzing the Writing: Archetypes
An archetypal situation represented in Catching Fire is The Initiation, which signifies a transformation in The Hero. The character has grown to maturity in understanding the world and his or her responsibilities in it.

1. Reread the last four paragraphs on page 242. What does Katniss mean when she says she wants to show the Gamemakers she is “more than a piece in their games,” and how does this represent a turning point in her character?

Possible response: Katniss means that she wants to show she is more than just a tribute who will fight like an animal to survive. Katniss has changed from someone whose goal is to win the game to someone who will defy the game and what it represents.
2. Reread the last paragraph on page 243. How does this signify another turning point in Katniss’s character?

Possible response: Katniss has moved from being someone who is consumed by her own pain to being someone who wants to right the wrongs done to others.

3. Reread the first paragraph on page 244. What responsibility does Katniss accept here?

Possible response: She accepts her responsibility to openly defy the Capitol and die doing so, if necessary.

4. When Cinna turns Katniss into the mockingjay, he makes her a symbol of the district’s rise against the Capitol. How does Katniss’s transformation into the mockingjay also symbolize her initiation into maturity?

Possible response: It reflects her inner resolve to inspire hope in people living in the districts by fighting the Quarter Quell by her own terms and supporting the revolution selflessly.

Getting to Know the Characters: Relationships and Their Effect on Plot

1. Why do you think Peeta announced that he and Katniss don’t want to make allies in the arena?

Possible response: He realizes that he and Katniss are of the same mind about how to fight in the Games and that their agenda is probably different from that of the other tributes. Also, he and Katniss both think they are marked for death, which would make them a danger to allies.

2. Why does Katniss finally allow herself to accept Peeta’s love, and what prevented her from doing so earlier?

Possible response: Katniss couldn’t accept Peeta’s love earlier, because she was worried about how doing so would affect Gale. She accepts his love now, because she doesn’t believe she will have a future beyond the Quarter Quell.
3. How has Cinna’s relationship with Katniss affected the plot of the story?

Possible response: Cinna’s friendship with Katniss inspired him to make her a symbol for the rebellion in the districts, which is the first open act of rebellion from a person in the Capitol.

4. How do the victors act during their interviews before the Quarter Quell?

Possible response: The join hands in an open show of unity and defiance toward the government, giving President Snow no option but to strike back at them as hard as he can.

Responding to the Story
1. After Katniss decides to protect Peeta and support the revolution, she is able to sleep without nightmares for the first time in the book. Why is this significant?

Possible answer: Katniss is able to sleep without nightmares, because she has resolved a conflict within herself. She no longer fears death, because she has found purpose in it.

2. Reread pages 250–251. Why are the victors’ appeals to the emotions of people living in the Capitol successful?

Possible response: All the victors use their interviews to remind people in the Capitol of the real relationships Capitol dwellers have developed with the victors over the years. This forces people in the Capitol to acknowledge the humanity of the victors.

3. When does the cruelty of the Games finally register with people in the Capitol, and why do you think their understanding has been changed?

Possible response: The cruelty of the Games registers with them when Peeta tells them that Katniss is pregnant. For the first time they understand that the Games are about more than just the tributes; they are about people whose families are broken by violence.
4. Haymitch says that even the idea of opposing the Capitol is a source of confusion for the people in the Capitol. Why do you think this is?

   Answers will vary. The fact that they accept what the government dictates so unquestioningly suggests they are like small children; they’re always provided for, so it has never occurred to them to look beyond the scope of their own lives, let alone question their government.
Chapters 19–21
The Games Begin
pages 267–310

Before You Read
Making Predictions
The last thing Haymitch tells Katniss, before she goes to fight in the Quell is to remember who the enemy is. What do you think Haymitch meant by that, and how do you think this advice will help Katniss?

Answers will vary. Some students may think Haymitch is warning Katniss not to trust all the victors, even though they presented a united front to the districts. Others may think Haymitch is reminding Katniss that he is not the enemy, and she should take his help when it is given in the arena.

After You Read
Checking Predictions
1. What have you read so far that supports your prediction about the meaning behind what Haymitch last said to Katniss?

Answers will vary. Students should note Katniss’s mistrust of Finnick, despite bangle he wears as a sign of Haymitch’s endorsement. Finnick proves not to be an enemy by saving Peeta.

2. Have you learned anything in these chapters that supports or makes you want to change your prediction about whether or not Katniss will be able to keep Peeta alive?

Answers will vary. Students should note that other tributes are helping to keep Peeta alive and adjust their predictions, if necessary.

