

SAT Vocabulary Study
The Giver by Lois Lowry

Note: The words in each section are given in alphabetical order at the top, then in the order in which they appear in the section. As much as possible, words are listed in the form in which they actually appear in the novel. If a definition was not available for that form, the closest form is defined and the derivative is listed. Other common derivatives are listed as well. Words capitalized in the novel are also capitalized in the quoted text.

List 1
Chapters 1–4

adherence
apprehensive
awed
bewildered
chastisement

gravitating
nondescript
nurturer
rarity
transgression

1. **apprehensive** (ap-ri-hen-siv) *adj.* uneasy or fearful about something that might happen

derivatives: apprehension, apprehensively

Chapter 1

“But there was a little shudder of nervousness when he thought about it, about what might happen. **Apprehensive**, Jonas decided. That’s what I am.”

2. **nurture** (nur-cher) *v.* to care for and protect; to support and encourage

derivatives: nurturer

Chapter 1

“He and the other **Nurturers** were responsible for all the physical and emotional needs of every newchild during its earliest years of life.”

3. **awed** (awd) *adj.* filled with or expressing an overwhelming feeling of reverence, admiration, and fear, produced by something grand, sublime, or powerful

derivatives: awe, awesome

Chapter 1

“Lily looked up, her eyes wide. ‘The Ceremony of Twelve,’ she whispered in an **awed** voice.”

4. **transgression** (tranz-gresh-uhn) *n.* violation of a law or command; sin

derivatives: transgressor, transgress

Chapter 1

“I feel frightened, too, for him,’ she confessed. ‘You know that there’s no third chance. The rules say that if there’s a third **transgression**, he simply has to be released.’”

5. **adherence** (ad-heer-uhns) *n.* steady devotion, support, allegiance, or attachment

derivatives: adherent, adhere

Chapter 2

“. . . the fact that his father had broken a rule at all awed him. He glanced at his mother, the one responsible for **adherence** to the rules, and was relieved that she was smiling.”

6. **chastisement** (chas-tiz-muhnt) *n.* discipline, especially by corporal punishment

derivatives: chastise, unchastised

Chapter 3

“[I]t was . . . considered rude to call attention to things that were unsettling or different about individuals. Lily, he decided, would have to learn that soon, or she would be called in for **chastisement** because of her insensitive chatter.”

7. **rarity** (rair-i-tee) *n.* something rare, unusual, or uncommon

derivatives: rare, rarest

Chapter 3

“Now, seeing the newchild and its expression, he was reminded that the light eyes were not only a **rarity** but gave the one who had them a certain look—what was it? *Depth*, he decided. . . .”

8. **bewildered** (bih-wil-derd) *adj.* completely puzzled or confused; perplexed

derivatives: bewilderment, bewilder, bewildering, bewilderedly

Chapter 3

“Jonas thought again about that incident. He was still completely **bewildered** by it . . . He probably should have brought up his feeling of bewilderment that very evening. . . . But he had not been able to sort out and put words to the source of his confusion, so he had let it pass.”



9. **nondescript** (non-di-skript) *adj.* of no recognized, definite, or particular type or kind

Chapter 3

"[H]e looked at it carefully, but it was the same apple. Unchanged. The same size and shape: a perfect sphere. The same *nondescript* shade, about the same shade as his own tunic."

10. **gravitate** (grav-i-teyt) *v.* to have a natural tendency or be strongly attracted (usually followed by *to* or *toward*)

derivatives: gravitating

Chapter 4

"But with guidance, as they developed self-confidence and maturity, they moved on to other jobs, *gravitating* toward those that would suit their own interests and skills."

List 2
Chapters 5–8

aptitude
capacity
collective
curb
exuberant

invariably
meticulously
precision
relinquish
vibrant

1. **relinquish** (ri-ling-kwish) *v.* to renounce or surrender (a possession, right, etc.)

derivatives: relinquishment

Chapter 6

“Each family member, including Lily, had been required to sign a pledge that they would not become attached to this little temporary guest, and that they would **relinquish** him without protest or appeal when he was assigned to his own family unit at next year’s Ceremony.”

2. **exuberant** (ig-zoo-ber-uhnt) *adj.* effusively and almost uninhibitedly enthusiastic; lavishly abundant

derivatives: exuberance, exuberantly

Chapter 6

“The audience applause, which was enthusiastic at each Naming, rose in an **exuberant** swell when one parental pair, glowing with pride, took a male newchild and heard him named Caleb.”

3. **invariably** (in-vair-ee-uh-blee) *adv.* always; without exception

derivatives: invariability, invariable

Chapter 6

“But **invariably** the grinning Nines, who in technical violation of the rule had been practicing secretly for weeks, would mount and ride off in perfect balance, training wheels never touching the ground.”

4. **meticulous** (muh-tik-yuh-luhs) *adj.* taking or showing extreme care about minute details; precise; thorough

derivatives: meticulousness, meticulously

Chapter 6

“Jonas shrugged. It didn’t worry him. How could someone not fit in? The community was so **meticulously** ordered, the choices so carefully made.”



5. **curb** (kurb) *v.* to control as with a curb; restrain; check

Chapter 7

“You Elevens have spent all your years till now learning to fit in, to standardize your behavior, to **curb** any impulse that might set you apart from the group.”

6. **aptitude** (ap-ti-tood) *n.* capability; ability; innate or acquired capacity for something; talent

derivatives: aptitudinal

Chapter 7

“She mentioned that there was one who had singular skills at caretaking, another who loved newchildren, one with unusual scientific **aptitude**, and a fourth for whom physical labor was an obvious pleasure.”

