WHO OWNS KATNISS EVERDEEN’S BODY IN *THE HUNGER GAMES*?

A CURRICULUM FOR FACILITATING DISCUSSIONS ABOUT GENDER EQUITY IN *THE HUNGER GAMES*

A Project

Presented to the faculty of the Graduate and Professional Studies in Education

California State University, Sacramento

Submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

in

Education

(Behavioral Sciences Gender Equity Studies)

by

Katie Vellanoweth

SUMMER
2014
WHO OWNS KATNISS EVERDEEN’S BODY IN \textit{THE HUNGER GAMES}? 
A CURRICULUM FOR FACILITATING DISCUSSIONS ABOUT GENDER EQUITY IN \textit{THE HUNGER GAMES} 

A Project 

by 

Katie Vellanoweth 

Approved by: 

\underline{Sherrie Carinci, Ed.D.}, Committee Chair 

\underline{Date}
Student: Katie Vellanoweth

I certify that this student has met the requirements for format contained in the University format manual, and that this project is suitable for shelving in the Library and credit is to be awarded for the project.

______________________________, Department Chair
Susan Heredia, Ph.D.  
Date

Graduate and Professional Studies in Education
Abstract

of

WHO OWNS KATNISS EVERDEEN’S BODY IN THE HUNGER GAMES?
A CURRICULUM FOR FACILITATING DISCUSSIONS ABOUT GENDER EQUITY IN THE HUNGER GAMES

by

Katie Vellanoweth

Statement of Problem

The rise of female protagonists in contemporary young-adult fiction positively and negatively impacts young-adult readers (Nilson & Donelson, 2009). Suzanne Collins’ novel The Hunger Games (2008) highlights Katniss Everdeen who is a strong, independent female protagonist. Millions of young-adult females identify with Katniss as they read the novel (Latham & Hollister, 2013). The extreme lack of gender equity training for educators creates inequities in classrooms (Carinci, 2007). Many teachers are ignorant of the negative impact this bias has on the education and self-esteem of girls in the classroom (Sadker & Saker, 1986). The absence of gender equity training causes current Hunger Games curriculum guides to be gender biased. This bias creates problematic notions of gender for educators who teach The Hunger Games and young-adults who read the text.
Purpose of Project

Educators, primarily middle-school teachers, need assistance when discussing *The Hunger Games* with students. The employment of the curriculum guide helps teachers counter gender-bias in current published curriculum and perpetuate a gender-inclusive message in their classrooms. The curriculum guide provides teachers with essential topics to discuss about *The Hunger Games*. Possible responses also help adults and young-adults celebrate both female and male characters in the text equally. The guide also assists educators in identifying problematic gender stereotypes in the novel that can harm young-adult readers.

Project Description

Gender equity training would vastly benefit educators and students. (Carinci, 2007). Only when educators are trained in gender equity can they recognize their own gender bias. The goal of this project was to help educators have gender equitable discussions with young-adults who read Suzanne Collins’ novel *The Hunger Games*. The curriculum guide (Appendix C) is comprised of direct quotations, post-reading questions, and possible responses. Providing direct quotation from *The Hunger Games* allows educators to ask questions in context of the novel. Post-reading discussion questions are designed to be open-ended and stimulate conversations between adults
and adolescent readers. Finally, possible responses prepare educators to talk about issues of gender in the novel.

\[\text{Committee Chair}
\]

Sherrie Carinci, Ed.D.

\[\text{Date}\]
DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my grandma, Alberta Shanrock. Thank you for your unending support. “The bird that would soar above the level plain of tradition and prejudice must have strong wings” (Chopin, 1899, p. 103).
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my advisor Dr. Sherrie Carinci. Her passion and dedication to the learning of others truly distinguishes her as a great teacher. She inspires me to be great too. California State University, Sacramento would be lost without her.

Thank you to my wonderful husband for supporting my dreams. You helped me see a light at the end of the tunnel.

To my mom, thank you for not letting me give up.

To my dad, thank you for supporting me through all of the other stresses that don’t go away just because you are in grad school.

To my sister Stephanie, being able to chat with you when I needed a break from writing was invaluable.

Finally, to my colleagues and friends, thank you for caring about my learning.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dedication</td>
<td>vii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgements</td>
<td>viii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement of the Problem</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose of the Project</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limitations</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theoretical Basis of the Study</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definition of Terms</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization of the Project</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background of the Researcher</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Constructs of Gender</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender in the Classroom</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls in the Classroom</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young Adult Readers</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Female Protagonists ................................................................................................................. 23
Instructional Materials ............................................................................................................. 25
The Hunger Games .................................................................................................................... 26
Summary .................................................................................................................................. 30
3. METHODOLOGY ...................................................................................................................... 31
   Introduction ............................................................................................................................. 31
   Research Design ...................................................................................................................... 31
   Settings .................................................................................................................................. 33
   Procedure ................................................................................................................................. 33
   Summary .................................................................................................................................. 35
4. CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND
   REFLECTIONS .......................................................................................................................... 36
   Evaluator Questions .................................................................................................................. 36
   Evaluators ................................................................................................................................. 37
   Feedback Results ...................................................................................................................... 38
   Conclusion ................................................................................................................................. 43
   Limitations ................................................................................................................................. 45
   Recommendations ................................................................................................................... 45
Appendix A. Evaluator Letter ...................................................................................................... 47
Appendix B. Evaluator Questions ................................................................................................. 49
Appendix C. Curriculum Guide ................................................................. 54
References .............................................................................................. 87
Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

The project was designed to share research finding about problematic gender issues in *The Hunger Games* with educators of young-adult female readers. Adult educators included teachers, parents, councilors, librarians, authors, and anyone who can guide and support young-olds as they read Suzanne Collin’s novel *The Hunger Games*. The project is accessible to all educators and promotes conversations between educators and young-adult readers. A narrative approach is necessary to promote open conversation between educators and adolescent female readers, “Narratives are an important source of order for qualitative research” as they open communication and validate participant’s voices (Shank, 2002, p. 147). The project was designed as a curriculum that is aligned with the novel *The Hunger Games*.

Statement of the Problem

A turning point in literature occurred when reading for pleasure became acceptable for young-adult female readers. From, 1900 to 1950, researchers saw the rise of young adult literature as young people began to demand their own literary genre that could be read for pleasure instead of instruction (Nilson & Donelson, 2009). While examining the literature produced between the early and mid-1900s, by both male and female authors, there is an extreme lack of female protagonists in young-adult fiction (Nilson & Donelson, 2009). More so, minor female characters in fiction texts overwhelmingly exhibit submissive character traits and assume gendered roles in
which their main purpose in the text is fulfilling a romantic goal (Nilson & Donelson, 2009). The lack of female protagonists and the presence of stereotypical minor female characters in early young-adult fiction prescribes submissive gender stereotypes to young-adult female readers.

In Susan Collins’s contemporary novel *The Hunger Games* series (2008), protagonist Katniss Everdeen, reinforces and challenges traditional female heteronormativity. While Collins’s novels challenge cultural gender roles in positive ways the series also idolizes harmful themes of violence towards females. With so many girls accessing and investing in *The Hunger Games*, educators must question what they are learning from these texts.

**Purpose of the Project**

*The Hunger Games* series by Susanne Collins has swept the nation. Boys and girls, young and old, are fascinated with these contemporary texts. The purpose of this project is to use a critical lens to examine issues of gender equity in the novels and to share these findings with educators of young-adult female readers.

The first novel of Suzanne Collin’s series is titled *The Hunger Games* and was produced in 2008. The next two books in the series followed in 2010 and 2011. In 2011, the first of *The Hunger Games* films was released and was a box-office hit. The plot of *The Hunger Games* begins with the reaping of two children, called tributes, from 13 districts to participate in a fight to the death competition at the Capital. Only one tribute can be named victor. Katniss Everdeen volunteers in the place of her sister and with Peeta Malark they travel to the Capital to fight in the Hunger Games.
Katniss and Peeta quickly gain popularity from their modern take on costumes and their falsely-created romantic relationship. Both are successful at staying alive in the games. The games only end when one tribute is alive. At the conclusion of the games, Katniss and Peeta are faced with killing each other. Instead, they almost eat poisoned berries as a choice to commit suicide than killing each other. Before they can eat the berries they are both crowned victors of the games. The president of the Capitol views their actions as defiance against the Capitol’s power. Katniss states, “Without a victor, the whole thing would blow up in the Game makers’ faces” (Collins, 2008, p. 344). They return to their District as champions and continue to struggle with their complicated relationship. Even though many fans revere them, their defiance is also viewed as a threat and begins to crumble the Capital’s dictatorship over the thirteen districts (Collins, 2008).

Millions of young people have access to *The Hunger Games* novel through literature and film. Adolescences who read this book are being exposed to problematic gender stereotypes and expectations. When reading *The Hunger Games* novel or watching the film it is absolutely essential that adults have conversations with young adults about problematic gender dynamics presented in the novel. Although Katniss Everdeen, female protagonist of the series, is an inspirational young woman, her character is still problematic. Young female adult readers are choosing to read this novel, however they should read it with adult support. Young adult readers may need assistance when working through issues of gender that can negatively impact their view of their self and their place in the world.
Within *The Hunger Games* novel, readers will find an overarching theme of gender related issues. These themes can be divided into four categories related to gender. First, characters in the novel struggle with issues of the body and ownership of one’s body. Second, relationships are extremely problematic and are at the forefront in the book. Next, the topic of power in relation to male and female characters is concerning when males hold power over female characters, and finally Katniss and other females in the novel struggle with their role, as a female, in society. All four of these issues are related to gender dynamics and are overwhelmingly present in the novel. Thus, when female young adults read *The Hunger Games* they are being exposed to gender issues that can affect their view of themselves and the world.

For the creation of this project, the researcher will closely analyze current *Hunger Games* curriculum. The research will consider what is lacking in current curriculum and develop a curriculum intended for both young-adult readers and adults that focuses on gender issues within *The Hunger Games* novel. This curriculum will read as a guide to aid parents and educators when having conversations with young-adults who are reading and watching *The Hunger Games* series. The researcher will arrange the guide by sequential chapters that align with chapters in the novel. The researcher will develop questions per chapter depending on the amount of gender issues present. There will be no right or wrong answers to these questions, instead they will be opportunities for adults to start conversations with young-adults and to help them develop an understanding of gender roles in the novel. All of the questions fall under the umbrella of gender. Within the theme of power the researcher discusses
issues of relationships, power, and roles in society in *The Hunger Games* novel. The researcher provided a curriculum that is appropriate for any educational setting, home or school. Adults include anyone who educates young-adults including parents, family, and teachers. Although the text focuses on one novel in the series, the hope is that any student who has in any way accessed the text (movie or novel) will benefit from the curriculum.

**Methodology**

Content analysis was the foundation for this project. According to Prasad (2008), “Content Analysis is described as the scientific study of content of communication. It is the study of the content with reference to the meanings, contexts and intentions contained in messages” (Prasad, 2008, p. 1). To study the meanings of content, the researcher purchased published *Hunger Games* curriculum and *Harry Potter* curriculum that is designed to be used by educators to teach *The Hunger Games* novel. This curriculum was analyzed for questions related to gender equity within the novel. The researcher found that the *Harry Potter* curriculum guides did not include problematic questions about gender due to the lack of a female protagonist. The guides focused on the male protagonist *Harry Potter*.

The researcher created a rubric to draw inferences and conclusions about the content of the *Harry Potter* and *The Hunger Games* published curriculum. The rubric included five categories: general questions about gender, questions about the body, questions about relationships, questions about the distribution of power between male and female characters, and questions about the role of females in society (Nachmias
and Nachmias, 1976). The researcher examined each curriculum guide for questions about gender and systematically sorted these questions into one of the five categories. According to Berelson (1952) the rubric maintained the validity of the project in that it was objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication. After the examination of the curriculum the researcher was able to divide findings into gender specific and problematic gender related questions. Current *Hunger Games* curriculum is limited due to how recent this novel was published. Areas that were lacking gender equity were included and developed in the researchers curriculum.

**Limitations**

The researcher was limited in the availability of current published curriculum. When designing the project researcher intended to analyze Susanne Meyer’s *Twilight* (2005), J. K. Rowling’s *Harry Potter* (1997), and Susanne Collins’ *The Hunger Games* (2008) curriculum. The researcher was not able to locate *Twilight* curriculum guides, perhaps due to the novel not being taught in classrooms. After examining three *Harry Potter* curriculum guides, the researcher found limited problematic questions about gender because the main character was a male protagonist.

The researcher is limited to educators who want to teach *The Hunger Games* and who have an interest in gender equity. Most educators who use this novel are middle school teachers. The project cannot assume that all educators have the same background and education in gender equity. The project also cannot ensure that all educators have the same comfort level discussing issues of gender with adolescent
readers. Therefore this project may not appeal to all teachers. Finally, this project is only designed for young-adults who are female and have read the novel *The Hunger Games*.

**Theoretical Basis of the Study**

**Introduction**

The researcher utilized theories relating to gender to develop the curriculum guide. In this section the researcher outlines Social Learning theory, Social Cognitive theory, Gender Socialization theory, and Feminist theory. Social Learning theory and Social Cognitive theory discuss how gender is a learned concept and the evolution of what is deemed masculine or feminine behaviors. The heavy influence of educators on the development of a student’s gender is determined in Gender Socialization theory. Finally, Feminist theory discusses the feminist movement and the roles of women in society. These theories express both the positives and negatives of Katniss Everdeen’s role as the female protagonist in *The Hunger Games*.

**Social Learning Theory**

To discuss gender theory, one must first consider the sex of an individual. The characteristics between males and females provide a basic organization process for our culture (Bem, 1981). Individuals are labeled by their sex, and through socialization, their attributes are developed and neatly fall into the categories of male or female (Schaefer, 1996). Sex typing is the process of labeling male and female into masculine and feminine (Bem, 1981). Social learning theory proposes that individuals learn to be masculine and feminine through communication and observation (Wood, 2009).
Gender roles are developed by the social learning process, which is influenced by the self, personal behavior, and the environment (Bandura, 1986; Bandura & Bussey, 2004). “Since gender is a social construction, it is amenable to change, but, as a deeply embedded social variable, gender also tends to resist modification” thus what a parent learns is transcribed to their children (Stromquist & Fischman, 2009, p. 473). Social learning theory assists the child in establishing self-identity (Martin & Halverson, 1981). By utilizing a female as her protagonist, author Suzanne Collins invites young-adult female readers to identity with the text *The Hunger Games*.

