

THE HUNGER GAMES Film Guide

Film length: 143 minutes

Film rating: PG-13

Director: Gary Ross

Genre: Adventure-drama

Synopsis

The Hunger Games takes place in a nation known as Panem, which consists of a wealthy capital city and twelve surrounding poor districts under the capital's iron rule. As punishment for a previous rebellion against the capital in which a 13th district was destroyed, one boy and one girl between the ages of 12 and 18 from each district are selected by annual lottery to participate in the Hunger Games, which are violent and deadly

The Games are an event in which the participants (or "tributes") must survive until only one individual remains. Katniss Everdeen is a girl from the poverty-stricken District 12 who volunteers for the 74th annual Hunger Games in place of her younger sister, Prim. Also selected from District 12 is Peeta Mellark, a baker's son whom Katniss knows from school, and who once gave her bread when she was starving.

Katniss manages to survive they violent "games" through her skill and intelligence, and she helps Peeta to survive also. While they are the victors, they have seen, and participated in, much violence. At the end of the film, trying to remain true to themselves, Katniss and Peter realize they must play roles to continue to stay alive even after the games have ended.



CST Themes to Engage Through the Film:

- *Great inequality among groups in society*
- *Option for the Poor*
- *Solidarity*
- *Respect for Life and Human Dignity*
- *The Common Good*
- *Violence and Non-violence*

Web Links

Official Movie Site:

www.thehungergames.com

Video Trailer:

hungergamesmovie.org/category/hunger-games-trailer/

Questions for Discussion:

1. The film opens with glimpses of Katniss in her daily life before she is involved in the games: how would you describe her life? How does she cope with her situation? What values does she seem to have?
2. There are many visual images that provide a contrast between the poverty of Katniss' home region and the extravagance of the capital city. What are some images you have seen that effectively present poverty and others that present extravagant wealth, in this country and in other countries. Why are images effective in helping us contrast the inequalities resulting from unjust systems and structures?
3. In the film, we see how people's private lives as well as violence is made a spectacle for the "entertainment" of others. Have you seen this in real life? Why does this happen? Does it undercut human dignity in any way?
4. Does the main character go through a transformation in the course of the film in any way? Does she remain true to herself and her ideals? Does anything compromise her in any way?
5. Catholic Social Teaching declares we are social beings. In what ways are the main characters in the film shown to be social beings? Does the film promote individualism over solidarity with others? When is the good of the individual shown to be primary? When is solidarity shown to be important? Which is the most important in the world of the film?
6. What are the problems in the society in the film that inhibit a flourishing of the common good? Do you see these problems in any contemporary societies? Is there any sense of what the common good might be for all the groups in the film?
7. In the film, Katniss does not kill anyone directly, but her choices do lead to the death of others (when she cuts down the nest of deadly insects, for example, and the insects kill a girl.) Does the story line allow her any other choices except those related to violence?
8. Is the world of the film portrayed as one in which non-violence has no place? Do the scenes of violence and death in the film promote violence in any way? What message does the film ultimately give about violence and about non-violence to young people? Why is non-violence so difficult for many people to understand and support?
9. Why do you think that this film and the books it was made from have so much appeal to young people today? Does a story about violence and limited choices ring true to young people in any way? Is the film ultimately a positive influence on young adults trying to live out a Christian life style, or is it a negative one, or is it a bit of both?