

### Defining “Sameness” and “Equality”

Review the two texts to locate evidence that either verifies or contradicts your personal definition of each term.

	Personal Definition	“Harrison Bergeron”	<i>The Giver</i>
<b>Sameness</b>	The condition where everything and/or everyone is the same and no differences exist.	<p><i>Text evidence will vary; examples included below.</i></p> <p>Some community members must wear physical and mental handicaps to ensure that everyone is the same in regards to intelligence, strength, and beauty.</p> <p>However, in looking at the handicaps that people wear, it does not seem fair or that people are truly the same. For example, Harrison is described as having to wear more handicaps to compensate for his height, strength, beauty, and intellect. However, the way that he is described makes him appear that his handicaps are too dramatic when compared to others. For example:</p> <p>“Nobody had ever born heavier handicaps... Instead of a little ear radio for a mental handicap, he wore a tremendous pair of earphones, and spectacles with thick wavy lenses. The spectacles were intended to make him not only half blind, but to give him whanging headaches besides. Scrap metal was hung all over him. Ordinarily, there was a certain symmetry, a military neatness to the handicaps issued to strong people, but Harrison looked like a walking junkyard. In the race of life, Harrison carried three hundred pounds.</p>	<p><i>Text evidence will vary; examples included below.</i></p> <p>Jonas community values Sameness above all else, and as a result has eliminated personal choice (which can lead to different outcomes across different people) and other variables like changes in weather and landscape.</p> <p>Although the community tries to achieve Sameness by eliminating these things, there is not true sameness. For example, Jonas and The Giver are two individuals who were governed by the same rules of the community but still developed the ability to “see beyond” or “hear beyond.” This suggests that even though the community tries to make everyone/ everything the same, it’s impossible to have true sameness.</p>

		<p>And to offset his good looks, the H-G men required that he wear at all times a red rubber ball for a nose, keep his eyebrows shaved off, and cover his even white teeth with black caps at snaggle-tooth random.”</p> <p>The examples raise the question as to whether sameness can actually be achieved.</p>	
<b>Equality</b>	The condition where everyone has equal rights and opportunity.	<p>In Harrison Bergeron, laws are passed to make everyone equal.  “Nobody was smarter than anybody else. Nobody was better looking than anybody else. Nobody was stronger or quicker than anybody else. All this equality was due to the 211th, 212th, and 213th Amendments to the Constitution, and to the unceasing vigilance of agents of the United States Handicapper General.”</p> <p>Although the handicaps make it so that no one is stronger or smarter than another, they don’t succeed in actually making everyone equal. Harrison demonstrates this by fighting back against the government and the rules. In addition, the people of the community don’t have equal opportunities. For example, George has more limited opportunities because of his mental handicap, which seems to impact him more severely than Hazel’s average intelligence.</p>	<p>Jonas’ community seems more focused on sameness than equality, but sameness also suggests that equality is achieved.</p> <p>In The Giver, everyone is equal in that their basic needs are met and provided for; for example, people have assigned roles in the community, enough food to eat, and are governed by the same rules and regulations.</p> <p>However, despite the focus on sameness, equality is not actually achieved. In The Giver, while people may think they have equal rights, they actual have no rights because they are unable to make choices.</p> <p>Furthermore, even though jobs are assigned, it’s clear through the characters’ dialogue that different jobs are less preferred or valued; for example, the night nurturers are less valuable than the daytime nurturers.</p>