**Social Cognitive Theory**

Children can develop sex typed gender schemas from adults, as they cannot help but observe for appropriate behavior (Bem, 1981). Society teaches developing children that gender is embedded in every aspect of our culture including media and school (Bem, 1981). Young children will imitate adults such as parent, teachers, and the media because they value their information, “In social cognitive theory, repeated modeling of gender-typed behavior in schools… serves as a major conveyer of gender-role information” (Bandura & Bussey, 2004, p. 96). The general acceptance is two discrete sexes, genders, and in turn, two classes of people (Risman, 2004). This is concerning when perpetual gender stereotypes label females as the lesser sex. *The Hunger Games*, however, celebrates a strong, independent female protagonist who reaches beyond gender-typed behaviors.
Gender Socialization Theory

Educators, in the form of parents or teachers, greatly impact the development of a child’s gender (Lee-Thomas, Sumson, & Roberts, 2005). Gender socialization theory suggests that children learn their “culturally defined gender roles […] which are persistently reinforced through] countless subtle and not so subtle ways” (Henslin, 1994, p. 76). Children are influenced by a variety of sources such as parents, teachers, media, and peers. Children learn what behaviors are acceptable for their gender and what behaviors are frowned upon. Lee-Thomas et al. (2005) “suggests that children are helpless to impede the constant stream of gender information they receive” therefore it is not possible for young-adults to not feel pressured to conform to their gender stereotypes and are chastised for not conforming (p. 22). The characters in The Hunger Games challenge the notions of what is feminine or what is masculine. When reading The Hunger Games young-adults learn that boys can enjoy baking and girls can be celebrated for their athleticism.

Feminist Theory

In Gender Trouble (1999), Butler argues that gender is viewed as a binary in which humans are divided into two clear-cut groups, women and men. The categorization as a man or woman prevents a person from choosing his or her own individual identity. Butler (1993) believes that rather than being a fixed attribute to a person, that is tied so closely to one’s sex, gender should been seen as fluid. Butler’s Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of “Sex” (1993) also suggests that we all involuntarily put on a gender performance. The performance of gender is not a
singular “act” or event, but a ritualized production. It is not a question of whether to perform, but what form that performance will take. By choosing to be different about it, Butler wishes to change gender norms and the binary understanding of masculinity and femininity, “There is no gender identity behind the expressions of gender…identity is performatively constituted by the very expressions that are said to be its results” (Butler, 1999). Thus males and females “perform” their learned gender.

In *Feminist Theory from Margin to Center* (1984), bell hooks suggests:

> Feminist consciousness-raising has not significantly pushed women in the direction of revolutionary politics. For the most part, it has not helped women understand capitalism—how it works as a system that exploits female labor and its interconnections with sexist oppression. It has not urged women to learn about different political systems like socialism or encouraged women to invent and envision new political systems. It has not attacked materialism and our society’s addiction to overconsumption. It has not shown women how we benefit from the exploitation and oppression of women and men globally or shown us ways to oppose imperialism. Most importantly, it has not continually confronted women with the understanding that feminist movement to end sexist oppression can be successful only if we are committed to revolution, to the establishment of a new social order. (p. 115)

bell hooks suggests that women are being used as capital to be transferred between men. The commodification of women is a learned system. Hooks supports of the
feminist movement stems from her desire for a new “ideological meeting ground for sexes, a space for criticism, struggle, and transformation” (hooks, 1984, p. 116). The performance of one’s gender is a theme woven through The Hunger Games. Female protagonist Katniss Everdeen is forced to perform both a feminine and masculine role throughout the text. Feminist theory can criticize how male characters in the text often determine Katniss’ performance of either a masculine or feminine role.

**Definition of Terms**

*Gender bias* – unfair treatment of one sex over another (Sadker & Sadker, 1994).

*Gender equity* - “parity between males and females in the quality of life, academic, and work, outcomes designed to promote these outcomes” (Funk, 2002, p. 4).

*Gender schema*: “organized knowledge structure containing information about the sexes” (Martin & Dinella, 2001, p. 507).

*Gender schema theory*: “cognitive approach in which people are actively involved in the process of gender development” (Martin & Dinella, 2001, p. 507).

*Hegemony* - the processes by which a dominant culture maintains its dominancy (McGuffey & Rich, 1999).

*Narrative* – “an interpretive approach in the Social Sciences and involves using storytelling methodology” (Mitchel & Egudo, 2003, p. 2).

*Patriarchy* – a form of social organization in which a male is the family head and title is traced through the male line (McGuffey & Rich, 1999).

*Sex-biased materials*: (a) males featured as main character and in illustrations more frequently than females; (b) sex-stereotypical roles for males and females; (c)
females portrayed in derogatory roles more often than males; (d) male generic language used (Scott & Schau, 1985).

*Sex-role socialization:* learned behaviors/values deemed by society that can be classified as masculine or feminine (Weitzman, Eifler, Hokada, & Ross, 1972).

*Socialization Theory* - a process in which “gender construction is said to occur from exposure to models in the child’s environment from which the child gains an understanding of desirable ways to think, act and feel” (Lee-Thomas et al., 2005, p. 22).

*Social cognitive theory:* using observational learning to imitate actions (Shaffer, 2005).

*Young-adult literature* - Literature intended for young-adult readers. This is different than children’s literature in that it can focus on issues of the body including sexuality and relationships (Harper, 2007).

*Young adult readers* – Females between the ages of 10-17 who have read the novel (Harper, 2007).

**Organization of the Project**

The project is organized into four chapters, appendices, and references. Chapter 1 describes the importance of the study. Chapter 2 explains the relevant literature that justifies the researcher’s claims. Chapter 3 describes the methods of research used during the study and the procedures for creating the project. Chapter 4 includes the conclusions drawn from the presentation of the study and future recommendations of the researcher. Finally the appendices contain the curriculum.
Background of the Researcher

Katie Vellanoweth earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in English from the University of California, Riverside. Ms. Vellanoweth then pursued a single subjects teaching credential in English from California State University, Sacramento. Ms. Vellanoweth has taught English classes at both middle and high schools in the Sacramento area. Ms. Vellanoweth hopes that her curriculum will be engaging and useful to her students, colleagues, and friends.
Chapter 2

REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter includes an examination of important components supporting the effective teaching of Suzanne Collins’ novel *The Hunger Games*. The review begins by discussing the social constructs of gender and the cultural framework in which a person’s gender is established. The researcher then examines gender in the classroom including the lack of gender equity training in teacher credential programs thus harming girls in the classroom. The chapter continues by examining the rise in young-adult literature and the impact on young-adult readers. The increase in young-adult literature has also caused an increase in female protagonists. The author concludes the chapter with reviewing issues with current curriculum guides and gender-bias in popular novel *The Hunger Games*.

Social Constructs of Gender

The results of socialization are detrimental to the equality of males and females, yet the social construction of gender and its existence within the cultural framing of our society has remained widely unchanged throughout the last century. Although visual styling changes, popular culture throughout the 1900s and early 2000s has taught and reinforced hegemonic ideals of femininity and the role of women in society as less than males (Zeisler, 2008). The degradation, dismissal, and refusal of women in one sphere, such as media, can undeniably damage female’s prospects in the next like the labor force, academia, and curriculum (Zeisler, 2008).
In the classroom experience, gender is used to predict students’ behavior given educators’ stereotypical ideas as to how girls and boys should behave (Funk, 2002). Wood (2009) states,

Young girls tend to be rewarded when they are deferential, considerate, quiet, loving, emotional expressive, and obedient—all qualities associated with femininity. They tend to get less positive responses if they are boisterous, independent, unconcerned with others, or competitive—qualities associated with masculinity. As parents and others reinforce in girls what is considered feminine and discourage behaviors and attitudes that are masculine, they shape little girls into femininity. Similarly, as parents communicate approval to boys for behaving in masculine ways and curb them for acting feminine—for instance—crying they influence little boys to be masculine. (p. 49)

Wood (2009) suggests that a female’s sex dictates the performance of a feminine gender role in the classroom which expects submissive qualities. Children will imitate the teacher’s expectations of gendered behavior and then expect similar behaviors from their classmates, thus preserving unfair gender stereotypes (Bandura & Bussey, 2004).

In addition to the media and teacher expectations, literature also greatly impacts the social construction of gender, “Children are continually exposed to models of gender-linked behavior in readers [and] storybooks” (Bandura & Bussey, 2004, p. 108). Children learn gender roles from stories and through modeling (Shaffer, 2005). Children and young adult literature is a social media that presents stereotypical roles
given to male and female characters. Attitudes and behaviors of same-sex models, or book characters, can be learned through observational learning (Shaffer, 2005). As suggested by social learning theory, children will pattern their behavior to match these same-gender models found in school literature curriculum (Bandura & Bussey, 2004). Students observe actions and choices by characters in books and model these behaviors in their own life. Often children and young-adults are reading gender-biased books and formulate stereotypical gender schemas, which influence the perception of their own gender role and self (Shaffer, 2005). Currently male-female distinctions have corrupted our curriculum for children and young adults (Bem, 1981). Educators must be mindful of gender bias in literature so students are not confined to one opportunity based solely on his or her sex instead of abilities. Teachers can broaden their student’s perceptions of appropriate gender role and activities by selecting literature that models nontraditional careers (McDevitt & Ormrod, 2004). Educators must be aware that the, “everyday classroom… use[s] practices that have not taken up girl’s experiences” (Gallagher, 2000, p. 71). Girls will expand their self-worth if exposed to a wider variety of people and social systems in classroom literature (Bandura & Bussey, 2004).

According to Brannon and Green (1997), “The denial of the female experience within literary curriculum is mirrored by the denial of female experience within history. The formation of the first documents and policies of the United States, from the prospective of minorities and women, is completely void of representation” (p. 142). If all young people learn to be masculine or feminine based on social models
then it is essential that female readers see themselves in the curriculum in gender equitable roles.

**Gender in the Classroom**

America’s education system began as single-sex. However, this practice was not equitable for male and female students because both genders did not receive the same education or materials. Co-education brought female and male students into the same classroom to learn together. Fox’s (1989) article “Women and Higher Education: Gender Differences in the Status of Students and Scholars” shows that females have not always been welcomed into institutions of education. According to Fox, “The shortage of male students and dwindling enrollments during the Civil War encouraged administrators to open their doors to female students” (p. 218). Female students were granted admittance to both elementary schools and higher academic institutions. Where many academic intuitions were once single-gendered, both female and male students began to occupy the same space. Even with the opportunity to learn at the same college as male students, women continued to receive an unequal education. Where male students focused on career preparation, female students learned how to be successful wives, “At the end of the 19th century, higher education for women emphasized the development of character, the pursuit of culture, and the ideas of liberal arts… Thus, college had come to occupy an interlude between high school and marriage (and motherhood) for young women” (p. 218). It was time for America to make a change, if coeducation existed, it needed to be equal for both male and female students.
Classrooms submit female students to gender biases and discriminatory practices from male classmates and teachers. Carinci’s (2007) studies found, “Females have fewer contacts with instructors in class, they are less likely to be called on by name, are asked fewer complex and abstract questions, receive less praise or constructive feedback, and are given less direction on how to do things for themselves” these findings are extremely disturbing (p. 146). Carinci’s (2007) research means that when a girl is enrolled in a co-education classroom, she is learning to be a low-status student: she deserves less of the teacher’s attention, feedback, and knowledge. Co-education allows these harmful gender practices to exist. The only option is to provide female students with their own classroom and teacher.

Boys demand and receive more of their teacher’s attention (Mulvey, 2010). Teachers may find themselves needing to correct more behavior problems from their male students, thus taking away time from female learners. Single-gender classrooms would incorporate best practices for male learners such as group work, competition, breaks, and other kinesthetic activities. These changes are not an option because our boys are failing before they graduate high school. They are “discourage[d] right from the beginning of their school careers,” and this is resulting in self-destructive and violent behavior (Mulvey, 2010, p. 35). Both male and female students are struggling for success in classrooms.

Teacher credential programs lack gender equity instruction. Sexist practices can damage students, yet teachers are not made more aware of this crisis. Carinci (2009) advocates for the inclusion of gender equity classes in credential programs,
“because of the lack of training on equitable approaches, educators are not prepared to make the needed changes in methods of assessments, curricula choices, interaction patterns, or teaching strategies that would foster a gender-equitable learning environment” (p. 64). Many teachers, unknowingly, promote sexist stereotypes in their classroom. Sexist practices by educating our educators on the importance of gender equitable practices and mindsets.

Leach challenges teachers to read and respond to *Sexism in the Classroom: A Self-Quiz for Teachers*. Leach (1994) admits, “While researching gender equity issues in science, I became distressed at the number of biases behaviors I had displayed in my own science classroom” (p. 109). Leach (1994) continues by asking a variety of questions that pin-point certain traditional behaviors of teachers, and she discusses how these choices negatively impact both female and male students. Without training teachers are not even aware of inequities to both female and male students in their classrooms.

**Girls in the Classroom**

Female experience differs from male experience in the classroom. Starting at an early age, girls are ill prepared for learning, “Because of their discomfort, girls spend much time attuned to and arranging their clothing and/or their bodies” (Martin, 1998, p. 501). With focus being placed on looks instead of full kinesthetic involvement, girl’s educational experiences are limited. Boys, on the other hand, take up more space and are encouraged to move freely, boys “take up more room with their bodies, to sit in more open positions and to feel freer to do what they wish with their
bodies,” (Martin, 1998, p. 503). Clothes are a visual representation of gendered differences in the classroom and perpetuate unfair stereotypes towards female students. In his research, Martin found elementary teachers constantly monitor female students, “noise levels with their students and girls’ voices are disciplined to be softer in many ways, less physical [as] toning down their voices [also tones down their physicality” (Martin, 1998, p. 504). Starting in early adolescence female students experience a loss of interaction with learning and direction instruction that results in the loss of their voice in the classroom.

