



# Catching Fire

by Suzanne Collins

90 minute lesson (15 –45 minutes of Optional Activities)

## Supplies

- Chairs for each participant
- A copy of *Catching Fire* for each participant
- A couple of tables
- Bibles
- Red, orange, and yellow pre-cut flame nametags
- Markers
- Butcher/large sheets of paper with opening questions on them taped to the wall
- Copies of the PC (USA) cross
- Copies of the worksheet “Symbols of Hope”
- Pen/Pencils
- Newspaper articles of modern day quells (optional activity)
- 2 copies of the Quell Quiz (optional activity)
- Chorus lyrics printed (2 of each) for fire songs chosen (optional activity)

## Focus of the Session

In this meeting, the leader should communicate that individuals are important and our actions matter just as the characters in the book, and identify the symbols of hope and their importance to the people of Panem and identify the symbols of hope and their importance to Christians.

## Objectives

As a result of their participating in this session, participants will be able to . . .

1. Recall main events of the book
2. Identify their own gifts and talents and how to use *their* gifts for the God
3. Discuss the book
4. Read the Pentecost story
5. Name Biblical symbols of hope

## Welcome Activities

### 15 minutes

### Entering Activity and Nametags

As participants enter . . .

1. Have a table set out with red, orange, and yellow pre-cut flame nametags. Have participants write their name and favorite character from the book on their nametag.

2. Have participants complete the following sentences or answer the questions written on large paper graffiti sheets around the room:

- \_\_\_\_\_ can cause a spark.
- I feel alive when I \_\_\_\_\_. It's almost as if a spark is in me.
- How would Katniss answer that question? Peeta? Haymitch? (page 15)
- When \_\_\_\_\_ happens, I feel like someone has snuffed out the fire in me.
- If your spark is dimmed or snuffed, what gives you hope to get your spark back?

### **Engage**

#### **Say:**

*As Katniss and Peeta head on their victory tour, they must prepare a “talent” to share. Peeta takes up painting, while Katniss pretends to take up designing clothing. Her real talent is hunting, a talent she is forbidden to practice due to the laws.*

Ask participants to share what makes them feel alive or what their talent is?

## **Book Discussion Part 1**

### **15 minutes**

Katniss and Peeta have both been through quite a bit. They have “survived” the Hunger Games, but now try to live a normal life though it is not easy. I imagine they both are thrilled to be reunited with their families, but have difficulties going about their daily lives.

- What must it feel like for Katniss to know she will be going on a Victory Tour, seeing families of children she has killed?
- What lies were told during the first Hunger games? (page 12) Were these lies made out of necessity or convenience? Explain.
- Why does Katniss feel she has to take care of Haymitch? Why does she feel as though she owes him?
- On page 23, President Snow says, “Katniss Everdeen, the girl who was on fire, you have provided a spark that, left unattended, may grow to an inferno that destroys Panem.”<sup>1</sup> What does this mean? Why is Katniss afraid to tell others about President Snow’s warning? (page 33)

1 Suzanne Collins, *Catching Fire* (New York: Scholastic Press, 2009), 22.

- The three finger salute is from District 12. However, the people of District 11 give this salute to Katniss after she thanks them. Is this salute a way of paying respect to the victors or an act of defiance to the Capitol? (page 61) What was the outcome of this salute? (page 62) How does this act feed the fire of rebellion?

## Bible Connection

**20 minutes**

### Pentecost

Share the PCUSA seal. Ask youth to see if they can spot the flames. Ask what they think the flames represent and why they are in our seal?



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“Integrated into the lower part of the design are flames, which form an implied triangle, a traditional symbol of the Trinity. The flames themselves convey a double meaning: a symbol of revelation in the Old Testament when God spoke to Moses from the burning bush and a suggestion of the beginning of the Christian church when Christ manifested himself to his apostles at Pentecost and charged them to be messengers of the good news of God's love.”<sup>2</sup>

- We are going to read about Pentecost. But first let’s recap what just took place seven weeks prior to Pentecost. Jesus has died and risen. The disciples are gathered. How do you think they feel? Do you suppose it was dangerous for all of them to gather?
- Read Acts 2:1–11.

<sup>2</sup> “The Seal of the Presbyterian Church (u.s.a.),” Office of the General Assembly, <http://oga.pcusa.org/section/departments/department-stated-clerk/seal/> (accessed May 15, 2013).

- What was the fire imagery in that scripture? What do you think this meant for the disciples? What changed after the fire/Holy Spirit filled them?
- The Holy Spirit filled the disciples and gave them the strength to start the church, and it spread like wild fire. Think of all the Christian churches today, which all began with the flames of Spirit on the disciples. The Spirit can really fill us and energize us to use our Spirit led gifts in this world.

