

**Prompt-**Language is often used as a tool for social control in *The Giver*. Choose two or three words used in the society (for example, release, nurturer, love, elsewhere) whose meanings differ from their current meaning, and describe how they promote the rules and conventions of the community. How does the use of these words affect the behaviour and attitudes of people in the community?

### **The Giver**

“*The Giver*” directed by Phillip Noyce showcases a seemingly idyllic society that is free from suffering and difference but in consequence is sheltered from the memories of the past and the true pleasure and pain that comes with them. To keep the secrets of the real world from the citizens, language and the twisting of words is one of the many measures that are used as a form of social control helping to hide pain and suffering behind their true meanings. Phillip Noyce has used precise dialogue to help depict the innocence prominent within the community, emphasising the social control and the amount of misunderstanding behind the words that the characters in the movie use. The citizens are forced to use precise language, however in this community, it is quite the opposite as words like home, released and love have an unclear meaning to citizens, hiding the deeper connotation and truth behind their lives.

Home is defined as a place of comfort where families grow together and form lasting bonds, whereas in “*The Giver*”, home or more precisely called a dwelling, is a shelter with no significance containing emotionally shallow individuals that have no love or compassion for each other. The chief elder has stolen all feelings from the people of the community including the privilege to love. Not knowing the significance of intimacy, citizens don’t know that “A dwelling is not a home. A home is more”. The Giver tells Jonas that a home is much more than he knows of and the lack of homeliness is shown in multiple circumstances in the movie, in particular when Jonas’s mother betrays him and helps to turn him in for his acts of rebellion. A home carries families that dearly care for each other but this isn’t shown in “*The Giver*” because of the lack of connection and bond that is lacking between the members of the family. Phillip Noyce has included the misunderstanding of the word home to better highlight the use of language as a tool for social control and how it will turn people towards each other rather than bring them together because of the lack of truth.

In the community, the word “released” is shown to be the removal of citizens who are elderly, underdeveloped or disobey the rules to a peaceful place outside of the community. In reality, it is just another twisted word used as a social control to hide how the community “hadn’t eliminated murder” but instead “brought it home”. Murderous acts are blatantly performed by the people of the community like nurtures releasing the elders without realising that they aren’t sending them to a peaceful place but instead killing them. People are so naive about what the real meanings behind these words are and this can be shown when Lilly, Jonas’s little sister, asks to “be released, just for one day”. People have misunderstood the real meaning of release and find it as a good thing but in reality, the word is hiding the agony of death. Phillip Noyce has included this manipulation of language to show the control over the community that the chief elder has created and how much is hidden from the beauty of truly living life including the despondency and difficulty that comes with it.

The film "The Giver" portrays a society where citizens lack feelings, including the most absent and most important emotion of love. "Love" is a word that is forbidden to be used within the community as it is not deemed to be precise. Instead citizens "enjoy", eliminating the pain and suffering love can cause as there is no real connection between people and or things. This point was reflected when the giver transmitted a memory to Jonas. While he was experiencing the memory, Jonas wasn't able to come up with a name for the emotion he was feeling. The feeling of love. This shows the innocence within the community and how much has been stolen from them to the point where Jonas wasn't able to identify the emotion that is most important and brings a community together. All his life he misunderstood the word "enjoy" for love and the connectedness that comes with it. Phillip Noyce was able to display a society where the manipulation of language sheltered the citizens from the feeling of loss and disappointment but instead was withheld from feeling love.

To conclude, "The Giver" directed by Phillip Noyce is a movie depicting a community whose citizens are deprived of multiple freedoms including the freedom of speech. Residents were sheltered from recognising the true meaning behind numerous words such as "love", "released" and "home" because they reveal emotional trauma such as pain and discomfort that the citizens have been stripped of. Phillip Noyce's depiction of "The Giver" written by Louis Lowry, helps to convey the message to viewers that humans can't have only one side of feelings. Every feeling is a part of living life and it is worth feeling the pain for the happiness. Sheltering the citizens from these emotions only caused a destructive society caused by a lack of choice including being withheld from the realities of life that can be expressed through the freedom of language.