Teachers’ and students’ perceptions of gender cause an unfair gender bias towards female students in the classroom. Students and educators may not realize that their curriculum is so skewed due to daily and life-long hegemonic messaging that males are naturally the norm and dominant (Wood, 2009). As students continue their education, teachers perpetuate a hierarchy that honors boys and displaces girls. Girl’s ability to achieve is limited (Sanders, 2003). According to Carinci (2007) teacher’s expectations of female and male students are determined by their individual perceptions of gender. Instructors may use their personal perceptions of gender to shape their opinions of students such as their conceived notions of behavior and learning expectations for male verses female students. Instructors are more likely to allow males students to talk more and to interrupt classroom instruction than they are for female to engage in like behaviors (Carinci, 2007). Thus, male students receive more teacher attention, dominant classroom discussion, and practice dominating behaviors throughout their school years (Carinci, 2007). Once again, in school female
students learn patience, care more about their looks than learning, and the male voices take first priority in the classroom (Carinci, 2007). Girls render themselves more reserved in school settings in order to fit in as they learn to sit quietly, and wait their turn, which often goes to a male student (Digiovanni & Liston, 2005). Digiovanni and Liston (2005) argue the denial of a girl’s voice devastates her self-image:

The lack of affirmation that can lead to [girls’] drop in self-esteem and achievement begins so much younger than even adolescence” therefore when girls are denied access to education, either through a teacher’s biased gender perceptions or through a male-dominated experience, girls are injured in our classroom. (p. 10)

By denying girls equal access to the education environment, educators are often communicating that girls are valued as lesser members of the education community.

**Young Adult Readers**

In the early 1990s young adults began to be recognized as consumers of literature for both learning and pleasure (Nilson & Donelson, 2009). While examining the literature produced between the early and mid-1900s, by both male and female authors, there is an extreme lack of female protagonists in young adult fiction. More so, minor female characters in fiction texts overwhelmingly exhibit submissive character traits and assume gendered roles where their main goal is romantic. If in fiction, a girl’s story ends when she kisses the prince, or is married, these acts teach young female readers that their “stories” must also end when they have achieved their
romantic goal. Thus, once can conclude the lack of female protagonists, and the presence of stereotypical minor female characters, in early young adult fiction thereby prescribe submissive gender stereotypes to young adult female readers (Baumgardner & Richards, 2000).

The Newbery Medal is awarded annually to a distinguished writer of young adult American Literature. According to the Association for Library Service to Children, between 1923 and 1950, 27 Newbery Medals were awarded. Of the 27 total awards, there were 14 female authors and 13 male authors (Carter, 1993). Twenty-seven texts were acknowledged for their greatness and contribution to young adult American literature, and only three of these texts exhibited a female protagonist. All three texts with female protagonists were written by women (Carter, 1993).

It is important to note that during the early 1990s only female authors were producing female protagonists (Carter, 1993). Women writers in the 1950s faced social inequalities themselves. Baumgardner and Richards (2000) describes how academia was an institution for men, “When girls get better grades than their male counterparts, they are half as likely to qualify for a National Merit Scholarship because many test questions favor boys” (p. 2). The fact that “test questions favor boys” shows that in producing novels, women authors were competing on unfair ground. If their novel was to discuss nontraditional hegemonic views of femininity, such as independence or adventure, many times a female author had to substitute an actual female protagonist for a character such as a doll (Baumgardner & Richards, 2000). These gendered novels were only intended for young women readers. The
majority of the time when female readers read for pleasure, they read about male
protagonists (Baumgardner & Richards, 2000).

According to Chemaly’s (2013) research of children’s literature over a period
of 100 years,

57% of children’s books published each year have male protagonists, verses
31% female. In popular children’s books featuring animated animals, 100% of
them have male characters, but only 33% have male and female characters.
The average number of books featuring male characters in the title of the books
is 36.5% versus 17.5% of female characters. (p. 1)

Young adult female readers only read about a female protagonist 31% of the time and,
if choosing a book by its cover, female protagonists are rarely celebrated in the title of
the book (Chemaly, 2013). Adolescent females must read books about female
protagonists to see themselves in primary roles.

**Female Protagonists**

The morals, values, and subjects of children and young adult books can convey
indirect messages to children (Crisp & Hiller, 2011). Readers can personally associate
with stereotypical roles found in text and illustrations of protagonists (Grimm &
Hughes, 2011). A protagonist is the main character of a story whose conflict drives the
plot. Readers tend to identify themselves with a man character that is the same sex as
the reader; boys relate to male protagonists and girls to female protagonists. Reading
comprehension is elevated when readers are more attentive therefore a same-sex
protagonist is invaluable to a young-adult reader (Bleakly, Westerberg, & Hopkins, 1988).

A literary cannon is a loosely comprised collection of literary works commonly assigned, read, and revered in academic institutions (Bona & Maini, 2006). In 1992 Barbara Pace found that the majority of authors featured in literary textbook cannons are male, with very few female writers (Pace, 1992). Male authors are studied and celebrated where female authors are ignored (Lauter, 1991). When considering our children’s experience in school, educators and parents need to be concerned with what literature is being taught in our classrooms. Crisp and Hiller (2011) found only 17 (23%) out of the 74 picture books that received the Caldecott Medal between 1938-2011 had female leading protagonists. The 17 female protagonists still needed a male character to help solve their conflict (Crisp & Hiller, 2011). There is an obvious lack of female main characters in current children, young-adult, and high school literary cannon currently being taught in schools. High school texts that are deemed classics often provide male voice, representation, and life connections, but offer very few opportunities for female connections (Barker, 1989, p. 40). Barker (1989) found that present female characters are, “marginalized, eliminated, or made into symbols as the male characters grapple with deep moral issues” (p. 40).

Many teachers choose to teach male-centered literature. When the main character is female, boy’s interest rate significantly drops (Bleakley et al., 1988). Publishers are producing more books geared towards male interest knowing that teachers may subconsciously select gender-biased literature to keep male students
focused on learning (Carinci, 2007). Girls, on the other hand, are year after year subjected to male-centered texts. Connell (1994) found that when female characters are lacking and male characters are present, female students are forced to code switch and identify with male characters. It is rare that male students are asked to do the same. Connell (1994) suggests that many generations of female readers have been asked to read male centered texts, learn male opinions, and relate to male character’s experiences and voices. As this cycle goes on unchallenged, female students become educators and continue teaching a biased literary cannon. It cannot be denied that currently more male-dominated literature is being taught in classroom.

Educators must balance the literary curriculum to help female students see themselves in primary roles. “Self-conception, identification within a text, and connection to the material are all key components in a female student’s style of learning (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1997, p. 21). Susanne Collins’ novel The Hunger Games offers an ideal opportunity for female young-adult readers to see themselves in the curriculum by providing a female protagonist.

**Instructional Materials**

The purpose of instructional curriculum is to provide all or some of the following information regarding the novel being taught: a summary of the story, about the author, character list, background information, pre-reading activities, vocabulary builders, discussion questions and answers, graphic organizers, writing ideas, literary analysis, post-reading discussion/writing ideas, cross-curriculum extension activities,
assessment, and scoring rubrics (ECS Learning Systems, 2014). Along with teaching
the novel, the curriculum is implemented to supplement a student’s learning.

The Common Core State Standards Initiative (2014) identifies 10 anchor
standards for reading texts. These anchor standards are categorized as, “key ideas and
details, craft and structure, integration of knowledge and ideas, and range of reading
and level of text complexity” (Common Core State Standards Initiative, 2014, p. 1).
Anchor standards are used for both expository and narrative texts. Current published
Hunger Games curriculum is aligned to Common Core State Standards (ECS Learning

The Hunger Games

Suzanne Collin’s *The Hunger Games* was published in 2009 and since its
inception, the novel has maintained a high level of attention. Latham & Hollister
(2014) suggest that female protagonist, Katniss Everdeen, survives death through both
“physical prowess and mental agility,” thereby recognizing the strong abilities of a
female protagonist (p. 1). Katniss’ independence and strength are inspirational to
female readers. Dominus’ (2012) "I Write About War. For Adolescents,” combines
post-structuralist theory with young adult literature to produce a method of analysis
that promotes discussion of the child’s position within politics, “Collins described her
decision to write the trilogy as a desire to ‘educate young people about the realities of
war” (p. 1).
In the novel *The Hunger Games*, each year two children between the ages of 11 and 17 are taken to the Capitol to compete in the games. One boy and one girl are selected. Katniss explains:

Taking the kids from our districts, forcing them to kill one another while we watch—this is the Capitol’s way of reminding us how totally we are at their mercy. How little chance we would stand of surviving another rebellion. Whatever words they use, the real message is clear. Look how we take your children and sacrifice them and there’s nothing you can do. If you lift a finger, we will destroy every last one of you. (Collins, 2008, p. 19)

The families of the tributes are then forced to watch as the children murder each other until only one stands. Katniss’ sister, Prim, is selected to be the female tribute. Unable to watch her 12 year old sister compete in the games, Katniss volunteers to take Prim’s place. Once chosen via the Reaping Katniss is no longer in control of her body. She has three minutes to tell her family and friends goodbye and she is placed on a train headed to the capitol (Collins, 2008, p. 35). At the Capitol Katniss is relocated to the restricted confines of the Tribute Quarters. Within the Tribute Quarters, Katniss follows a strict schedule and sleeps in a locked room. Even her right to suicide is suspended due to an electric force field that prevents the Tributes from jumping off the roof (Collins, 2008, p. 81).

When Katniss is taken to the Capital she must endure an intense reformation of her body to compete in the games. She and the other tributes must surrender their bodies to their “stylists” (Collins, 2008, p. 61). The Capital assigns each tribute a prep
team, a group of people who transform the appearance of the tribute. During the “remake” sessions, the team redesigns Katniss’ body to fit the Capitol’s aesthetic demands (p. 61). Katniss’ session takes hours and leaves her feeling like her body is no longer her own. Venia, one of Katniss’ stylists, waxes Katniss’ body hair and scrubs her with a solution that painfully removes layers of her skin (p. 61). The remake includes scrubs, hair removal, make up application, the changing of her hair, a costume (p. 61). Feeling like, “a plucked bird, ready for roasting,” Katniss must stand naked while any stray hairs are plucked from her body (p. 61). At the conclusion of the beauty session, Katniss cannot recognize herself. She stands a costume and feels vulnerable and uncomfortable. The Capitol takes possession of Katniss’ body to make it beautiful enough to be slaughtered for their entertainment. Katniss and the other Tributes are paraded on stage to be publically interviewed on television. In her disgust Katniss states, “All I can think of is how unjust the whole thing is, the Hunger Games. Why am I hopping around like some trained dog trying to please people I hate?” and yet she must perform as expected or risk the death of herself and loved ones (Collins, 2008, p. 117). The moment Katniss becomes a Tribute, she no longer has control over her body. Her political status places her in a position where she faces the loss of the freedom to choose her own outward appearance.

Female adolescent readers can be confused when reading the above scene. Warwick and Cavallaro (1998) argue that subjects must first construct their public identities out of clothing in order to enter the social. Clothing publically announces a person’s subjectivities through its signifying capacity Warwick and Cavallaro (1998)
explain, “… [t]he body might need the skin supplied by dress because it cannot signify by itself. In a post-structuralist scenario, this is due to the disembodying effects of the subject’s admission into the symbolic” (p. 68). Katniss must completely change her outward appearance and must be costumed to be a Tribute. Katniss’ loss of possession over her body allows her to no longer be viewed as a child but only as a Tribute. This complete transformation is necessary to compete in the games and for the games to be considered as entertainment for the citizens of the capitol. Katniss is no longer a young woman, she is a symbol of the Capitol’s dominance over the Districts.

Where beauty is idolized through the media, options like waxing, microderm abrasions, and Botox might seem natural to young female readers. Since it is not possible for real people to compete in the games, young girls seek other harmful options such as surgery, eating disorders, heavy make-up, hair dyes, hair removal, and constant diets. When pre-teens try to look beautiful, like Katniss, they fail and in turn reject their natural bodies as ugly. Beauty is an expectation of hetero-normative female culture. By tying beauty to violence, Collins’ reinforce negative harmful stereotypes. Scott and Dargis (2012) state, “it’s hard not to think that they cast a woman with a rocking body instead of a young girl partly because they were worried that guys wouldn’t turn out for a female-driven story,” here Scott and Dargis are referring to *Hunger Game’s* actress Jennifer Lawrence (p. 2). What is made plain with actress Lawrence’s “rocking body” is that sex sells and this consumerism of the female beauty harms girls. To change hetero-normative beauty would be an almost impossible task
because our society is saturated with images of unrealistic beauty. What can be changed are young girls’ perceptions of themselves.

Concerns about *The Hunger Games* are also present in research. For example, Pols (2013) asks if Katniss is an appropriate heroine for young adult readers. The article describes the character Katniss Everdeen from the movie *The Hunger Games* (2013). Pols says the young heroine might be the best female role model from a movie ever but poses a problem for parents because of the film's violence and how she is portrayed. The character's strength and her ability to defend herself and how she deals with other people are at the forefront of her argument (Pols, 2013). It is also apparent that some parents are concerned with the violence in the novel *The Hunger Games*, “But the current crop of dystopias has an even darker twist: their heroes, and victims, are children, perpetrating and witnessing distinctly adult levels of violence” (Cooper, 2013, p. 74). As a result not all parents or teachers feel comfortable allowing adolescent to read the novel.

**Summary**

Instruction in gender equity has been proven to be effective in helping all students feel esteemed in the classroom (Carinci, 2007). Additionally, reading books with female protagonists can help girls see themselves in vital roles (Carlson, 1989). In conclusion, young-adult readers can be both negatively and positively influenced from reading Suzanne Collins’ novel *The Hunger Games*. Instructional supplements that support this novel should be gender inclusive and promote the equal value of both male and female characters.
Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter outlines the proposed setting where this project is to be used and the proposed evaluators and participants that will instruct and learn from the curriculum guide. Additionally, this chapter outlines the methodology used to create the curriculum guide.

Research Design

The study utilized qualitative research by employing content analysis to analyze current *Hunger Games* curriculum to document both the lack of gender-focused questions and the inclusion of problematic gender related questions. Content analysis provided the opportunity to study, “processes occurring over long periods of time” (Babbie, 2007, p. 318). Research has concluded that, “Literary adventures educate children about what is expected and valued in the real world,” thus educators must be aware of what young-adult female readers are valuing in *The Hunger Games* novel, especially if they are valuing problematic gender roles (Dickman & Murnen, 2004, p. 373). This curriculum was designed to be accessible to both young-adults and educators to best impact adolescent learning.

The researcher grouped chapters in *The Hunger Games* into sets of three including 1-3, 4-6, 7-9, 10-12, 13-15, 16-18, 19-21, 22-24, and 25-27. Questions in the curriculum guide focus on gender equity themes and include: the body, relationships, the distribution of power between males and females, and gender roles. The
The curriculum begins with a “Note to Educators” that describes the purpose of the curriculum and how current *Hunger Games* curriculum lacks a gender focus. The researcher also included a section on “How to Use This Curriculum” to explain instructions to educators. Next educators found a comprehensive summary of the novel.

