

# Ms. Hernandez English Class

## Helpful Guide

### Contents:

- |  |       |
|--|-------|
| 1. How to Structure a Paragraph                    | Pg. 1 |
| 2. The Giver Handout                               | Pg. 2 |
| 3. How to Structure a Paragraph: The Giver Example | Pg. 3 |
| 4. The Giver Essay: Example                        | Pg. 4 |
| 5. Sample Think Questions                          | Pg. 6 |

# How to Structure a Paragraph

**Topic Sentence:** This is the first sentence of the paragraph. This sentence tells us what you will be writing about. Example: In the story...

**Statement/Claim:** your stance or idea about the prompt, your answer to the prompts questions.

**Evidence:** This is the proof from the book that tells you about the topic you have chosen to write about. Examples: In the paragraph it states, “ \_\_\_\_\_ ” (pg, 192).

**Explanation:** This is your explanation or your opinion about the evidence, or what the evidence means to you. (There should be two sentences explaining your opinion) Example: This tells us...

**Concluding sentence:** This is the last sentence. It gives your paragraph closure and summarizes what you have already talked about. Example: In this paragraph...

# Example: The Giver Writing Prompt Handout

## Directions:

1. Turn to page 4 of this packet. It is the example I wrote of “The Giver” writing prompt.
2. Read the first paragraph of the essay and then come back to this handout.
3. After you have read the first paragraph, I want you to look at the 5 areas we went over that make a paragraph below on page 3 (Topic Sentence, Statement/Claim, Evidence, Explanation, and Concluding Sentence). I have given you examples of each taken directly from the writing prompt for “The Giver.”

## How to Structure a Paragraph: The Giver Example

**Topic Sentence:** In the story, “The Giver” Jonas’ questions reveal his feelings regarding the ceremony of twelve.

**Statement/Claim:** Jonas does not want to be disappointed in his job title.

**Evidence:** In paragraph 13 it says, “Unlike his father, he had no idea what his assignment would be. But he knew that some would disappoint him...Nurturer would not be his wish. And he didn’t envy Laborers at all” (page 154).

**Explanation:** Jonas tells us he does not know his job assignment, and doesn’t want to be disappointed. He does not want to be a nurturer or a Laborer as his job assignment.

**Concluding Sentence:** Jonas’ questions about the ceremony of twelve reveal that he does not want to be disappointed with his assignment, and he does not want to be a Nurturer or a Laborer.

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Prompt: What do Jonas's questions and comments reveal about his feelings as he awaits the ceremony of twelve? What do his parents' responses reveal about him and the community?

#### Potential Disappointment and Observations

In the story, "The Giver" Jonas' questions reveal his feelings regarding the ceremony of twelve. Jonas does not want to be disappointed in his job title. In paragraph 13 it says, "Unlike his father, he had no idea what his assignment would be. But he knew that some would disappoint him...Nurturer would not be his wish. And he didn't envy Laborers at all" (page 154). Jonas tells us he does not know his job assignment, and doesn't want to be disappointed. He does not want to be a nurturer or a Laborer as his job assignment. Jonas' questions about the ceremony of twelve reveal that he does not want to be disappointed with his assignment, and he does not want to be a Nurturer or a Laborer.

The responses that Jonas' parents have about him and the community reveal that they are very observant. In the story it states, "My friend Yoshiko was surprised by her selection as Doctor," Father said, "but she was thrilled...There was Andrei-I remember that when we were boys he never wanted to do physical things...The Elders knew that, of course. Andrei was given the Assignment of Engineer and he was delighted." (Lowry, 154) This shows that Joanas's father

was observant with his friends and remembers what Assignments they would be good at. It also tells us that the Elders were just as observant because they gave him the Assignment of Engineer. In paragraph 21 it states, “The Elders know Asher,” his mother said. “They’ll find exactly the right Assignment for him. I don’t think you need to worry about him.” (Lowry, 155) Jonas’ mom tells us that the Elders are observant enough to know where to place Asher, and that they will choose the right Assignment for him. She advises Jonas not to worry about where Asher ends up because the Elders know what they are doing. The responses of Jonas’ parents tell us that the community is observant and through observation place the people of the community into the right Assignment.

## The Giver Think Questions: Example

1. Refer to one or more details in the text to support your understanding of why Jonas “shivered” in the opening line of the excerpt. Cite specific details that are directly stated in the text and inferences you made from clues in the first three paragraphs.
  - a. Jonas shivers because he is worried about his upcoming Ceremony of Twelve and is showing his nervousness. In paragraph 1 it states, “He pictured his father...shy and quiet boy...seated with his group, waiting to be called to the stage.” (Lowry, 153)
  
2. Why didn’t Jonas’s father feel an element of suspense at his Ceremony of Twelve? What is Jonas’s reaction to his father’s lack of suspense at his Ceremony? Cite textual evidence from paragraphs 3, 4, and 6 to support your response.
  - a. Jonas’s father didn’t feel an element of suspense at his Ceremony of Twelve because he already knew what his Assignment would be. In paragraph 3 it says, “..for me there was not the element of suspense that there is with your Ceremony. Because I was already fairly certain of what my Assignment was to be” (Lowry, 153). Jonas was surprised by his father’s lack of suspense because it is supposed to be a secret and nobody is supposed to know their Assignment. In paragraph 4 it states, “Jonas was surprised. There was no way, really, to know in advance. It was a secret selection, made by leaders of the community, the Committee of Elders” (Lowry 153).

3. Use specific evidence from the text to explain why Jonas is concerned about Asher's assignment. Then explain why Jonas's mother is not worried about Asher. What can you infer about Jonas and his mother from their contrasting points of view about Asher in paragraphs 19 and 21?
  - a. Jonas is concerned about Asher's assignment because he feels that Asher is always having fun, but doesn't have serious interests. In paragraph 19 it states, "Asher's such fun. But he doesn't really have any serious interests. He makes a game out of everything" (Lowry, 155). Jonas's mother is not worried about Asher because she trusts that the Elders can make the best decision and give him the Assignment that is right for him. In paragraph 21 it tells us, "The Elders know Asher," his mother said. "They'll find exactly the right Assignment for him. I don't think you need to worry about him" (Lowry, 155). I can infer about Jonas and his mother that they both have different views on trusting that the Elders will make the best choice for Asher.
4. Use a print or digital dictionary to determine the meaning of **aptitude** as it is used in paragraph 6 of the excerpt. Write the definition.
  - a. The meaning of the word aptitude is the natural ability to do something.
5. Use a print or digital dictionary to determine the meaning of **elders** as it is used in paragraph 4 of the excerpt. Write the definition.
  - a. The word elders means a person of greater age than someone specified.