

UNIT 6 Journeys / Visions of the Future
Independent Reading

A STEM school

FROEBEL
BILINGUAL SCHOOL

Home of the Space Generation



HARRISON
BERGERON

with JIM SOTO



THE YEAR IS 2081, SPEAK YOUR MIND!

Why do people sometimes seek to escape the rules of society?

Could it be due to:

INDIVIDUALISM?

ANARCHIC TENDENCIES?

FEAR?

ISSUES IN HARRISON BERGERON INCLUDE:

The topic of EQUALITY is fundamental in this short story. In our times, the struggle for equality is connected to very controversial issues such as:

POLITICAL CORRECTNESS
AFFIRMATIVE ACTION
SOCIAL JUSTICE

What are they? How do they relate to struggle for equality?

THE BIG QUESTIONS

In our contemporary society, the struggle to achieve **equality** is one of great importance. In Harrison Bergeron, author Kurt Vonnegut makes us question:

- What does equality really mean?
- Can we truly be equal?
- At what cost?
- Is diversity the enemy of equality?



LITERARY CONCEPT

DYSTOPIA

This story takes place in a Dystopian Society. Dystopia refers to any imagined setting in which oppressive societal control and the illusion of a perfect society are maintained through corporate, bureaucratic, technological, moral, or totalitarian control. Dystopias, through an exaggerated worst-case scenario, make a criticism about a current trend, societal norm, or political system.

LITERARY CONCEPT (CONT.)

SETTING

In fiction the setting of a story is the time and location in which it takes place. Broadly speaking, the setting provides the main backdrop for the story. Setting can also provide atmosphere or mood.



LITERARY CONCEPT (CONT.)

MOOD

Mood is a lasting emotional state. A setting can induce feelings of joy, dread or claustrophobia, in the reader if done correctly. **What type of mood is generated by this story's setting?**



READING STRATEGY

VISUALIZING

Visualizing refers to our mind's ability to take note of **sensory details** when information is presented to us. For example, a well described setting can help us not only understand but experience a story much more vividly.



READING STRATEGY (CONT.)



STORY PASSAGE	WHAT I VISUALIZE
* “But the old man sat there without moving. He was too tired to go any farther.”	The wrinkly old man is slouching and sweating as he sits on one of the bridge’s rails.

*From *Old Man at the Bridge*

For example, a well described setting can help us

STORY PASSAGE	WHAT I VISUALIZE
1.	
2.	
3.	

As you read Harrison Bergeron describe what you visualize from three passages of your choice.

BEFORE YOU READ

Ask yourself these questions before, while, and after reading:

1. What is equality? Should it be pursued?
2. Does equality bring fairness and justice?
3. How were the citizens faring under the government's equality laws?



ASSESSMENT

Choose two connections that you connect with after reading “Harrison Bergeron” by Kurt Vonnegut. Write your responses in the space provided.

Text-to-Self How would you feel if you lived in a society in which everybody was absolutely equal? What parts of your life, if any, might be better? What parts would be worse?

Text-to-Text Compare and contrast the government described in “Harrison Bergeron” to the one described in “The Censors” by Luisa Valenzuela. How are the motives of the two governments similar and different? What effects does each one have on personal freedom and individuality? Is one government less harmful than the other? Support your viewpoint with examples from both stories.

Text-to-World What specific aspects of contemporary American life is Vonnegut criticizing? Explain why you agree or disagree with his viewpoint.



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