Each chapter of the curriculum begins with a short summary of events in the designated chapters. Chapters then ask 3 to 13 open-ended questions about events in the novel, depending on the number of gender related issues found in the novel’s chapters. The questions do not have a right or wrong answer, instead they offered an opportunity for the young-adult to express their opinions and insights as well as ask for clarification, advice, and support from the educator. The questions also allow the educator to give his or her insight and ask follow up questions of the young-adult reader, “Teaching narratively calls forth images of storytelling… and is a significant mode of human communication, a bearer of culture, and a potentially profound and far-reaching educational methodology” (Moore, 1998, p. 248). The researcher included “possible responses” to help guide the educator in conversing with young-adult readers. Page numbers, a short summary of events in the novel, and direct quotations from the book guide the educator to reference the novel *The Hunger Games*.

It was not necessary to employ the curriculum sequentially; educators can use questions and chapters as their young-adult reader needs. The curriculum should be
employed while the reader is reading the novel as well as after the reader concludes the novel.

**Settings**

The researcher created this project for a diverse population of learners between the ages of 10 and 17. Typically *The Hunger Games* is taught in middle school English Language Arts classrooms. Young-adult readers are intended to be females between the ages of 10 and 17 who have read Suzanne Collin’s *The Hunger Games* although male students will also benefit from the curriculum guide. Educators are adults who are in a position to mentor the young-adult female readers of *The Hunger Games*. Educators can be parents, teachers, councilors, book-club leaders, after school program directors, librarians, authors, and any other adult who works with young-adults who read this novel. Educators need to be familiar with *The Hunger Games* to access the curriculum. They may utilize the textual summary, direct quotations, and page numbers to comprehend the events in the novel.

**Procedure**

The researcher employed content analysis for this study. Content analysis was a well-suited research method as it allowed the research to collect unbiased data about current *Hunger Games* curriculum. The creation of the curriculum began with content analysis described by Babbie (2007) as, “the study of human recorded communications,” where the research located current *Hunger Games* curriculum (p. 320). The researcher was limited to Hunger Games curriculum that was published, therefore accessible to educators who currently teach *The Hunger Games* to young-
adult readers (Babbie, 2007). After extensive research, the researcher located four curriculum guides including, *The Hunger Games Literature Guide and Student Workbook* (2011), *Novel Units: The Hunger Games Novel Units Student Packet* (2011), *Novel Units: The Hunger Games Teacher’s Guide* (2011), and *The Hunger Games Companion* (2011). The researcher found that published curriculum was limited due to the high level of violence embedded in the novel therefore middle-school educators are hesitant to teach the novel in their classrooms.

In reviewing the literature several themes emerged. Through research conducted in the literature review, the researcher designed a rubric that categorized these themes. The rubric utilized by the researcher included the following topics addressing issues of gender in *The Hunger Games*:

1. Gender questions about gender.
2. Questions about the body.
3. Questions about relationships.
4. Questions about the distribution of power between male and female characters.
5. Questions about the role of females in society.

When concluding the project, an evaluation component was completed. The researcher presented the project to a panel of six educators. The educators were provided with a copy of the curriculum guide, directions, and evaluator questions. The participants completed twelve open-ended questions designed to guide the researcher to improve
the project materials. Project evaluators were required to have read *The Hunger Games* prior to evaluating the guide.

**Summary**

Content analysis was utilized to analyze published *Hunger Games* curriculum. The researcher created a rubric to categorize questions about issues of gender found in current published *Hunger Games* curriculum. This research method aided the researcher in designing curriculum that addressed gender inequities found in current *Hunger Games* curriculum. The evaluation of the project was conducted by six educators who mentor young-adult female readers who have read Susanne Collins’ novel *The Hunger Games*. This project encourages educators to use a gender equitable approach when discussing and teaching *The Hunger Games*. 
Chapter 4

CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND REFLECTIONS

Teachers often use curriculum guides when teaching novels in their classrooms. Limited access to gender equity training leaves teachers unprepared to recognize gender biased in these published curriculum guides. These curriculum guides are used to educate both female and male students. Female students are being treated unfairly because of gender bias in curriculum guides, novels, and pedagogical practices (Sadker & Sadker, 1994). The inequitable treatment of girls was the focus of extensive research for this project.

The intention of this project is to help educators practice equitable treatment of both male and female students when teaching Suzanne Collins’ novel The Hunger Games. Using content analysis, the researcher found that current published Hunger Games curriculum guides perpetuate unfair gender stereotypes that are harmful to the equitable socialization of male and female students. The project should be employed as a supplemental resource to published Hunger Games curriculum guides to create a gender inclusive environment for all students.

Evaluator Questions

1. In what role do you educate young-adult readers?
2. Have you received any training in gender equity? If so, where did you receive the training? What did the training include?
3. Do you usually use a curriculum guide when you teach novels?
5. The central message of this guide is the need for educators to discuss issues of gender with young-adult readers. If the target audience of this curriculum are middle school teachers, how effective was the message?

6. What questions in the curriculum guide would work well in your classroom?

7. What questions in this guide were lacking or confusing?

8. What could the curriculum use more of?

9. What could the curriculum use less of?

10. After reading the curriculum, how comfortable do you feel facilitating these questions and discussions with young-adult readers? Circle a number and explain.

    1  2  3  4  5

    least comfortable most comfortable

11. If you chose to utilize this curriculum for your students, how do you see yourself using it?

12. Do you have any other suggestions for the researcher?

**Evaluators**

Six evaluators were selected to read the curriculum guide and complete the evaluator questions. Each evaluator was provided with a bound copy of the curriculum guide and separate evaluator questions. Four of the evaluators are middle-school teachers, one evaluator is a high school teacher, and one evaluator works with elementary students. All evaluators have a Bachelor degree and one evaluator has a Masters degree. Six evaluators were female and one was male.
Feedback Results

In What Role do You Educate Young-Adult Readers?

All evaluators hold a teaching credential. One evaluator is an 8th grade English-Language Arts teacher at a public school in Northern California. A second evaluator stated that they currently work with preschool to second graders and also teaches at a California State University. A third evaluator is an English teacher specifically, “Honors and an intervention class for struggling readers.” The fourth evaluator was a seventh grade Language Arts teacher in an affluent area of Northern California. This evaluator stated, “I have been teaching for over five years at the middle school level.” The fifth evaluator is a middle school English and Social Studies teacher. The last evaluator is a high school English teacher for grades 9 and 11.

Have You Received Any Training in Gender Equity? If so, Where Did You Receive the Training? What Did the Training Include?

Question two asked evaluator to judge if they had been training in gender equity. The research found a broad range of answers. One middle-school teacher stated, “I have not received any training in gender equity,” and is a graduate from the California State University, Sacramento’s single-subject credential program. The male middle-school teacher recalled, “Not really.” Another middle-school teacher remembered, “I took a couple of gender equality courses when I was in my undergraduate program at UC Davis. Other than that, no specific training on gender equality/equity.” Another middle-school teacher said, “I have only taken one course on the topic of gender. It was at CSUS while I was receiving my credential.” The
elementary educator is a graduate of a CSU MA program in Gender Equity. The high school teacher took one course in women’s studies and one course during their credential program that “promoted equity in the classroom like language choices.” Therefore, three middle-school teachers did not receive any gender equity training in their teaching credential programs. All educators received their teaching credentials in the last 10 years.

**Do You Usually Use a Curriculum Guide When You Teach Novels?**

All evaluators were open to using curriculum guides when teaching a novel. One middle school teacher uses both “department crafted guides and curriculum guides I have developed myself.” Another middle-school evaluator stated, “With some I do use a curriculum guide that is prepared. With others I have created my own curriculum.” Therefore evaluators were not opposed to using curriculum guides to support teaching a novel.

**Would You Teach The Hunger Games in Your Classroom? Explain.**

All middle-school teachers were enthusiastically open to using *The Hunger Games* curriculum guide in their class. One middle-school teacher currently teaches the novel, “I’ve taught it for the last three years and it is a great novel to use at the middle school level.” The other evaluator’s comments included, “I think the themes in the novel speak to the students of this age group” and “There are many topics that could be covered and discussed plus my students would really enjoy it.” One evaluator noted that funding for resources are limited and could prevent the purchase of new novels at their school site.
The Central Message of This Guide is the Need for Educators to Discuss Issues of Gender with Young-Adult Readers. If the Target Audience of this curriculum are Middle School Teachers, how Effective was the Message?

According to the evaluators the message was “effective.” Responses focused on how the curriculum guide “points out less obvious places where gender is an issue in the novel,” and “provides some very controversial questions that allow the reader to look at the novel from a very different angle.” The evaluator with gender-equity training suggested that the curriculum guide was, “often on target for younger end of young adult.” Finally, the eighth grade English teacher remarked, “this would be a great way to address issues related to gender roles in society through an interesting book.”

What Questions in the Curriculum Guide Would Work Well in Your Classroom?

When asked what questions would work well in classrooms, two of the evaluators suggested “chapters one through six.” One middle school teacher liked how the questions, “look at Katniss in a completely different light in terms of her taking the position of the head of the house, in the years that I have taught this novel I have never thought to discuss with my students how Katniss is assuming a more male driven role in her family.” This educator stated earlier that they do teach *The Hunger Games* and have not received gender equity training. A different evaluator suggested chapters one through six because, “I think these questions would get a group discussion that would really bounce around and get a lot of feelings, emotions, and opinions shared.” In addition chapters four-six, question one was cited by two evaluators because it deals
with, “beauty and agency in society.” Another questions that was mentioned by three evaluators is chapters 13-15, question one as it recognizes, “Prim as a hero.” The researcher intended for these questions to help evaluators consider females in primary roles that depend on skill instead of beauty.

**What Questions in This Guide Were Lacking or Confusing?**

Three middle-school educators did not find any questions lacking or confusing. They found the questions, “straightforward and easy to follow.” The educator with the gender background suggested that, “the broad scope of this guide lends itself to the younger age range.” This educator also suggested to, “stay away from the straightforward tone” as it sometimes “weakens the argument.” The fourth middle-school teacher expressed that, “The question from chapters seven-nine regarding the moment of romance between Peeta and Katniss is a bit confusing. There might been to be more explanation.” Finally, the high school teacher recommended revising, “Page 11, number nine formal attire verses training challenge” and “Page thirteen, number one analyze for what purpose? Literary devices, character development?” thus suggesting that the researcher give clearer direction for the word analyze.

**What Could the Curriculum Use More of?**

To align with Common Core Standards, one educator suggested the inclusion of, “more questions that ask for evidence.” Another middle-school educator felt that the curriculum could examine how, “the Capitol reinforces some of the gender stereotypes.” The educator with gender training pointed out, “more reference to specific situation of storyline.” This evaluator also suggested that educators need,
“specific prompts to be prepared to discuss these issues with their students from a feminist standpoint. While you have provided great ‘possible responses’ from students, you need to add more ‘response’ to the responses. As you suggest, your educators are going to be from all walks of life. They need help with focusing the discussion on gendered issues from a feminist perspective.”

What Could the Curriculum Use Less of?

All five middle-school and high-school teachers did not feel the curriculum could use less of anything. Comments included, “It’s great!,” and “It felt like an appropriate amount of questions for the length of the novel.” The evaluator with gender-equity training noted that using the term “parents” in place of “fathers” in questions would “counter this hetero-normative framework.”

After Reading the Curriculum, How Comfortable do You Feel Facilitating These Questions and Discussions With Young-Adult Readers? Circle a Number and Explain.

1 2 3 4 5

least comfortable most comfortable

Three female evaluators selected five, most comfortable. Two female evaluators selected four noting, “Some conversations may be uncomfortable, but most important conversations are.” The male evaluator selected five stating, “I could teach the book using this guide and it would be an easy job.”
If You Chose to Utilize This Curriculum for Your Students, how do You See Yourself Using it?

The responses included small group discussion, quizzes, writing prompts, and culminating projects after the completing of the novel.

Do You Have Any Other Suggestions for the Researcher?

One middle-school teacher proposed including an anticipation guide to complete before and after reading the novel. Another middle-school teacher asked for, “a bigger project, perhaps an essay where students could discuss how Katniss and perhaps some of the other characters do or do not fit into gender stereotypes using textual evidence.”

Conclusion

Evaluator comments suggested an overall enthusiastic attitude towards the researcher’s curriculum guide on *The Hunger Games* novel. Providing evaluators with the ability to access the guide at home at their own pace resulted in thoughtful, honest feedback. Although all feedback was helpful, lack of training in gender equity greatly impacted the insights of the evaluators. The majority of the evaluators did not receive training in gender equity and this is representative of the target audience. Having insight from an evaluator with a MA in Gender Equity was also invaluable in critiqued the feminist perspective of the researcher.

The fact that the educators utilize curriculum guides when teaching novels supports the need of the researcher’s curriculum guide. The rise of young-adult fiction began in the early 1990s and has evolved into a significant literary genre (Nilson &
Donelson, 2009). Even with the popularity of young-adult fiction, adolescent readers encounter more male protagonists than female protagonists (Chemaly, 2013). Curriculum guides are produced to support the teaching of these novels. The researcher is concerned that other curriculum guides for popular contemporary young-adult fiction might perpetuate unfair gender stereotypes and that educators might unknowingly practice gender bias when using these curriculum guides.

The lack of extensive gender equity training in credential programs does not prepare teachers to critically examine curriculum guides using a gender lens before using them in their classrooms (Leach, 1994). Children are exposed to gender stereotypes perpetuated by teachers who are not trained in gender equitable practices (Shaffer, 2005). Bias in the classroom can result in lowered self-esteem and self-worth in female students (Digiovanni & Liston, 2005).

According to feedback, the researcher was highly effective at conveying the message of the need to discuss issues of gender with young-adult readers. Several evaluators suggested that chapters one through six stood out as working well in classrooms. The researcher will reexamine the format and language of these questions and apply the finding to subsequent chapters in the curriculum guide. The researcher will also consider providing more context as suggested. Overall the researcher was pleased to hear that the curriculum guide was easily accessible to the target audience. Finally, the feedback received communicates that educators do feel comfortable assuming the role of facilitator when employing the curriculum guide.
Limitations

The evaluators who returned feedback totaled five females and one male, which is a small sample. Not all evaluators had the same background in teaching experience or gender equity training. In addition, only four evaluators were middle-school teachers and only one has taught *The Hunger Games* in a classroom environment. Finally, evaluators might have different interpretations of *The Hunger Games* novel.