### **Revisit Opening Discussion, “What Makes You Alive?”**

It is often hard to have confidence to do the things we love. We often feel reluctant to share our talents. Instead, we should allow the Spirit to fill us in the same way it filled the disciples, giving them a boldness to stand up and share what they believed. Even if we are nervous or ashamed of our gifts, we should allow the Spirit to give us boldness to share ourselves and beliefs with others.

Let’s think back to our conversation about what makes us feel alive or gives us our spark.

- Specifically, how could you share your gifts?
- How could you use your gifts to glorify God in worship, in church, or in other ways?
- How can you encourage your friends to share their gifts too?
- For Peeta, Gale, Katniss, and Haymitch, did they always know their gifts? What are gifts they do not see in themselves, but others see in them? How does sharing their gifts with others matter? Why is it important?
- In a similar way, what if the first disciples stayed scared and locked up in a room after Jesus’ death? How would their fear and hiding of their gifts have changed the world?
- Why would the world be worse off without you and your gifts? Has anyone shared with you how important you are, and why you matter to them? If so, share what that experience was like.

## **Book Discussion Part 2**

### **20 minutes**

- What is the difference between a spark and a controlled burn? *A spark is a fiery particle that has the potential for starting a fire. Controlled burns reduce the hazard of fires starting on their own.*
- What was the spark in the Hunger Games that sparked the rebellion? (page 149 – the berries) Does Katniss have anyway of controlling the fire? Does President Snow think she has control? Why or why not? (Page 149)

- What did Katniss and Peeta set into motion in District 8 when they held out the berries? (page 144-46) How did the Capitol try to put out the fire? (page 146-7).
- As Katniss watches news from District 13, she notices the mockingjay wing. What is in District 13? What does the capital want them to think? What are they hoping is present? (page 163)

### **Define quell**

How do you define the word quell?

1: to thoroughly overwhelm and reduce to submission or passivity  
<quell a riot>

2: quiet, pacify <quell fears><sup>3</sup>

- Why would the Capitol call the Hunger Games each 25 years a Quell?
- The Quarter Quell reading is televised along side the wedding dress choices. Is this purposeful? What is this a sign of? (page 173)
- As Katniss begins to realize that she is going back in the arena, she discovers her only mission will be to keep Peeta alive. As a way of preparing, Peeta is watching the old Games, specifically Haymitch's games. Why does watching Haymitch's Games feel like invading his privacy? (page 195) What connections are made between Katniss and Haymitch as she views the tape? (page 196) How does this change her feelings towards Haymitch? What do Katniss and Peeta discover about how Haymitch won the Games? What are the similarities between Haymitch and Maysilee, and Katniss and Rue?
- Now that the games are almost upon them, they meet the other tributes. Both Katniss and Peeta are weary of becoming friends with people they may have to kill. However, Haymitch encourages them to make connections. Who would you want as allies after seeing them train? Who does Katniss want? (page 233)
- When it is Katniss' turn to go in front of the judges, she notices that their mood is different? How so? (page 235) What does Katniss do to impress or surprise the Gamemakers? (page 237) What does Peeta paint? Why? (page 248) What impact does the combination of Peeta's painting and Katniss' hanging make on the judges?
- Describe the alliances forming in the arena. Why are Finnick, Johanna, Wiress, and Beetee important to Katniss and Peeta?
- What keeps Katniss going and hopeful in the arena? What keeps Peeta going and hopeful in the arena?

<sup>3</sup> "Merriam-Webster," <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/quell> (accessed May 15, 2013).

- The symbol of the mockingjay has become more than just a token. It has become a symbol of hope. Name the times the mockingjay appears prior to the Quarter Quell. Why doesn't Katniss recognize its power as a symbol of hope? In the same way, how have Katniss and Peeta become symbols of hope for Panem? What prevents them from seeing their own power?

## Bible Connection

**15 minutes**

### Symbols of Hope

In pairs, students will be instructed to complete a worksheet. Each worksheet will have several scriptures. Students will be asked to draw the symbol of hope represented in the scripture after determining where did the scripture take place, what were the people/person hoping for, and what did God do? (See appendix)

## Closing Prayer Activity

**5 minutes**

### Human Knot

To close the session, have the group face one another in a circle. Each participant holds out their right hand and grabs the right hand of another participant, like shaking hands. Then each does the same with their left hand, but cannot grab the same person's hand, therefore each participant is holding two different hands. With hands held, arms crossed and weaved, have participants unwind themselves without letting go of hands.

