

0. PANEM - THE CAPITOL - Story Preface

1. PANEM - THE CAPITOL

2. PANEM - DISTRICT 12

3. PANEM - THE SEAM

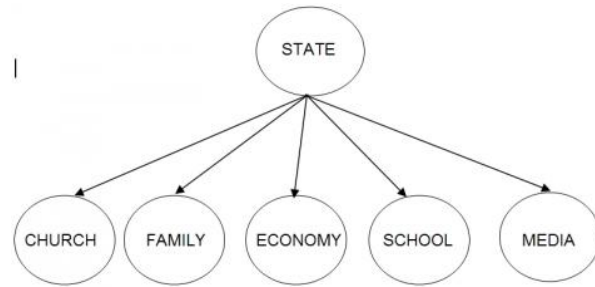
4. FOOD and the REAPING

5. PANEM - THE DISTRICT TRIBUTES

6. THE HUNGER GAMES

7. KATNISS and PEETA - DEFIANCE

8. MOCKINGJAY



Panem, the country in which Katniss and her family live, is a totalitarian state. In such a place, the national government runs (or attempts to run) nearly all aspects of a person's (and a country's) life. This image depicts the impact of a totalitarian government on its people.

Katniss and her family live in a country called Panem. Located in North America, Panem is split into Districts. We could compare those "districts" to "states" or "provinces." Panem originally had 13 functioning Districts; now it has 12.

The country is run by a government called "The Capitol." The Capitol is actually a totalitarian regime which governs nearly all aspects of a person's life. Goods and services, produced by the 12 Districts, must be sent to The Capitol.

Totalitarian governments can order citizens to do whatever they want them to do - because - such a government has absolute power. Governments, however - even totalitarian governments - are still just made-up of ... people.

Often the people who run totalitarian governments are despised by the rest of the country's citizens. Sometimes government functionaries - like those in George Orwell's novel 1984 - are referred to as "Big Brother."

People - who have taken (or have been given) "total" political power - make life-and-death decisions impacting others. Such "power-hungry" people usually tend to put themselves first, satisfying their own needs and desires at the expense of everyone else.

Because *individuals* are actually the driving-force behind totalitarian governments, those individuals "in charge" are also at risk. Their biggest risk is rebellion from others who have "had enough" of rules, regulations, orders and whatever additional tools people who run governments use to compel others to do their will.

One way a totalitarian government prevents rebellion is to kill, imprison or exile potential dissenters.

- The Stalinist government did that in the 1920s, when millions of peasants were ordered to change the way they farmed their land. (Those government actions ultimately caused a disastrous famine in the Ukraine.)

- The Soviet government did that when famous writers and thinkers, such as Alexander Solzhenitsyn and Andrei Sakarov, were exiled.

Another way a totalitarian government prevents rebellion is to exterminate people the rulers dislike:

- The Nazis did that to Gypsies, Jews and others before, and during, World War II.

- The Roman Empire did that to conquered people who dared to question Rome's authority.

Panem's totalitarian government tries to prevent rebellion against The Capitol by ordering people in the 12 districts to fight each other. That is one reason why The Capitol holds "The Hunger Games" - to focus aggression between citizens instead of citizens against the government.

Another reason for the games is to remind the people of Panem that the government will crush any uprisings.

That is what happened when The Capitol obliterated District 13 decades earlier.

Government, thus, is not an "it." Depending on the structure, government could be either "us" or "them." In the case of The Capitol and the Districts, the structure is clearly "them" against "us."

Let's visit one of the districts - District 12 - the home of Katniss Everdeen.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/PANEM-THE-CAPITOL-Hunger-Games>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/PANEM-THE-CAPITOL-Hunger-Games>

Questions 2 Ponder

When, if Ever, Is a Totalitarian Government a Good Political Solution?

In "The Hunger Games," the people of Panem are living under the dictates of a totalitarian government. The government's hold over people is so strong that its leaders can order a group of young people, called Tributes, to fight each other to the death. The last person standing is the "winner" of that year's games.

Can you envision any circumstances which would justify a totalitarian government? What would those circumstances be? How should such a government be structured?

Does Power Tend to Corrupt and Absolute Power Tend to Corrupt Absolutely?

The Hunger Games features a country called "Panem" where a totalitarian government is in place. The extent of power, which is vested in the country's leader—a man called Coriolanus Snow—seems to be absolute.

In 1887, Lord Acton—a British historian—observed: "Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely." Do you think that statement is true? Why, or why not?

Does absolute political power, and the corruption which tends to follow in its wake, have anything to do with the creation of the "Hunger Games" in Panem? Explain your answer.

Media Stream



Panem - The 12 Districts

Image of the 12 Districts, featuring goods/services, copyright Lions Gate Entertainment, all rights reserved. Image provided here as fair use for educational purposes.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Panem-The-12-Districts>



Panem - The Capitol

Image of The Capitol, copyright Lions Gate Entertainment. Copyright, Lions Gate, all rights reserved. Image provided here as fair use for educational purposes.

View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Panem-The-Capitol>

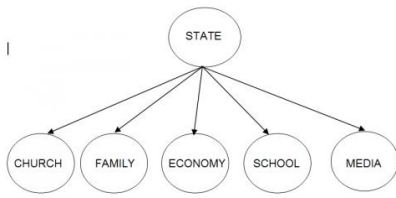


Everdeen Home - District 12

Photo of abandoned homes at Henry River Mill Village - Hildebran, North Carolina - by Margo Mertzger, Associated Press. Copyright, Margo Metzger, all rights reserved. Photo online via VisitNC.com. Image provided here as fair use for educational purposes.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Everdeen-Home-District-12>



PANEM - THE CAPITOL

View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/>