Recommendations

The goal of this project was to raise self-esteem in female students by promoting conversations about issues of gender in *The Hunger Games* novel. *The Hunger Games* novel employs a female protagonist. The project celebrates the inclusion of a female protagonist inhabiting a primary role in contemporary young-adult fiction. The project provides educators with questions about gender to help facilitate conversations about positive and negative stereotypes found in the novel. Possible responses ensure that educators and students promote a safe, equitable environment to discuss issues of gender. The project helps teachers and both male and female students recognize gender bias in other popular young-adult fiction.

Girls are not always treated equitably in classrooms therefore further research in the area of gender equity is needed for teachers to remain unbiased in their instruction (Carinici, 2007). It is crucial for all teachers in all content areas to be trained in gender equity during their credential programs (Sanders, 2003).
researcher also recommends that publishing companies hire staff with a background in gender equity to evaluate bias in curriculum guides.
APPENDIX A

Evaluator Letter
Dear Evaluator,

Thank you for assisting in the development of my curriculum guide on Suzanne Collins’ novel *The Hunger Games*. Enclosed you will find Evaluator Questions and the curriculum guide.

To be an evaluator you must be familiar with Suzanne Collins’ novel *The Hunger Games*. It is also expected that you educate young-adult readers between the ages of 10-17.

You are welcome to keep the curriculum guide or feel free to make suggestions and comments on the guide and return it to me. Please make arrangements to return the Evaluator Questions by April 27th. For assistance please contact Dr. Sherri Carinci or researcher Katie Vellanoweth at xxxxx. All feedback is appreciated.

I sincerely thank you for your time and effort.
APPENDIX B

Evaluator Questions
Evaluator Questions

1. In what role do you educate young-adult readers?

2. Have you received any training in gender equity? If so, where did you receive the training? What did the training include?

3. Do you usually use a curriculum guide when you teach novels?

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

5. The central message of this guide is the need for educators to discuss issues of gender with young-adult readers. If the target audience of this curriculum are middle school teachers, how effective was the message?

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

6. What questions in the curriculum guide would work well in your classroom?

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________
7. What questions in this guide were lacking or confusing?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

8. What could the curriculum use more of?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

9. What could the curriculum use less of?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
10. After reading the curriculum, how comfortable do you feel facilitating these questions and discussions with young-adult readers? Circle a number and explain.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Least</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comfortable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most Comfortable

11. If you chose to utilize this curriculum for your students, how do you see yourself using it?

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

12. Do you have any other suggestions for the researcher?

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
APPENDIX C

Curriculum Guide
Who Owns Katniss Everdeen’s Body in *The Hunger Games*?

A Curriculum for Facilitating Discussions about Gender Equity in *The Hunger Games*
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Notes to Educators ........................................................................................................ 57
How to Use This Curriculum .......................................................................................... 57
Summary of The Hunger Games Novel ........................................................................... 58
Post-reading Discussion Questions and Possible Responses:
  Chapters 1-3.............................................................................................................. 59
  Chapters 4-6.............................................................................................................. 62
  Chapters 7-9.............................................................................................................. 64
  Chapters 10-12......................................................................................................... 69
  Chapters 13-15......................................................................................................... 71
  Chapters 16-18......................................................................................................... 73
  Chapters 19-21......................................................................................................... 75
  Chapters 22-24......................................................................................................... 80
  Chapters 25-27......................................................................................................... 82
Works Cited.................................................................................................................... 86
Notes to Educators

The purpose of this curriculum is to offer young adults a gender inclusive method of reading *The Hunger Games*. Research has shown that current *Hunger Games* curriculum contains problematic questions, answers, and activities that do not support the healthy development of adolescent female and male readers as equal members of society. When employed, the curriculum allows young adult readers to value both male and female characters equally for their contribution to the development of the plot. This can translate to an increase in the equal value of female and male students in both the classroom and social environments.

This curriculum employs the term “educator” to refer to any adult who can facilitate discussions with young adults about Suzanne Collins’ novel *The Hunger Games*. Educators can be parents, teachers, leaders in the community, librarians, and any other adult who can help students read with a critical lens. This curriculum should be employed as a supplement to other published and teacher made *Hunger Game’s* curriculum.

How to Use this Curriculum

To better guide students through text-dependent questions it is suggested that educators are familiar with *The Hunger Games* novel. Educators are encouraged to use this curriculum as needed, employing all or just part of the curriculum as post-reading discussions.

Questions in this curriculum are intended to be open-ended, where no answer is wrong. Each question begins with textual support for easy reference. Questions are bolded and possible responses are provided to help guide the educator in facilitating a gender-inclusive conversation with young-adult readers. Educators should be open to other responses than those provided. Educators should encourage students to ask questions about what they are reading, even if the questions or answers are not gender equitable. Where it is okay and necessary for students to be honest in their insights about the novel, educators should not allow sexist comments to be tolerated without a discussion about the possible implications of the comment. Finally, educators should be prepared to have real conversations about the equity between male and females as characters in the novel and as members of our communities.
Summary of *The Hunger Games*

The nation of Panem is located in what was North America. The Capitol oppresses its 12 surrounding districts. Every year, as punishment for past uprisings, the Capitol forces each district to send one boy and one girl to complete in the Hunger Games, a competition in which adolescents fight to the death on live TV. Sixteen-year-old Katniss Everdeen lives in the poverty-stricken, coal-mining District 12, where she and her best friend Gale forage and poach in the surrounding woods to feed their families. Katniss is proficient at archery, a skill she learned from her father before his early death in a coal-mining accident. On Reaping Day, when her younger sister Prim is chosen as District 12’s tribute, Katniss volunteers to take her beloved sister’s place. She and Peeta, the baker’s son who once saved her family from starvation, travel to the Capitol with their mentor, Haymitch. While preparing for the Games, Katniss and Peeta are pampered and beautified with the Capitol’s opulence and perceptions of beauty. Haymitch and the stylists assigned to Katniss and Peeta present them as a team. During a television interview, Peeta declares his love for Katniss, both out of true love and also as a strategy for aiding Katniss’ survival. Peeta and Katniss are then presented as star-crossed lovers – a strategy that wins over sponsors and the TV audience of the citizens of the Capitol. During the Games, Katniss survives a highly manipulated environment, battle-trained tributes, horrific man-made monsters, and unprecedented rule changes by the Gamemakers.

At different times in the novel Katniss saves Peeta and Peeta saves Katniss. After the final showdown, Katniss and Peeta are the only remaining tributes. Unwilling to kill each other, Katniss contrives a double suicide by suggesting both characters eat poison berries. To “save face,” Gamemakers allow for two victors; however, Katniss earns the Capitol’s fury for presuming to question their authority. Haymitch tells Katniss of the Capitol’s fury and convinces her to claim that her defiance is due to her love for Peeta. Where Katniss struggles with her true romantic feelings towards Peeta and her best friend Gale throughout the novel, Peeta’s feelings for Katniss are real. Katniss must sort through her feelings, for Peeta, for Gale, and for her actions during the Games.
Chapters 1-3

Katniss lives with her mother and younger sister in the poverty-stricken, coal mining District 12. Though hunting is illegal, Katniss goes beyond the district fence each day to provide food for her family. In the woods, Katniss and her hunting partner Gale discuss the unfairness of living under the Capitol’s rule. It is reaping day, an annual event where the Capitol forces each district to send a boy and a girl, known as tributes, to fight to the death in the Hunger Games. At the reaping ceremony, Katniss’ little sister Prim is selected but Katniss immediately volunteers to take her sister’s place. Peeta, the baker’s son who once saved Katniss’ family from starvation, is selected as the male tribute. Katniss and Peeta say emotional good-byes to their families and friends before boarding a train to the Capitol. They are accompanied by Effie Trinket, District 12’s escort, and a drunken Haymitch, District 12’s mentor.

1. Katniss is a proficient archer, “I retrieve a bow and sheath of arrows from a hallow log… My father knew and he taught me some before he was blown to bits in a mine explosion” (Collins 5).

   In your observations, is archery usually a sport for boys or girls? What survival skills should fathers teach their daughters?

   Possible Responses: Archers can be both male and female. Fathers should teach their daughters how to build a fire, change a tire, identify poisonous plants, etc. Knowing that a female tribute must be selected each year, it would be smart of a father in District 12 to teach his daughter how to survive the Games.

2. In chapter 1, we learn how Katniss feels about Gale, “In the woods waits the only person whom I can be myself. Gale… There’s never been anything romantic between Gale and me” (6-10).

   How is Gale important to Katniss? Is it okay to be just friends with someone of the opposite sex?

   Possible Response: Gale is Katniss’ hunting partner and friend. Although Gale and Katniss care for each other, Katniss is unsure if she has romantic feelings towards Gale. Gale would like to pursue a relationship with Katniss but Katniss’ responsibility towards her family is her first priority. Yes, it is okay to be “just friends” with someone of the opposite sex however both people should agree that they are just friends and do not want to pursue a relationship.
3. Both Gale and Katniss support their families as the breadwinner, “Gale’s two little brothers and a sister. Prim. And you may as well throw in our mothers, too, because how would they live without us? Who would fill those mouths that are always asking for more?” (9).

A breadwinner is the person who provides for a family. In your experience is it more typical to see a male or a female breadwinner?

Possible Responses: Answers will vary based on student experience. Educators can discuss how traditionally males were breadwinners. However, with the increase of women in the work force, many females now share or hold the title of breadwinner. Some students may want to talk about how male and female breadwinners experience different pressures and expectations.

4. Early in the novel the readers learns that Katniss “never want[s] to have kids” (9).

What are your reactions to this statement? Is it okay if a woman does not want to have children?

Possible Responses: Some students might be surprised that Katniss does not want to have children, other students might accept this statement without question. Educators should discuss how having children is up to the woman, and her partner, and should be a personal choice. It is okay if a woman chooses to not have children.

5. During the Reaping in chapter 2, one female and one male are randomly chosen as tributes for the Hunger Games. Although Prim’s name is chosen, Katniss volunteers in her place, “I bet my buttons that was your sister. Don’t want her to steal all the glory, do we? Come on, everybody! Let’s give a big round of applause to our newest tribute!”.

In this moment, how is Katniss a hero?

Possible Responses: Katniss is a hero because she saves her sister from an almost certain death in the Games. Katniss protects her sister by offering herself as tribute.

6. In Chapter 2, Katniss describes her memory of Peeta giving her bread when she and her family were starving, “It didn’t occur to me until the next morning that the boy might have burned the bread on purpose.” Might have dropped the loaves into the flames, knowing it meant being punished, and then delivered them to me” (31).
In this moment, how was Peeta a hero?

_Possible Responses:_ Peeta is a hero because he saves Katniss and her family from starvation. Peeta chooses to protect Katniss even though his mother bruises him.
Chapters 4-6

Katniss is concerned that although Peeta’s is kind, he secretly hides plans to kill her. Haymitch’s drinking concerns Katniss and Peeta. They confront Haymitch, who agrees to stay sober long enough to prepare them for the Games. Katniss and Peeta share their survival skills. At the Capitol, Katniss must visit the Remake Center where she undergoes painful beautification. Stylist Cinna dresses Katniss as “the girl who was on fire” (67). Unlike the other tributes, Katniss and Peeta, who also wears a spectacular fiery costume, are presented as a team. They outshine the other tributes and appeal to the crowd at the opening ceremonies.

1. Katniss and Peeta are on their way to the Capitol to begin the Hunger Games. “‘Stand over here. Both of you,’ says Haymitch, nodding to the middle of the room. We obey and he circles us, prodding us like animals at times, checking our muscles, examining our faces… The Hunger Games aren’t a beauty contest, but the best-looking tributes always seem to pull more sponsors” (58).

In your opinion, why do the “best-looking tributes always seem to pull more sponsors”? Do people who are more attractive have an advantage in society? In your experience, what does a beautiful woman look like; what does a handsome man look like? How can this negatively affect young-people’s self esteem?

Possible Responses: The best-looking tributes might pull more sponsors because their physical appearance appeals to the Capitol audience who place a high value on looks. Often celebrities are considered attractive therefore students might say that good-looking people have an advantage in society. Using celebrities as a model, attractive women and men are tall, have clear skin, shiny hair, are thin, muscular, strait teeth, and wear expensive clothing. These images of beauty are extremely harmful because they can be unrealistic. Many celebrities and models undergo surgery to achieve their beauty and often images are retouched to hide unwanted attributes like stretch marks or blemishes. It is suggested that the educator show before and after pictures of celebrities without make up or an original picture and a retouched picture of a model.

3. Before Katniss can be presented to the Capitol she must visit the Remake Center where her stylist alters her physical appearance, “I’ve been in the Remake Center for more than three hours… This has included scrubbing down my body with a gritty foam that has removed not only dirt but at least three layers of skin, turning my nails into uniform shapes, and primarily, ridding my body of hair. My legs, arms, torso, underarms, and parts of my eyebrows have been stripped of the stuff, leaving me like a plucked bird, ready for roasting” (Collins 61).
Suzanne Collins’ does not describe Peeta’s experience in the Remake Center. In your opinion, what would Peeta experience in the Remake Center. Compare his and Katniss’ experience. Do girls or boy have more pressure to alter their bodies to be physically attractive?

Possible Responses: In the Remake Center Peeta’s body was probably scrubbed clean and his nails trimmed. Since stylists removed most of Katniss’ body hair, Peeta’s beard was probably removed and his eyebrows shaped. Katniss’ experience is more extreme because almost her whole body was removed of hair, not just her face. Girls and boys both feel pressure to alter their bodies to be beautiful. Boys might share feeling pressured to be muscular, to be able to grow facial hair, to not have excess hair, etc. Girls might share feeling pressured to be thin, to have shaped eye-brows, long eye-lashes, full lips, high cheekbones, larger breasts, a small waist, etc.

4. After Katniss finishes at the Remake Center she meets her personal stylist Cinna, “‘Just give me a moment, all right?’ he asks. He walks around my naked body, not touching me, but taking in every inch of it with his eyes. I resist the impulse to cross my arms over my chest” (64).

How do you think Katniss feels at this moment?

Possible Responses: It is very uncomfortable to be looked at naked without giving consent. Educators should discuss how unwanted attention can be deemed sexual harassment and can result in consequences such as suspension, explosion, and possible jail time.

