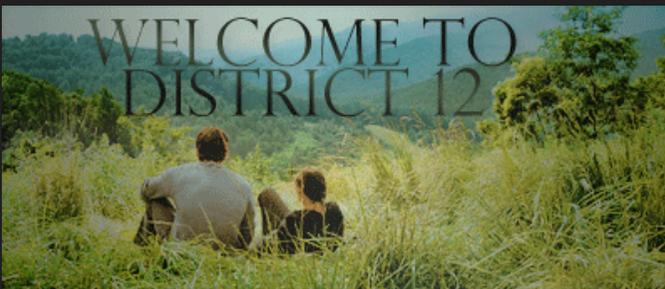


# The Hunger Games



## Summary



'The Hunger Games' is set in our world, but in a post-apocalyptic time. The Capitol is the cruel Government of the twelve districts of Panem, which was once North America. As punishment for a revolution in the past, the Capitol created the Hunger Games. One boy and one girl are chosen from each district to fight on live television until only one child remains. The main character is Katniss Everdeen, who volunteers in the place of her younger sister Primrose for District Twelve. The male "tribute" for the district is Peeta Mellark, the son of a baker, who is in love with Katniss.

All the citizens from districts four to twelve hate the Capitol because of the oppression, poverty and violence that they suffer. Katniss angers the Capitol during the Games when her new friend Rue from District Eleven is killed, and she shows compassion by laying flowers on her body. Furthermore, at the end of the Games, only Peeta and Katniss remain, so each refuses to kill the other. Instead, they agree to eat poisoned berries together so that there is no winner for the Capitol. In response, rather than being humiliated in front of the districts, the Capitol allow the couple to win together. The other districts watching the Games have now witnessed an act of rebellion, and they want more. Thus, a second revolution is about to be born...

## Symbolism

The dresses Cinna designs for Katniss not only give Katniss her epithet, "the girl who was on fire," but also come to symbolize her spirit. Cinna designs the first dress to reflect the main industry of Katniss's home district, coal mining, and since coal's purpose is to burn, Cinna creates a dress that would be lit with synthetic flames. This dress begins the association between Katniss and fire while also giving Katniss her epithet, "the girl who was on fire." That epithet comes to describe Katniss generally, however, and not just how she appears in Cinna's designs. Haymitch, for instance, explains Katniss's high training score by saying the judges must have liked her temper and her "heat." (Katniss also thinks the Gamemakers may have targeted her with fireballs in the arena as a reference to "the girl who was on fire.") The dresses, notably the first one for the opening ceremony but also the more subdued versions Cinna creates for Katniss's interviews, serve as outward, nearly literal representations of Katniss's inner "fire."



# Connection

Panem: Suzanne Collins has said that Panem is supposed to be like ancient Rome: "Panem itself comes from the Latin expression 'Panem et Circenses' which translates into 'Bread and Circuses'". This term refers to the techniques used by the Roman Empire to keep the masses happy and docile.

The Hunger Games and the Arena: With our Roman history glasses on, we can't help but see the Hunger Games arena as very similar to the Colosseum in Rome, where gladiators would fight to the death for the entertainment of the citizens of the Empire's capitol.



## Conflict/Resolution

The primary conflict that Katniss faces during the novel *The Hunger Games* falls into the category of 'man versus society'; Katniss must find a way to overcome Panem's diabolical Hunger Games and survive to return home to her family. Over the course of the story, this conflict deepens as she finds herself in an emotionally-complicated alliance with Peeta, who is also her rival in the Games.



"I volunteer as  
tribute! (p.22)

## Significant Quote

This quote is significant because it emphasizes many of Katniss's character traits early in the book and sets the stage for the major conflict of the novel. For example, Katniss yelling out to take her sister's place shows Katniss's rashness but also her bravery and courage. While she may be a little impulsive, her natural instincts of a protector and guardian immediately come out.