Getting to Know the Characters: Traits as Expressed through Values
1. Finnick comes from one of the districts that generates Careers, or tributes who have trained for the Games their whole lives. Think about what Katniss has said about Careers over the course of the book. What do they value most, and why does this make Katniss mistrust Finnick?

Possible response: Careers value winning above all else. They form quick alliances with each other, kill mercilessly, and turn on each other.
2. When Finnick saves Peeta, Katniss is vexed, because she feels like she owes Finnick a debt of gratitude. Who are other people Katniss feels indebted to, and how has this affected her relationship with them?

Possible response: Katniss feels indebted to Peeta and Haymitch. When Katniss feels indebted to someone, she takes this very seriously. It usually inspires fierce loyalty and protectiveness in her, even if she doesn’t like him or her.

Analyzing the Writing: Setting
1. What has Katniss noted so far about the physical features of the arena?

Possible response: The arena is circular, and a force field forms a dome around it. At the center of the arena is the Cornucopia. Twelve thin strips of land separated by water radiate from the center of the arena, each of which has a sandy beach that borders a jungle.

2. What kinds of animal life has Katniss found in the arena?

Possible response: Muttation birds, monkeys, and rodents are among the animals on the island.

3. So far, what kinds of weather has Katniss’s group encountered?

Possible response: There was a lightning storm in the distance and fog made nerve gas.

4. Before the odd weather conditions started, Katniss heard twelve bongs. How long did the first bout of weather last, and what caused the second bout of weather to end?

Possible response: The first bout of weather lasted one hour, and the second bout of weather ended when a glass window contained it and caused it to cease.
Responding to the Story

1. Katniss notes with disappointment that many of the victors jumped right into “massacre mode” as soon as they were released into the arena. Why wasn’t she surprised by this? How can their violence be attributed to an upbringing in the districts?

Possible response: Some of the victors began training for the Games in early childhood, and all grew up knowing that one day they could become tributes. The victors are conditioned to fight, rather than form bonds with people. Katniss, herself, is evidence of this.

2. Why does Katniss hide her true knowledge about the force field?

Possible response: Katniss is thinking strategically. She doesn’t want to give away what she knows about the force field, in case the knowledge might give her an edge later.

3. Katniss is confused by what happened to her group in the fog. Why do you think Finnick left Mags to carry Peeta, and Mags willingly sacrificed herself when it became apparent Katniss could no longer carry her?

Answers will vary. It seems fairly apparent that Finnick and Mags had an agreement to save Katniss and Peeta at all costs, but their reasons for this agreement are unknown.

4. At the end of Chapter 21, the morphling from District 6 throws herself in front of a monkey mutt just as it was ready to attack Peeta. Do you think this was intentional? Why or why not?

Possible response: The morphling was wounded and seemed out of her mind when she threw herself in front of the monkey mutt. However, Katniss notes that she materialized out of nowhere, right in the nick of time, which makes her actions seem intentional.
Chapters 22–24
Allies and Enemies
pages 311–354

Before You Read
Making Predictions
Though Finnick has continually proven himself helpful to Katniss and Peeta, Katniss is still unsure she can trust him. Do you think she and Finnick will continue to be allies? Answers will vary.

I predict: Possible prediction: Students may be divided on whether or not they will continue to be allies.

Based on what evidence?
Students who think Katniss will keep Finnick as an ally may give Haymitc’s endorsement of Finnick and Katniss’s indebtedness to him as evidence. Those who think they will part ways may say that, because Finnick is a Career, he can only be trusted for so long.

After You Read
Checking Predictions
Based on what you read, was your prediction about Katniss and Finnick correct?

Answers will vary. Possible response: So far, my prediction is correct: Katniss and Finnick are still allies, and they seem to have formed a bond with each other.

Analyzing the Writing: Pacing
Pacing is momentum of action in a story. Changes in time, space, and mood create ebb and flow in the action that carries readers through to the story’s climax, when tension is greatest.

1. At the beginning of Chapter 22, the mood has relaxed from what it was in Chapter 21, where the characters in Katniss’s group were fighting for their lives. However, there is still tension in the plot. What about the characters’ physical surroundings causes a constant state of tension?

Possible response: The characters’ physical surroundings are unpredictable; with little warning their environment can become very dangerous.
2. What kinds of events serve to break up the characters' time while they are in the arena?

   Possible response: The characters' time is broken up by attacks from other victors, changes in the environment, gifts from sponsors, searches for food and shelter, and evening death tolls.