5. For the opening ceremony, Cinna dresses Katniss and Peeta in black costumes that use a special synthetic fire to capture the audience’s attention. “The pounding music, the cheers, the admiration work their way into my blood, and I can’t suppress my excitement. Cinna has given me a great advantage. No one will forget me. Not my looks, not my name, Katniss. The girl who was on fire,” describes Katniss’ reaction to the audience’s cheers as she is introduced to the Capitol (78).

In this moment, Katniss realizes that “Cinna has given [her] a great advantage” by dressing her in an unforgettable costume. Should the right clothes give someone an advantage?

Possible Responses: Educators can use this opportunity to discuss how different clothes are associated with events in society. For example, one should dress professionally to an interview, versus how one might wear formal attire to a wedding. Students might ask questions about what professional clothes look like for girls as opposed to boys.
Chapters 7-9

Katniss and Peeta prepare for the Games at the Training Center with the other tributes. Katniss learn that some tributes form an alliance to have a better chance of surviving the games. Katniss meets District 11’s tribute, Rue, who reminds her of Prim. Katniss is the last tribute to perform in the private sessions. To gain the Gamemaker’s attention, Katniss shoots at arrow at a pig the Gamemakers are enjoying. Katniss is afraid her actions will cause the Gamemakers to harm her family but instead she is awarded with a score of 11. The tributes must be interviewed in front of the Capitol audience. Peeta declares his love for Katniss during his interview.

1. During the opening ceremony Cinna instructed Katniss and Peeta to hold hands:

“‘Whose idea was the hand holding?’ asks Haymitch.

‘Cinna’s,’ says Portia.

‘Just the perfect touch of rebellion,’ says Haymitch. ‘Very nice.’

Rebellion? I have to think about that one a moment. But when I remember the other couples, standing stiffly apart, never touching or acknowledging each other, as if their fellow tribute did not exist, as if the Games had already begun, I know what Haymitch means. Presenting ourselves not as adversaries but as friends has distinguished us as much as the fiery costumes” (79).

When you were reading the book, did you feel this moment was meant to be romantic between Peeta and Katniss? Did either Peeta or Katniss view the moment as romantic?

Possible Responses: It is possible that hand-holding was meant to be romantic between Katniss and Peeta because the audience is aware that Peeta threw bread to Katniss to prevent her from starving. Peeta could have viewed this moment as romantic because he has cared for Katniss since he first saw her when they were five. Katniss did not view this moment as romantic because she shared earlier that Prim is the only person she really loves.

2. While Peeta and Katniss discuss their strengths as tributes, Katniss struggles to see her strengths, “What effect do I have? That I am weak and needy? Is he suggesting that I got good deals because people pitied me?” (91).
Peeta recognizes Katniss’ value yet she struggles to see her own strengths. Why is it sometimes easier for others to see our strengths than for us to see our own? Is it okay to talk about your strengths to others without seeming conceited?

Possible Responses: Young-adults face high expectations such as being attractive, smart, successful, to always make good-decisions, and to work cooperatively with others. Sometimes young adults struggle to see their own strengths because they are consumed with thinking about their weaknesses. Yes, it is okay to talk about your strengths with others and being celebrated is a healthy way to raise your self-esteem. To avoid being conceited a student should be both celebrated and should celebrate others for their successes.

3. Most tributes do not associate with other tributes in the novel however Haymitch insists that Katniss and Peeta stick together, “‘One last thing. In public, I want you by each other’s side every minute,’ says Haymitch. We both start to object, but Haymitch slams his hand on the table. ‘Every minute! It’s not open for discussion!’” (92).

As a mentor it is Haymitch’s job to help Katniss and Peeta survive the Games. Katniss is not comfortable being at Peeta’s “side every minute.” Should Katniss follow Haymitch’s instructions even though she is uncomfortable?

Possible Responses: Answers will vary; some students will feel that Katniss should listen to Haymitch because he is doing his job. Haymitch survived the Hunger Games so he must have some insight on winning. Other students will feel that Katniss should follow her instincts and stay away from Peeta. Haymitch is often drunk and his judgment might be impaired. Educators can discuss how a student should always report if an adult makes them uncomfortable.

4. In chapter 7, Peeta argues that Katniss’ is a skillful competitor, “I hear Peeta’s voice in my head. She has no idea. The effect she can have. Obviously meant to demean me. Right? But a tiny part of me wonders if this was a compliment. That he meant I was appealing in some way” (93).

What qualities make Katniss attractive to Peeta? Are these qualities traditionally associated with females in novels?

Possible Responses: Katniss has shown she is brave, independent, and resourceful by hunting to take care of her mother and sister. Traditional female characters are associated with beauty, grace, and dependency such as a princess waiting to be rescued by a prince.
During training we learn that Katniss’ can hunt using snares and Peeta is skilled at camouflage. “We cross to an empty station where the trainer seems pleased to have students…When he realizes I know something about snares, he shows us a simple, excellent trap that will leave a human competitor dangling by a leg from a tree…Then we move on to camouflage. Peeta genuinely seems to enjoy this station, swirling a combination of mud and clay and berry juices around on his pale skin, weaving disguises from vines and leaves. The trainer who runs the camouflage station is full of enthusiasm at his work. ‘I do the cakes,’ he admits to me” (95).

**Katniss’ skill is one used for combat and Peeta’s skill is domestic.**
Traditionally in novels, males are equipped for battle where females manage the home. Why might Suzanne Collin’s switch these skills? Is this what you expected?

*Possible Responses: Suzanne Collin’s might have given Katniss masculine skills and Peeta feminine skills to show young-adult readers that females and males are both equal members of society. It is okay for a boy to like cooking and a girl to enjoy sports. The educator might want to discuss how both boys and girls can enjoy activities like dancing, baking, mountain-bike riding, snowboarding, painting, and playing video-games. Some students might be surprised that Katniss can make snares and Peeta excels at camouflage.***

During her private session the Game makers do not pay attention when Katniss is performing. Katniss’ frustration causes her to gain their attention by shooting at an apple in a pig’s mouth. Instead of being punished with a low score, Katniss receives an 11, “Eleven! Effie Trinket lets out a squeal, and everybody is slapping me on the back and cheering and congratulating me” (108).

**In your opinion, why did the judges award Katniss an eleven? Was it her shooting skills or something else? If you were a judge would you award higher points for personality or skill?**

*Possible Responses: Katniss might have earned an eleven because the judges were impressed with her archery skills and her boldness. Being able to shoot and having high confidence are both attributes that will help her survive the Games. Answers will vary when students imagine they are a judge.***

When Peeta asks Haymitch to be coached separately, Katniss feels betrayed, “Betrayal. That’s the first thing I feel, which is ludicrous. For there to be betrayal, there would have to have been trust first. Between Peeta and me. And trust has not been part of the agreement. We’re tributes. But the boy who risked a beating to give me bread, the one who steadied me in he chariot, who covered for me with the redhead Avox girl, who insisted Haymitch know my hunting skills... was there
some part of me that couldn’t help trusting him. On the other hand, I’m relieved that we can stop the pretense of being friends” (114).

**How are Katniss’ feelings towards Peeta developing? In this moment, are they friends? Are her feelings towards Peeta romantic? Is it more than just the Games that cause Katniss to hesitate to admit positive feelings towards Peeta?**

**Possible Responses:** Katniss feelings towards Peeta are growing stronger. She is forced to recall how he saved her by giving her bread and is forced to spend time with him during training. Katniss might be beginning to view Peeta as a friend but mostly she still sees him as a competitor. No, Katniss’ feelings are not romantic. Katniss’ feelings for Gale might cause her to hesitate to admit positive feelings towards Peeta.

9. Before her interview Katniss must practice how to please the audience, “I can’t imagine what Effie will have to teach me that could take four hours, but she’s got me working down to the last minute. We go to my room and she puts me in a full-length gown and high-heeled shoes, not the ones ill be wearing for the actual interview, and instructs me on walking. The shoes are the worst part. I’ve never worn high heels and can’t get used to essentially wobbling around on the balls of my feet. But Effie runs around in them full-time, and I’m determined hat if she can do it, so can I. The dress poses another problem. It keeps tangling around my shoes so, of course, I hitch it up, and then Effie swoops down on me like a hawk, smacking my hands and yelling, ‘Not above the ankle!’ When I finally conquer walking, there’s still sitting, posture – apparently I have a tendency to duck my head – eye contact, hand gestures, and smiling. Smiling is mostly about smiling more. Effie makes me say a hundred banal phrases starting with a smile, while smiling, or ending with a smile. By lunch, the muscles in my cheeks are twitching from overuse. ‘Well, that’s the best I can do,’ Effie says with a sigh. ‘Just remember, Katniss, you want the audience to like you’” (115).

**If Katniss is being forced to kill the other tributes in the Games, why must she learn how to walk in heels, wear a floor length dress, and smile? Do you think Peeta, as a male, is also being trained to wear formal clothes, walk in dress shoes, and smile? Who has the more challenging training?**

**Possible Responses:** Katniss must learn how to walk in heels, wear a floor length dress, and smile because she is being presented to the Capitol audience who value physical appearance highly. Often when someone represents others he or she is expected to dress up like how Katniss is representing all citizens of District 12. Peeta is probably not trained on how to wear a suit and walk in flat men’s dress shoes. Peeta also already knows how to please a crowd with his smile. Katniss has the more challenging training because she is being asked to wear clothing that she
is unfamiliar with and to walk in heels, which is not easy for all women. Katniss also has a challenging time smiling because she is angry about being a tribute.

11. After hours working with Haymitch, Katniss fails to use her personality to impress him for the upcoming interviews. Katniss looks to Cinna for hope, “My lessons with Effie and Haymitch are over. This day belongs to Cinna. He’s my last hope. Maybe he can make me look so wonderful, no one will care what comes out of my mouth” (119).

This is a concerning statement. Katniss hopes the audience will care more about what she is wearing than what she says. Young women are reading *The Hunger Games*, what does this teach them about the value of their voice?

Possible Responses: Katniss’ statement teaches girls that fashion is valued more than their voice. Young women must learn that their insights and opinions are more important than their clothes or physical appearance. Educators should consider if they allow girls to participate equally with boys in their classroom or home.

13. At the end of chapter 9, Peeta declares Katniss as his “special girl” on live TV in front of both the Capital audience and District 12 (138). Peeta’s choice automatically labels Katniss as his “unrequited love.” (138).

The Capitol audience loves the entertaining love story between star-crossed lovers Peeta and Katniss. However, Peeta never asked Katniss for her consent before sharing this information on live TV. Katniss is preparing to fight to the death. Does she want to be thought of as someone’s girlfriend? How does being labeled Peeta’s star-crossed lover change her image?

Possible Responses: Students need to be aware that it is not okay that Peeta labeled Katniss his “special girl” without her consent. Even though Peeta had the best intentions, he is altering Katniss’ image and therefore strategy without her permission. Peeta and Haymitch intended for Katniss to look desirable. Being someone’s girlfriend might also cause Katniss to look dependent on Peeta.
Chapters 10-12

It is the night before the Games. Katniss questions what she will face in the Games where Peeta considers how to show that the Capitol does not own him. Katniss prepares for the Hunger Games with Cinna. Katniss is transported into the arena and the Games begin. Katniss grabs a backpack but chooses not to enter the Cornucopia to grab a bow and arrows. She escapes into the woods and does not know where Peeta is. Katniss suffers from dehydration. Peeta forms an alliance with the Career pack.

1. Peeta declares his love for Katniss during a live television interview. Katniss was angry and Peeta for his declaration. Haymitch responds with, “He made me look weak! He made you look desirable!” (Collins 135).

   Analyze Katniss and Haymitch’s statements regarding Peeta’s declaration of love for Katniss.

   Possible Responses: Discussions should address Katniss, Haymitch, and Peeta’s feelings. Katniss believes that forcing her into the role of “desired female” will make her look weak because desirable females are often cast as damsels in distress. Haymitch believes that Katniss will look more amicable to the citizens of the Capitol if she is desirable. Peeta truly loves Katniss, but did not consider her feelings before announcing his love.

2. At the sound of the gong, the seventy-fourth Hunger Games begins. Katniss and the other tributes cannot step off their metal circles for 60 seconds or they will be blown up. During this waiting time Katniss considers running towards the cornucopia to retrieve a bow even though Haymitch told her to run the opposite direction. She makes her decision to get the weapon, “When suddenly I notice Peeta, he’s about five tributes to my right, quite a far distance, still I can tell he’s looking at me and I think he might be shaking his head… while I’m puzzling over it the gong rings out. And I’ve missed it! I’ve missed my chance!” (150).

   Yes, Peeta is wants to save Katniss, however does Peeta have a right to tell Katniss what to do in this situation? How might the Games have been different if Katniss was successful at retrieving the bow at the Cornucopia?

   Possible Responses: Although Peeta is looking out for Katniss’ best interests, he does not have the right to tell her not to go for the bow. If Katniss was successful at retrieving the bow she might have killed more tributes at the Cornucopia and ended the games earlier.
3. In chapter 11, Katniss is surviving in the woods. At the end of the day she awaits the cannons to announce who has been killed. She thinks about Peeta, “Maybe it’s better, if he’s gone already. He had no confidence he could win. And I will not end up with the unpleasant task of killing him. Maybe it’s better if he’s out of this for good” (153).

**Katniss “will not end up with the unpleasant task of killing [Peeta].” How are Katniss’ feelings for Peeta developing?**

*Possible Responses: At the beginning of the novel Katniss only viewed Peeta as the boy with the bread. She then recognizes his kindness during their stay at the Capitol. Katniss’ refusal to kill Peeta shows that she can no longer only view him as a competitor.*
Chapters 13-15

Katniss was injured in the Gamemaker’s fire. Her calf is burned badly yet she is forced to climb a tree to escape the Careers and Peeta. While hiding in the tree Rue alerts Katniss to a tracker-jacker nest overhead. Katniss saws a branch and drops the nest onto the Careers below. In the chaos, Katniss grabs a bow and arrow. The stings of the tracker-jackers cause her to be disoriented and Peeta helps her escape. Rue finds Katniss and treats the stings. Rue and Katniss become an alliance.

1. Think of heroes in the media and literature. Characters like Hercules, Superman, and past Presidents might come to mind. Heroes are traditionally strong males. In chapter 13, Katniss thinks of her sister Prim, “I went to the woods and hunted the entire day, haunted by the gruesome leg, memories of my father’s death. What’s funny was, Prim, who’s scared of her own shadow, stayed and helped. My mother says healers are born, not made. They did their best, but the man died, just like the doctor said he would” (179).

