The Hunger Games

Part I: “The Tributes”

Chapter 1

Vocabulary

- **apothecary** – a place where medicines are sold; a pharmacy
- **claustrophobic** – cramped, confined, closed in
- **deterrent** – something that prevents or discourages
- **indifferent** – uncaring; not interested
- **iridescent** – shimmering, gleaming
- **maniacally** – in a crazy or overexcited manner
- **obliterated** – completely destroyed, wiped out
- **paraffin** – wax used to make candles
- **paunchy** – having a large belly
- **pelt** – the hide and fur of an animal
- **poaching** – illegally hunting and taking fish or game
- **preposterous** – ridiculous; outrageous
- **reaping** – harvesting; gathering
- **repentance** – remorse for one’s sins
- **sustenance** – food, nourishment
- **torturous** – painful, agonizing
- **unintelligible** – impossible to understand or make sense of
- **vermin** – bugs or other pests that carry disease
- **verve** – energy; enthusiasm

1. Who is the narrator of the story? What form of narration is used?

2. Describe Katniss’s family members. How does she feel toward each of them? What happened to her father?
3. Point out at least two examples within the first few pages that indicate that Katniss’s family is very poor. Who provides for the family, and how?

4. Where do Katniss and her family live?

5. What type of work do most of the people in the Seam do? How does the author use descriptive imagery in her depiction of the workers? What mood does she create with this type of imagery?

6. As the novel begins, Katniss makes several references to something called “the reaping.” Find at least two quotes from the first several pages of the chapter, in which the reaping (or reaping day) is mentioned. How does the author create suspense through these references?

7. What are some indications within the first few pages that the government of Panem is oppressive?

8. Describe Gale. How does Katniss feel about him?
9. As Gale and Katniss sit together eating bread and gazing down at the valley, Gale says, “We could do it, you know.” What is he suggesting they do? What is Katniss’s response?

10. What is the Hob? Who are the Peacekeepers?

11. Explain how the reaping system works, according to Katniss. Which class of people suffers the most because of the way the system operates?

12. A tessera is defined as a small tile that is used in a mosaic. In ancient times, tesserae were small pieces of wood or other hard objects used as tokens or tickets. How does the author incorporate both definitions into her use of tesserae?

13. Identify at least two examples from the chapter indicating that District 12 is marked by deep divisions among the social classes.

14. Identify the simile that Katniss uses to describe the camera crews that have come to televise the reaping. What does this simile imply about these people and their line of work? Find at least two more examples of simile in the chapter.
15. As an introduction to the ceremony, the mayor reads an account of the history of Panem. Briefly summarize the country’s history. How does the country’s past relate to the current tradition of the Hunger Games?

16. Explain the rules of the Hunger Games. What does the winner receive?

17. According to Katniss, what is the “real message” that the government intends to send to its citizens through the tradition of the Hunger Games?

18. In what ways are the Hunger Games used as entertainment or a type of festivity? Why does the Capitol require its citizens to view the Games this way?

19. Who is Haymitch Abernathy? How does he behave at the reaping ceremony? What might his behavior indicate about the lasting effect of the Hunger Games on its participants?

20. Whose name is the first to be drawn in the reaping? What is ironic about this circumstance?