3. How do relationships among characters in Katniss's group also create tension in the plot?

   Possible response: The characters can't fully trust each other, because they are uncertain of each other's motives.

**Responding to the Story**

1. How do you think Haymitch got Finnick, Mags, Johanna, Wiress, Beetee, and the morphling to protect Katniss and Peeta? What do these victors have to gain by being Katniss and Peeta's allies?

   Possible response: Perhaps they are like Katniss, willing to sacrifice themselves in order to help the rebellion.

2. Katniss and Peeta discover that Haymitch has promised them both that he will keep the other alive. Who do you think he lied to, and why?

   Answers will vary. Possible answer: Katniss is convinced that Peeta could lead the rebellion, but Katniss is the mockingjay; so, it may be more important for Haymitch to keep her alive.

3. What does Peeta do to try to convince Katniss that she should try to survive the Quell?

   Possible response: Peeta shows her pictures of her family and Gale and asks her to live for them.
Before You Read
Making Predictions
Katniss thinks that Plutarch Heavensbee may have given her a hint about the arena being a clock. Do you think he was setting a trap for Katniss, or is it possible he is really an ally?

Answers will vary. Possible response: Plutarch is an ally. If he had wanted to hurt Katniss, he wouldn't have needed an elaborate scheme to do so. It seems more likely that he is like others, such as Cinna, who secretly support the districts' rebellion.

After You Read
Checking Predictions
Based on what you read, did you predict accurately about Plutarch being an ally?

Answers will vary. Possible response: Yes; I was correct about him being an ally, though I didn't suspect he would have such a large part in the rebellion.______

Getting to Know the Characters: Motives
Much comes to light in these last chapters about motives for character's actions that characters made known to few or no other people. Complete the chart by telling who in Katniss's group knew about it and who didn't.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character and Motive</th>
<th>Who Knew about It</th>
<th>Who Didn’t Know about It</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heavensbee, Haymitch, Finnick, Mags, Johanna, Wiress, Beetee, and the morphling wanted to keep Katniss alive.</td>
<td>Those within their group</td>
<td>Katniss and Peeta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beetee wanted to break the arena's force field.</td>
<td>Heavensbee and Haymitch</td>
<td>Katniss, Peeta, Finnick, Mags, Johanna, Wiress, Beetee, and the morphling</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heavensbee planned to break the victors out of the Quell arena.</td>
<td>Haymitch, Finnick, Mags, Johanna, Wiress, Beetee, and the morphling</td>
<td>Katniss and Peeta</td>
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</table>
Analyzing the Writing: Conflict and Resolution

Though some of Katniss's conflicts were resolved in Catching Fire, many were not. For each of the conflicts below, indicate what its resolution was by underlining resolved or unresolved. Then, on the line following, tell what the conflict’s resolution was or why the conflict is unresolved.

1. Katniss wants to protect her family from the Capitol.
   Resolved/Unresolved

   Possible response: Gale tells Katniss that her family he was able to save her mother and Prim.

2. Katniss is unsure whether or not she has romantic feelings for Gale.
   Resolved/Unresolved

   Possible response: Katniss is still unsure; she never resolved this conflict, because she didn't think she would live to see Gale after the Quell.

3. Katniss is unsure whether or not she has romantic feelings for Peeta.
   Resolved/Unresolved

   Possible response: Katniss opened herself to loving Peeta in the arena, but she was still unsure if they could have a future together, were they both to live.

4. Katniss wants to save Peeta from dying at the hands of the Capitol.
   Resolved/Unresolved

   Possible response: Peeta has been captured by the Capitol, and it’s uncertain whether he is dead or alive.

5. Katniss wants to inspire rebellion in the districts.
   Resolved/Unresolved

   Possible response: Haymitch tells Katniss that most of the districts are in full-scale rebellion.

Responding to the Story

1. What is Katniss's purpose in finding Peeta when she finally wakes up in the hovercraft?

   Possible response: She wants to kill Peeta so that he will die mercifully, instead of at the hands of the Capitol.
2. When Katniss walks in on Haymitch, Heavensbee, and Finnick in the hovercraft, Haymitch has just said to Finnick, “Don’t be stupid. That’s the worst thing you could do. Get her killed for sure. As long as you’re alive, they’ll keep her alive for bait.” What do you think Haymitch and Finnick were talking about?

Possible response: Finnick’s friend, Annie, has been captured by the Capitol, and he wants to go rescue her, but Haymitch won’t let him.