**How is Prim a hero? What makes Prim an unexpected hero? How does this event challenge the stereotype that girls need to be saved by boys?**

*Possible Responses: Prim is a hero because she uses her knowledge of healing to help injured citizens of District 12. Prim is not afraid to seeing body injuries. Prim is an unexpected hero because she is small, young, and “scared of her own shadow.” In this scene Prim, a girl, was saving a man who was hurt in the mines.*

2. Katniss has to climb a tree to escape the Careers. Glimmer shoots an arrow at Katniss, “One of the arrows gets lodged in the tree near me though and I’m able to seize it. I wave it teasingly above her head, as if this was the sole purpose of retrieving it, when actually I mean to use it if I ever get the chance. I could kill them, everyone of them, if those silver weapons were in my hands” (183).

**Middle school students are reading The Hunger Games, is Katniss’ statement too violent for young readers?**

*Possible Responses: In this scene Katniss is cornered in a tree. She wants the set of bows and arrows. Katniss wants to free herself from her desperate situation. Collins was graphic is describing how Katniss would use a single arrow to kill “everyone of them.” Educators should discuss how Katniss questioned how she would kill anyone at the beginning of the novel and now she is fantasizing over killing multiple people. The act of killing with a single arrow is gruesome and might scare young readers.*
3. To escape being cornered in tree, Katniss drops a tracker-jacker nest on the Careers. Glimmer dies, “Glimmer appears to go completely mad, shrieking and trying to bat the wasps off with her bow, which is pointless. She calls to the others for help but, of course, no one returns. The girl from District 4 staggers out of sight, although I wouldn’t bet on her making it to the lake. I watch Glimmer fall, twitch hysterically around on the ground for a few minutes, and then go still” (191).

**Is it Katniss’ fault that Glimmer dies?**

*Possible Responses: Possible answers will include how Katniss drops the tracker-jacker nest on Glimmer and the other Careers. Glimmer made the choice to hunt Katniss and corner her in a tree. Rue suggested that Katniss defend herself with the tracker-jacker nest. Peeta stayed up all night and did not warn the others that Katniss was sawing the branch to drop the nest. Ultimately the Capitol forced Katniss and her other tributes to compete in the games.*

4. Katniss is severely injured by the tracker-jacker venom. At a desperate moment, Peeta tells her to run away. When she recovers Katniss struggles with accepting why Peeta helped her, “I wonder what Gale made of the incident for a moment and then I push the whole thing out of my mind because for some reason Gale and Peeta do not coexist well together in my thoughts” (Collins 197).

**How is Katniss and Peeta’s relationship developing?**

*Possible Responses: The reader knows that Katniss cares for Gale. Even though she does not label him as her boyfriend, Gale is at least Katniss’ closest friend. In this scene Katniss positions Gale and Peeta at the same level in her mind therefore Peeta is at least her friend if not more.*

5. **Similar to Prim, in chapters 14 and 15 how is Rue a hero? What makes Rue an unexpected hero? How does this event challenge the stereotype that girls need to be saved by boys?**

*Possible Responses: In chapter 14 Rue save Katniss because she points out the tracker-jacker nest and suggests that Katniss drop it on the Careers. Rue is an unexpected hero because she is young, small, and a girl. Rue challenges the stereotype that girls need to be saved by boys because she saves Katniss.*
Chapters 16-18

Katniss convinces Rue to create a plan to take out the Career’s food supply. Katniss destroys the booby-trapped supplies using the bow and arrow but loses hearing in one ear. Katniss searches for Rue and finds her trapped in a net. She kills the boy from District 1 but not before he spears Rue. To honor Rue, Katniss sings to her and covers her in wildflowers. Katniss grieves for Rue. An unprecedented rule change is announced: two victors of the same District can win. Katniss hears this and immediately begins searching for Peeta.

1. In chapter 16 Foxface reveals how she is surviving the Games by outsmarting the other tributes, “So, I’m right about the booby trap, but it’s clearly more complex than I had imagined. I was right about the girl, too. How wily is she to have discovered this path into the food and to be able to replicate it so nearly?” (218).

What makes Foxface a powerful competitor in the Games? If you were a tribute, would you make an alliance with Foxface?

Possible Response: Although Foxface is not physically strong she is still a tribute to be taken seriously. She is smart and agile. She figures out the Career’s plan and is able to take food without harm.

2. Rue is murdered in chapter 18, “Rue’s eyes have fluttered shut. Her chest moves but only slightly. My throat releases the tears and they slide down my cheeks. But I have to finish the song for her” (235).

Whose fault is it that Rue dies?

Possible Responses: The educator should be prepared for a variety of responses including the boy from District 1, the Capitol, and even Katniss. Katniss suggested that Rue set the fires and was not present to protect her. The boy from District 1 threw the spear that killed Rue. Help the student see that the largest amount of blame should rest on the Capitol, neither Rue, Katniss, or the boy from District 1 would be forced to compete in the Hunger Games if they were not being oppressed by the Capitol.

3. Katniss kills the boy from District 1 by shooting him with an arrow, “The boy from District 1 dies before he can pull out the spear. My arrow drives deeply into the center of his neck. He falls to his knees and halves the brief remainder of his life by yanking out the arrow and drowning in his own blood. I’m reloaded, shifting my arm from side to side, while I shout at Rue, ‘Are there more? Are there more?” (233).
How do you feel about Katniss killing the boy from District 1, was she in the right? Do you feel that author Suzanne Collins is too violent when she describes this scene?

Possible Responses: Katniss killed the boy from District 1 because he murdered Rue and was a threat to her own survival. Katniss is an excellent shot and the reader can assume that she aimed for his neck. Collins’ chose to have the boy yank the arrow out and “drown in his own blood” possibly as a punishment for killing Rue. Katniss was not overwhelmed with sadness and did not hesitate to prepare to shoot additional tributes.

4. At the end of chapter 18, Claudius Templesmith announces a rule change, “Under the new rule, both tributes from the same district will be declared winners if they are the last two alive. Claudius pauses, as if he knows we’re not getting it, and repeats the change again. The news sinks in. Two tributes can win this year. If they’re from the same district. Both can live. Both of us can live. Before I can stop myself, I call out Peeta’s name” (244).

As a reader how did you feel when Katniss calls out Peeta’s name? How do you think Katniss feels at this moment?

Possible Responses: The reader is meant to feel a surge of emotion when Katniss calls out Peeta’s name. Some readers might feel excitement; others worry. Katniss might be feeling several emotions. She might feel hope that both she and Peeta can return home; gratitude that she can repay Peeta for his kindness in saving her as a child; happiness to be reunited with her friend.
Chapters 19-21

Katniss finds Peeta camouflaged in the mud. He is severely injured after fighting Cato to help Katniss escape. She treats the wound as best as she can, but Peeta is very ill. Claudius Templesmith invites all remaining tributes to a feast at the Cornucopia. Katniss hopes to find medicine for Peeta at the feast. Knowing that it is his only chance of survival Katniss puts Peeta to sleep with a draught from a sponsor. At the Cornucopia Katniss is attacked by Clove. Clove is about to injure Katniss when Thresh kills Clove. Thresh spares Katniss when he learns of her alliance with Rue. Katniss is successful at retrieving the medicine and she returns to the cave to save Peeta.

1. The idea of Katniss and Peeta being “star-crossed lovers” is reintroduced in chapter 19 (247). Katniss was angry when Peeta first announced his love during the interview. When Katniss thinks about Peeta being her star-crossed lover now she reacts differently, “The star-crossed lovers… Peeta must have been playing that angle all along. Why else would the Gamemakers have made this unprecedented change in the rules? For two tributes to have a shot at winning, our ‘romance’ must be so popular with the audience that condemning it would jeopardize the success of the Games. No thanks to me. All I’ve done is managed not to kill Peeta. But whatever he’s done in the arena, he must have the audience convinced it was to keep me alive” (248).

Should Katniss feel guilty for not “playing” up Peeta and her romance?

Possible Responses: Peeta never discussed his choice to use his feeling for her as a strategy in the Games. Therefore, Katniss was unaware of his feelings until he announced them on TV. Katniss was also unaware why Peeta joined the Career pack and helped hunt her. Finally, Katniss did not know that Peeta fought Cato to give her a chance to escape the tracker-jackers. As a result, Katniss cannot be completely blamed for not

2. Katniss looks for Peeta and finds him camouflaged in the mud by the river. She cleans and dresses his wounds, “After three applications and what seems like a bucket of pus, the wound does look better. Now that the swelling has gone down, I can see how deep Cato’s sword cut. Right down to the bone” (258).

How is Katniss a hero?
Possible Responses: Katniss is a hero because she saves Peeta from certain death. Cato’s sword severely cut Peeta’s leg. Peeta used his camouflage skills to hide himself in the mud however his leg was gravely injured. Katniss pulled Peeta from the mud and cleaned his wounds. Students may also suggest that Katniss also emotionally saved Peeta.

3. Even though Peeta is promoting being star-crossed lovers, Katniss kisses Peeta first, “Impulsively, I lean forward and kiss him, stopping his words. This is probably overdue since he’s right, we are supposed to be madly in love. It’s the first time I’ve ever kissed a boy, which should make some sort of impression I guess, but all I can register is how unnaturally hot his lips are from the fever. I break away and pull the edge of the sleeping bag up around him. ‘You’re not going to die. I forbid it. All right?’” (261).

Why does Katniss kiss Peeta? In your opinion, what should she feel when she kisses him? Because she only thinks of his “unnaturally hot lips from the fever,” does this mean that she is not thinking of Peeta romantically?

How do you think Peeta feels about this kiss?

Possible Responses: Katniss might have kissed Peeta because she is promoting the idea of being star-crossed lovers to get sponsor’s attention. It is possible that she kissed Peeta to provide emotional support because of his serious injury. Usually when someone kisses someone else they feel joy and desire. By feeling only how “unnaturally hot lips from the fever” the reader can infer that Katniss is not thinking about Peeta as a romantic way. On the other hand, the reader is aware of Peeta’s feelings for Katniss therefore the reader can assume that Peeta thinks of this kiss as romantic. Peeta possibly gains hope that Katniss could care for him as more than a friend.

4. While Katniss and Peeta recover in the cave, Katniss experiences both a staged kisses and a real connection with Peeta, “His hand brushes the loose strands of my hair off my forehead. Unlike the staged kisses and caresses so far, this gesture seems natural and comforting. I don’t want him to stop and he doesn’t. He’s still stroking my hair when I fall asleep” (265).

Would Katniss say that she and Peeta are boyfriend and girlfriend at this moment? Would Peeta?

Possible Responses: Katniss enjoys being with Peeta and feels comforted when he strokes her hair. She does not view Peeta as her boyfriend. Peeta probably does not view Katniss as his girlfriend, but he wishes she were.
5. At the end of chapter 20, Katniss lies to Peeta. She uses sleep syrup to make Peeta sleep so she can retrieve medicine to save him at the Cornucopia, “His eyes widen as he realizes the truth. I clamp my hand over his mouth and nose hard, forcing him to swallow instead of spit. He tries to make himself vomit the stuff up, but it’s too late, he’s already losing consciousness. Even as he fades away, I can see in his eyes what I’ve done is unforgivable” (277).

**Katniss hurt Peeta in order to save him. Is Katniss a hero in this moment?**

Possible Responses: Katniss is a hero in this moment because she risks sacrificing herself to save Peeta’s life. This moment shows how being a hero is not always easy, Katniss must emotionally hurt Peeta to save him.

6. Katniss made the choice to risk her life to save Peeta, “I watch the sky, hoping for one less opponent at dawn, but nobody appears tonight. Tomorrow there will be faces up there. Feasts always result in fatalities” (279).

**The reader is unsure of how Katniss views her relationship with Peeta. Is he just a friend, more than a friend, a boyfriend? Do you think she should risk her life to save his? If the situation were reversed, would Peeta have gone to the feast to save Katniss?**

Possible Responses: Some students might consider Peeta just a friend where others will think he is more than a friend if Katniss is willing to risk her life to save his. Katniss and Peeta have not clarified their relationship status but the reader can assume that they are not boyfriend and girlfriend. Responses will vary regarding if Katniss should risk her life to save his, but if Katniss does not go to the Cornucopia Peeta will surely die. Some students will suggest that Peeta dying will make it easier for Katniss to win the Games where other students might say that Katniss will not being able to face District 12 knowing she could have saved Peeta. It is most likely that Peeta would go to the feast to save Katniss however he does not have the same survival skills she possesses.

7. Before Katniss heads to the Cornucopia she thinks of Gale, “And Gale. I know him. He won’t be shouting and cheering. But he’ll be watching, every moment, every twist and turn, and willing me to come home. I wonder if he’s hoping that Peeta makes it as well. Gale’s not my boyfriend, but would he be, if I opened that door? He talked about us running away together. Was that just a practical calculation of our chances of survival away from the district? Or something more? I wonder what he makes of all this kissing” (280).
Katniss recognizes that she could face her death at the Cornucopia yet she is thinking about Gale. In your opinion, why does Katniss think about Gale at this moment? Does Katniss feel guilty for kissing Peeta? If so, should she feel guilty?

Possible Responses: Katniss might be thinking about Gale because she feels supported knowing that he is watching her from District 12. Gale is Katniss’ best and only friend. Because Katniss thinks about “opening the door” to a relationship with Gale and how he feels watching her kiss Peeta, the reader can assume that she does feel guilty. Katniss should not feel guilty because she and Gale have not discussed being in a relationship therefore it is Katniss’ choice who she kisses.

8. At the Cornucopia, Foxface employs a successful strategy to retrieve her pack without harm from the other tributes, “The table has just clicked into place when a figure dares out of the Cornucopia, snags the green backpack, and speeds off. Foxface! Leave it to her to come up with such a clever and risky idea! The rest of us are still poised around the plain, sizing up the situation, and she’s got hers. She’s got us trapped, too, because no one wants to chase her down, not while their own pack sits so vulnerable on the table. Foxface must have purposefully left the other packs alone, knowing that to steal one without her number would definitely bring on a pursuer. That should have been my strategy! By the time I’ve worked through the emotions of surprise, admiration, anger, jealousy, and frustration, I’m watching that reddish mane of hair disappear into the trees well out of my shooting range. Huh. I’m always dreading the others, but maybe Foxface is the real opponent here” (283).

Foxface is a female tribute that stands a real chance of winning the Games. Where Katniss could badmouth and demean Foxface, Katniss chooses to celebrate and admire her for her skillful strategy. Often females put down other females for many reasons. In terms of improving the rights of women, why is it so important for females to celebrate and recognize the strengths of other females?