*Say, Just as in the book, individual gifts are important and also working together for the better of the whole. This is vital. This human knot activity allows you all to share your individual gifts and work together to solve a problem. You are each important to the group. Let's go forth, knowing our importance in this world with God on our side, and when it gets hard, remember to look to Christ for hope. Let's close in prayer,*

### Prayer

*“God, sometimes we allow the world to imprison us. We allow others to bury us. We will not stay down, God. We will not stay within these walls of pain. We have hope. You have given us hope. As long as we have hope, nothing can keep us down. Nothing can keep us in the dark. Nothing can take away your love. As long as we have hope, there is no complete darkness, no complete loneliness, no complete sorrow. God of hope, let us know you are here. Amen.”<sup>4</sup>*

<sup>4</sup> Steven L. Case, *The Book of Uncommon Prayer 2: Prayers and Worship Services for Youth Ministry (soul Shaper)* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan/Youth Specialties, 2006), Page 110.

## Optional Activities

**15 – 45 minutes**

### Modern Day Quells

**15 minutes**

Give each group a current newspaper article about a modern day quell. Have students read the article and answer the same four questions:

1. Who is the oppressor?
2. Who is being oppressed and how?
3. What, if anything, did they do “fight” against the oppressor?
4. What was the outcome?
5. Is there anyway that we, as the Christian community, can help?

### Timed Third Quarter Quell Quiz

**15 minutes**

Break class into two groups. Explain that each group will have thirty seconds to answer as many questions as possible. Keep track of how many correct answers are given for each team in the time provided. You may decide to have two or more rounds of questions or a tie-breaker may be needed.

- What gift do they receive from sponsors to help them get fresh water?  
*A spile.*
- Why does Beetee want the wire? *He needed it for a trap...to set an explosion.*
- What was Wiress saying over and over again, and what did it mean?  
*Tick tock. The arena was a clock.*
- How did Katniss recognize danger was approaching? *Wiress stops singing.*
- Why did Katniss swim out to Wiress’ body? *She was holding Beetee’s wire.*
- The use of a bird to symbolize things is throughout the book. During the Quarter Quell, do the game makers use them as a symbol of danger, trickery, or freedom? *trickery*
- Whose voice did Finnick hear? *Annie*
- Why couldn’t the tributes get away from the birds? *There was a wall trapping them in that segment of the arena.*
- Why did making it to the final eight mean that Prim couldn’t be dead? *The capitol broadcasts interviews with the family.*
- Johanna says that the birds can’t hurt her. Why? *She has no one left.*
- Why is Finnick examining the bread? *The bread was a clue to when they would be captured and brought to safety.*

- What is Peeta’s intention by showing Katniss the locket? *She had family that needed her. She had to live.*
- What is the old wives’ tale about pearls, coal, and pressure? *Putting pressure on coal turns it to pearls.*
- Why did Johanna attack Katniss? *To pull out her tracking device.*
- What did Katniss do when she remembered who the enemy was? *She takes the wire and puts it on an arrow and shoots it through the chink of the force field.*
- Why does Katniss want to kill Peeta? *She doesn’t want him to be tortured by the Capitol.*
- Name six areas of the arena? *Lightening, Blood Rain, Poisonous Fog, Carnivorous Monkeys, JabberJays, Beast, Tidal Wave, Insects*

## **Game**

### **15 minutes**

Give each student a printout of chorus lyrics to a song with the word “fire” in it. You will need to prepare the song lyrics ahead of time and make sure that there are two sets of lyrics. (see list of suggested songs below)

Have students scatter throughout the space.

Ask students to sing their song until they find their partner, who is singing the exact same song. OPTION: Blindfold students to make it a little harder to find their partner. This will require them to memorize the chorus.

Once partners have found one another, have them take a look at their lyrics. Using the lyrics, have partners share a character or event in the story that reminds them of the lyrics. Have partners also share a Bible story or event in the Bible that reminds them of the lyrics.

Ask each set of partners to share what the song reminded them of in the book and in the Bible without telling the groups what song they were assigned. OPTION: Have students act out the events or Bible stories in charades fashion and have other students guess their song.

Song suggestions:

“Come on Baby Light My Fire” by the Doors

“Ring of Fire” by Johnny Cash

“This Girl is on Fire” by Alicia Keys

“Blaze of Glory” by Bon Jovi

“Great Balls of Fire” by Jerry Lee Lewis

“I Set Fire to the Rain” by Adele

“Firework” by Katy Perry



## Symbols of Hope

Scripture	Where did this take place or what was going on?	What were the people/person hoping for?	What did God do?	Draw a symbol of hope to represent the scripture.
<b>John 20:1-9</b>				
<b>Luke 1:26-38, 41-56</b>				
<b>Ezekiel 37:1-10</b>				
<b>Exodus 13: 17-14:32</b>				
<b>Exodus 16:1-35</b>				