3. Why does Katniss feel like she was just a piece in Haymitch and Heavensbee’s game?

Possible response: They kept her in the dark about all their plans for the rebellion and a break from the arena, and their primary interest in protecting her was to keep the revolution alive.

4. Do you think Haymitch and Heavensbee’s decision not to tell Katniss and Peeta about their plans was understandable? Why or why not?

Answers will vary. Some students may find it deplorable that Katniss was used for purposes she wasn’t aware of, while others may say that a plan four years in the making could not be risked in any way. Katniss can be a bit of a loose cannon, so Heavensbee and Haymitch’s worry she might let information slip is not completely unfounded.
Wrap-up

Reviewing Predictions
Turn to page 5 of this guide to review your first predictions. How accurate were they?

Answers will vary.

Making Connections
1. Describe a time in your life when you were conflicted about your feelings for someone. What made your feelings complicated, and how did you resolve them?

Answers will vary.

2. Which character in Catching Fire did you relate to most, and why?

Answers will vary.

Thinking About the Genre: Adventure
1. This novel includes characteristics of classic adventure tales, such as King Arthur and the Knights of the Roundtable. How are the archetypes represented in Catching Fire like the archetypes of one of your favorite adventure tales?

Answers will vary. Students should include references to these archetypes: The Hero, The Devil, The Mentor, and The Initiation.

2. Why do you think archetypes for storytelling have been carried down for so many generations?

Possible response: They describe characters and situations that continue to be thought provoking and true-to-life even in contemporary times.
Thinking about Theme

1. For *Catching Fire*, Suzanne Collins imagined a future society that includes characteristics of present-day culture meshed with characteristics of more barbaric ancient cultures in which ritual sacrifices were made. What circumstances may have led to the demise of civilized culture?

   Answers will vary. Possible response: In the summary of *Catching Fire*, on pages 4–5, it says that an apocalyptic event occurred that was followed by wars. This suggests that chaos reigned for a time, and people had to rebuild societies.

2. She seems to suggest that people could return to a more barbaric society? Do you agree with this idea? Why or why not?

   Answers will vary. Possible response: It suggests that civilized society is very fragile and crisis situations tend to bring out the worst in people. This suggestion is reinforced by the fact that in the present day there are still wars and violence and deep divides between people who have money or don’t have it.

3. How is *Catching Fire* a commentary on the present-day entertainment industry?

   Answers will vary. Possible response: *Catching Fire’s* entertainment industry is superficial in many of the same ways as that of the present day. The industry promotes superficiality and an obsession with beauty and trends.

4. Suzanne Collins has commented that she fears that depictions of war and violence on television have desensitized people. In *Catching Fire*, how might Collins’s worst fears about desensitization be represented in the Capitol?

   Answers will vary. Possible response: People in the Capitol watch fights to the death among children and don’t understand how horrific this is or how many lives are affected by the violence.
Library Applications

Ancient Connections
Catching Fire was inspired by the Greek myth Theseus and the Minotaur, as well as by the Gladiator games that took place in ancient Rome. Have students read Theseus and the Minotaur and research ancient Roman culture using library sources and the Internet. Then have them write an essay in which they draw parallels among the cultures of Panem and ancient Greece and Rome.

What’s in a Name?
In the tradition of Charles Dickens and other literary greats, Suzanne Collins created names for many of her Catching Fire characters that relate to their character traits or to the industry in their districts. For example, Plutarch Heavensbee’s last name connotes someone busily working for the greater good, and characters from District 11 have names that relate to the agricultural industry their district is known for. Have students discuss other character names from Catching Fire and how they communicate something about the characters themselves.

Regional Industries
The first book in the Hunger Games series explains that the country of Panem is located in what used to be called North America. It also places the Capitol west of the Rocky Mountains and District 12 in the Appalachian region, where coal mining is still a major industry. Have students consider where other districts in Panem might be placed on a present-day map, based on their main industries. Districts whose industries are named in Catching Fire include the following:

- District 1: gemstones and diamonds
- District 3: factories, television, cars, and explosives
- District 4: fishing
- District 7: lumber and paper
- District 10: livestock
- District 11: agriculture
- District 12: coal mining

Have students keep in mind that the North American continent in Panem’s day is smaller, due to encroaching tides. Invite students create a map of Panem based on their findings.
Suggestions for Further Reading

Other books by Suzanne Collins

The Hunger Games series:

- Book 3: Stay tuned!

The Underland Chronicles series:


Other speculative/dystopic fiction from JLG:

## Correlations to National Standards
### For Grades 9–12

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