Discussion questions on The Giver:

1. Describe the things that trouble Jonas. Compare these worries to the concerns of a typical 11 year old in your community.
2. Jonas lives in a highly structured community. Which of its various ceremonies, customs, and rules do you find most beneficial for the characters? Are there any you think might be harmful? Give your overall opinion about the overall effects of living in such a community.
3. If you lived in Jonas’ community what would you hope your assignment would be? Explain.
4. Is requiring children to do volunteer service a good idea? Would it work in your community? Explain your ideas.
5. Evaluate the way the community treats the Old. Identify the good things about the House of the Old. Next describe anything you see as questionable about the treatment of the Old. How does it compare with how the elderly are treated in our community?
6. As the novel progresses are you growing in respect for the way of life in the community, or do you find yourself disagreeing with its operation?
7. What kind of changes do you see in Jonas as the novel progresses?
8. Think of a time when you were weighed down with a memory. What did you do to relieve it?
9. At the end of Chapt 15 is there anything you strongly disagree with about the community?
10. At the end of Chapt 19 do you feel that Elsewhere is an actual place or is it merely a symbol used by the author? Explain your answer.
11. Compare and contrast how you wanted the novel to turn out to the way it actually turned out.
12. What does the phrase “back and back and back” mean in the novel? Could the same term be applied to any contemporary problems? Explain.