Possible Responses: The rights of women are making great progress. Where once women were viewed as the property of men and could not vote, women are now able to make choices for themselves including earning higher education and advancing their careers. It is so important for females to celebrate and recognize the strengths of other females to help positively influence the rights of women. By supporting each other, women can help promote the positive image of all women.

9. At the Cornucopia Katniss is injured by Clove and is pinned to the ground, “She carelessly wipes the blood from my wound with her jacket sleeve. For a moment, she surveys my face, tilting it from side to side as if it’s a block of wood and she’s deciding exactly what pattern to carve on it. I attempt to bite her had, but she grabs
the hair on the top of my head, forcing me back to the ground. ‘I think…’ she almost purrs. ‘I think we’ll start with your mouth.’ I clamp my teeth together as she teasingly traces the outline of my lips with the tip of the blade” (286).

It is true that tributes must kill other tributes to survive the Hunger Games, however Clove seems to enjoy her opportunity to kill Katniss. Is it typical to see this enjoyment of violence from a female character? Is this scene appropriate for young-adult readers?

Possible Responses: In literature and the media, it is rare to see females enjoying acts of violence. Most violent characters are male. In this scene Clove is enjoying injuring Katniss. Clove views Katniss as a “block of wood” ready to be carved therefore considering herself as an artist. Clove plans on carving Katniss’ face, starting with her lips. These images are disturbing whether a male or a female character performs them.
Chapters 22-24

Katniss and Peeta remain in the cave and use the time to heal from their injuries. The more time they spend together, the more closer they get. Peeta shares that he has loved Katniss since she was five years old. Katniss and Peeta kiss several times and are sent gifts from sponsors. Eventually they need food and go hunting. Foxface dies when she steals poisoned berries that Peeta innocently picks. Katniss and Peeta head to the lake to fight Cato.

1. Katniss returned from the Cornucopia with a serious head wound and Peeta took care of her. When she recovers they kiss, “This is the first kiss that we’re both fully aware of. Neither of us hobbled by sickness or pain or simply unconscious. Our lips neither burning with fever or icy cold. This is the first kiss where I actually feel stirring inside my chest. Warm and curious. This is the first kiss that make me want another” (298).

How is Katniss and Peeta’s relationship developing? What causes this development? Should Katniss be thinking about kissing in the middle of the Hunger Games?

Possible Responses: Katniss and Peeta’s relationship is developing because Katniss is beginning to view Peeta as more than a friend. This development might have been a result of Peeta taking care of Katniss when she is injured by Clove. Katniss might also have realized that she is willing to die to save Peeta and therefore she must care about him. This scene shows that sometimes one cannot control how they feel like Katniss wanting to kiss Peeta in the middle of a fight to the death.

2. In chapter 22, Katniss privately thinks about her future life if she wins the Hunger Games, “I have my mother and Prim. Well, for the time being. And then … I don’t want to think about then, when Prim has grown up, my mother passed away. I know I’ll never marry, never risk bring a child into the world. Because if there’s one thing being a victor doesn’t guarantee, it’s your children’s safety. My kids’ names would go right into the reaping balls with everyone else’s. And I swear I’ll never let that happen” (311).

Katniss has made the choice not to marry. One of her reasons is the fear of having children that would be forced to compete in the Hunger Games. It is an option for Katniss to marry and not have children? How do you feel about married couples who choose to not have children?
Possible Responses: Yes, it is an option for Katniss to marry and not have children. Students should understand that having children is a personal choice.

3. Katniss considers what life will be like if Peeta survives the Games with her, “Who will [Peeta] transform into if we make it home? This perplexing, good natured boy who can spin out lies so convincingly the whole of Panem believes him to be hopelessly in love with me, and I’ll admit it, there are moments when he makes me believe it myself? At least, we’ll be friends, I think. Nothing will change the fact that we’ve saved each other’s lives in here. And beyond that, he will always be the boy with the bread. Good friends. Anything beyond that though … and I feel Gale’s gray eyes watching me watching Peeta, all the way from District 12” (311).

In this moment, why does Katniss think of Gale? If Gale is not her boyfriend, why does she think about how he feels watching her with Peeta? How is thinking about Gale risking Katniss’ safety?

Possible Responses: Katniss is thinking about Gale because she feels guilty. Katniss cares for both Gale and Peeta. She is unsure exactly how she feels about either boy. Thinking about Gale is dangerous for Katniss because she is performing the role of star-crossed lover with Peeta. Thinking about Gale makes Katniss feel guilty therefore she will be more reluctant to show “love” for Peeta. Katniss must be Peeta’s star-crossed lover to earn gifts from sponsors and survive the Games.


Chapters 25-27

The Gamemakers send wolf-like mutations to attack the remaining tributes Peeta, Katniss, and Cato. The mutations look like dead tributes. Cato catches Peeta but Katniss shoots him sending him over the ledge. Although Katniss and Peeta should win, the Games do not end. Claudius Templesmith announces that only one tribute can survive. Instead of killing each other, Katniss offers Peeta poisoned berries. The Gamemakers, who must have a victor, declare Katniss and Peeta victors. Katniss and Peeta are again sent to the Remake Center where Peeta gets a metal leg. President Snow is furious at Katniss for inciting rebellion and Katniss must convince everyone that she really loves Peeta. On the train back to District 12 Peeta learns about Katniss and Haymitch’s deception, believing that Katniss does not really care for him. Katniss is not sure of her true feelings for either Gale or Peeta, and she dreads losing Peeta.

1. In chapter 25, Cato dies, “It takes a few moments to find Cato in the dim light, in the blood. Then the raw hunk of meat that used to be my enemy makes a sound, and I know where his mouth is. And I think the word he’s trying to say is please.

Pity, not vengeance, sends my arrow flying into his skull. Peeta pulls me back up, bow in hand, quiver empty.

‘Did you get him?’ he whispers.

The cannon fires in answer.

‘Hurray for us,’ I get out, but there’s no joy of victory in my voice” (341).

Whose fault is it that Cato dies? In this moment, is Katniss a hero?

Possible Responses: Several characters can be blamed for Cato’s death. Katniss shot the arrow that caused Cato to lose his footing and fall off the Cornucopia into the pack of mutts. Peeta pointed to Cato’s hand to tell Katniss to shoot. The Capitol is ultimately to blame for forcing Cato to compete in the Games. Students may differ on how they view this moment; some students might say Katniss is not a hero because she causes Cato to be mauled by the creatures. Other students will see that Katniss stops Cato’s suffering by killing him therefore she is a hero.

2. The Games should have ended after Cato dies but they don’t. Gamemaker Claudius Templesmith announces that only one victor can leave the arena. Instead of killing Peeta, Katniss suggests that they both eat poisoned berries, “I spread my fingers, and the dark berries glisten in the sun. I give Peeta’s hand one last squeeze as a signal, as a good-bye, and we begin counting. ‘One.’ Maybe I’m wrong. ‘Two.’
Maybe they don’t care if we both die. ‘Three!’ It’s too late to change my mind. I lift my hand to my mouth, taking one last look at the world. The berries have just passed my lips when the trumpets begin to blare. The frantic voice of Claudius Templesmith shouts above them. ‘Stop! Stop! Ladies and gentlemen, I am pleased to present the victors of the Seventy-fourth Hunger Games, Katniss Everdeen and Peeta Mellark! I give you – the tributes of District Twelve!’” (345).

**Why doesn’t Katniss kills Peeta and win the Games? Is it possible that Katniss loves Peeta?**

*Possible Responses: In this scene Katniss chooses not to kill Peeta with her weapons. Katniss suggests that they eat poisoned berries to commit a double suicide so that the Capitol will not have a victor. Katniss is betting on the Capitol’s need for a victor. Although the reader is still unsure exactly how Katniss feels about Peeta, the reader knows that Katniss cannot kill Peeta because she cares for him. It is possible that Katniss loves Peeta but she has not admitted this to herself.*

3. After Katniss is removed from the arena her stylists erase the damage to her body with a “full body polish” (353). As Cinna readies her for her public interview Katniss slips on her dress, “I immediately notice the padding over my breasts, adding curves that hunger has stolen from my body. My hands go to my chest and I frown. ‘I know,’ says Cinna before I can object. ‘But the Gamemakers wanted to alter you surgically. Haymitch had a huge fight with them over it. This was the compromise’” (354).

**At this moment, who own Katniss’ body? What would have happened if Haymitch had not advocated for Katniss and what might have been her reaction? Why would it be important to the Gamemakers that Katniss have larger breasts?**

*Possible Responses: At this moment Katniss does not own her body because she cannot make her own decisions about her own body. Haymitch owns Katniss’ body more than Katniss because he was able to negotiate to have her dresses padded instead of Katniss receiving breast implants. The Capitol ultimately owns Katniss’ body because they chose to not force her to have the surgery. If Haymitch had not advocated for Katniss she would have been force to have breast implants. Katniss would have been devastated because she is happy with her natural body and having larger breasts might have negatively affected her ability to use a bow. Katniss must be able to shoot to feed her family. It might be important to the Gamemakers that Katniss have larger breasts because Peeta made her a symbol of desire. To the Capitol having larger breasts might represent femininity. The Capitol might also want to hide how thin Katniss is now because of the lack of food in the Games.*
4. Before Katniss is reintroduced to the Capitol audience as a Victor, she considers her actions and feelings for Peeta, “I haven’t even begun to separate out my feelings about Peeta. It’s too complicated. What I did as part of the Games. As opposed to what I did out of anger at the Capitol. Or because of how it would be viewed back in District 12 Or simply because it was the only decent thing to do. Or what I did because I care about him” (359).

**Recall Katniss’ actions during the Games. What do you think she did as part of the Games? Out of anger? Because it was the only decent thing to do? And because she cared about Peeta?**

*Possible Responses: As part of the Games Katniss did not deny that she was Peeta’s star-crossed lover, she did not stop Peeta from killing the female tribute that lit a fire, and she staged a kiss with Peeta in the cave. Out of anger Katniss dropped the tracker-jacker nest on Peeta and the Careers. Because she cared about Peeta, Katniss searched for Peeta, rescued him from the mud, treated his wound, kissed him, shared food, fought at the feast for medicine, did not abandon Peeta for being slow, shot Cato, did not shoot Peeta to be the victor, and shared poisoned berries. Students may share additional answers.*

5. Katniss and Peeta are introduced to the Capitol as victors, “He rights himself and we just cling to each other while the audience goes insane. He’s kissing me and all the time I’m thinking, do you know? Do you know how much danger we’re in? After about ten minutes of this, Caesar Flickerman taps on his shoulder to continue the show, and Peeta just pushes him aside without even glancing at him. The audience goes berserk. Whether he knows or not, Peeta is, as usual, playing the crowd exactly right” (361).

**In this moment, is Peeta “playing the crowd” or are his actions towards Katniss genuine?**

*Possible Responses: It is possible that Peeta has gained confidence and hope for a relationship with Katniss because of her actions towards him in the Games. Peeta knows that he must play up being reunited star-crossed lovers to the crowd however his actions towards Katniss could be authentic.*

6. After her final interview Katniss reflects, “As I slowly, thoroughly wash the makeup from my face and put my hair in its braid, I begin transforming back into myself. Katniss Everdeen. A girl who lives in the Seam. Hunts in the woods. Trades in the Hob. I stare in the mirror as I try to remember who I am and who I am not. By the time I join the others, the pressure of Peeta’s arm around my shoulders feels alien” (371).
It is true that our experiences change us, how has Katniss changed from the beginning to the end of the novel? Can she ever be the same “Katniss Everdeen” as she was before the Games?

Possible Responses: At the beginning of the novel Katniss was reluctant to depend on others. She felt comfortable in her role as provider for her family. As a tribute, Katniss had to form relationships with others like Haymitch, Effie, Cinna, and Peeta. She was forced to wear make-up and perform for others. She killed people. It will never be possible for Katniss to forget the Hunger Games therefore she will never be the same girl she was before the Games.

7. On the train ride back to District 12, Katniss finally has time to consider her experience with Peeta, “The idea of seeing Gale in a matter of hours makes my stomach churn. But why? I can’t quite frame it in my mind. I only know that I feel like I’ve been lying to someone who trusts me. Or more accurately, to two people. I’ve been getting away with it up to this point because of the Games. But there will be no games to hide behind back home” (371).

What “two people” has Katniss been lying to? What has she been lying about?

Possible Responses: This statement is ambiguous because Katniss could be referring to Gale, Peeta, and herself.

8. Peeta discovers that Haymitch has been coaching Katniss to help her from angering the Capitol. He is surprised and hurt that Katniss’ romantic actions might not be genuine. Katniss considers her true feelings, “I want to tell him that he’s not being fair. That we were strangers. That I did what it took to stay alive, to keep us both alive in the arena. That I can’t explain how things are with Gale because I don’t know myself. That it’s no good loving me because I’m never getting married anyway and he’d just end up hating me later instead of sooner. That if I do have feelings for him, it doesn’t matter because I’ll never be able to afford the kind of love that leads to a family, to children. And how can he? How can he after what we’ve just been through? I also want to tell him how much I already miss him. But that wouldn’t be fair on my part. So we just stand there silently, watching our grimy little station rise up around us” (373).

If Katniss was honest with Peeta, what might have happened?

Possible Responses: If Katniss was honest and told Peeta her thoughts, Peeta might have reacted by accepting what she feels and giving her more time to get to know him. Peeta might also have been angry and demanded she love him now. It is more likely that Peeta would have given Katniss the time and space she needs to feel comfortable with a relationship.
9. The last sentence of the novel reads, “I take his hand, holding on tightly, preparing for the cameras, and dreading the moment when I will finally have to let go” (374).

This novel ends with Katniss fearful of letting go of Peeta. Katniss has survived the Hunger Games; she killed two people and watched many others die. Katniss is more afraid of losing Peeta than she was of the Games. What might Suzanne Collins’ be saying about relationships?

Possible Responses: Suzanne Collins’ is suggesting that relationships can be brutal, painful, and unforgettable. Katniss will never forget being Rue’s ally just like she will never forget her first kiss with Peeta. Sometimes, just like the Games, relationships are something you have to survive and they require your best skills to do so.

Works Cited

REFERENCES


Funk, C. (2002). *Gender equity in educational institutions: Problems, practices, and strategies for change.* Unpublished manuscript, Sam Houston State University, Huntsville, Texas.


http://www.css.ac.in/download/deviprasad/content%20analysis.%20a%20method%20of%20social%20science%20research.pdf