7. **precision** (pri-sizh-uhn) *n.* accuracy; exactness

derivatives: precise, precisely

Chapter 7

“But the mistake had been made. And **precision** of language was one of the most important tasks of small children. Asher had asked for a smack.”

8. **vibrant** (vahy-bruhnt) *adj.* (of sounds) characterized by perceptible vibration, resonant, resounding; (otherwise) exciting, stimulating, lively

derivatives: vibrance, vibrantly

Chapter 8

“‘I know,’ she said in her **vibrant**, gracious voice, ‘that you are all concerned. That you feel I have made a mistake.’ She smiled.”

9. **collective** (kuh-lek-tiv) *adj.* of or characteristic of a group of individuals taken together

derivatives: collectively

Chapter 8

“What did that mean? He felt a **collective**, questioning stir from the audience. They, too, were puzzled.”

10. **capacity** (*kuh-pas-i-tee*) *n.* power of receiving impressions, knowledge, etc.; mental ability

derivatives: capacious

Chapter 8

“Perhaps Jonas will, because the current Receiver has told us that Jonas already has this quality. He calls it the *Capacity* to See Beyond.”

List 3
Chapters 9–13

admonition
assimilated
excruciating
exhilarating
exempted

fleeting
irrationally
obsolete
successor
unnerving

1. **exempt** (ig-zempt) *v.* free from an obligation or liability to which others are subject; release

derivatives: exemption

Chapter 9

“From this moment you are *exempted* from rules governing rudeness. You may ask any question of any citizen and you will receive answers.”

2. **unnerving** (uhn-nurv-ing) *adj.* depriving of courage, strength, determination, or confidence; upsetting

derivatives: unnerve, unnerved

Chapter 9

“He was so completely, so thoroughly accustomed to courtesy within the community that the thought of asking another citizen an intimate question, of calling someone’s attention to an area of awkwardness, was *unnerving*.”

3. **excruciating** (ik-skroo-shee-ey-ting) *adj.* extremely painful; causing intense suffering; unbearably distressing; torturous

derivatives: excruciatingly

Chapter 9

“Almost instantly the *excruciating* pain in his hand had diminished to the throb which was, now, all he could recall of the experience.”

4. **successor** (suh k-ses-er) *n.* a person who follows or replaces another by descent, election, appointment or the like

derivatives: succeed

Chapter 10

“My job is important and has enormous honor. But that does not mean I am perfect, and when I tried before to train a *successor*, I failed. Please ask any questions that will help you.”

5. **exhilarate** (ig-zil-uh-reyt) *v.* to enliven, invigorate, stimulate; to make cheerful or merry

derivatives: exhilaration, exhilarating

Chapter 10

“‘It’s like going downhill through deep snow on a sled,’ he said finally. ‘At first it’s **exhilarating**: the speed; the sharp, clear air; but then the snow accumulates, builds up on the runners, and you slow, you have to push hard to keep going, and—’”

6. **obsolete** (ob-suh-leet) *adj.* no longer in general use; fallen into disuse

derivatives: obsolescence

Chapter 11

“‘Snow made growing food difficult, limited the agricultural periods. And unpredictable weather made transportation almost impossible at times. It wasn’t a practical thing, so it became **obsolete** when we went to Sameness.’”

7. **admonition** (ad-muh-nish-uhn) *n.* counsel, advice, or caution

derivatives: admonish

Chapter 12

“Jonas listened. He was very aware of his own **admonition** not to discuss his training. But it would have been impossible, anyway. There was no way to describe to his friends what he had experienced there in the Annex room.”

8. **fleeting** (flee-ting) *adj.* passing swiftly; vanishing quickly; transitory

derivatives: fleetingly

Chapter 12

“It had happened again: the thing that he thought of now as ‘seeing beyond.’ This time it had been Fiona who had undergone that **fleeting** indescribable change.”

9. **irrational** (ih-rash-uh-nl) *adj.* without the faculty of reason; deprived of reason

derivatives: **irrationally**, irrationality

Chapter 13

“He found that he was often angry, now; **irrationally** angry at his groupmates, that they were satisfied with their lives which had none of the vibrance his own was taking on.”

10. **assimilate** (uh-sim-uh-leyt) *v.* to take in and incorporate as one’s own; absorb

derivatives: assimilation

Chapter 13

“‘It was chaos,’ he said. ‘They really suffered for a while. Finally it subsided as the memories were **assimilated**. But it certainly made them aware of how much they need a Receiver to contain all that pain. And knowledge.’”

List 4
Chapters 14–19

anguish
assuage
carnage
ecstatic
isolation

luminous
ominous
perceive
permeated
released

1. **anguish** (ang-gwish) *n.* excruciating or acute distress, suffering, or pain; the anguish of grief

derivatives: anguished

Chapter 14

“*They have never known pain*, he thought. The realization made him feel desperately lonely, and he rubbed his throbbing leg. Eventually he slept. Again and again he dreamed of the *anguish* and isolation on the forsaken hill.”

2. **assuage** (uh-sweyj) *v.* to make milder or less severe; relieve; ease; mitigate

derivatives: assuagement, unassuaged

Chapter 14

“The daily training continued, and now it always included pain. . . . Each time, in his kindness, The Giver ended the afternoon with a color-filled memory of pleasure. . . . It was not enough to *assuage* the pain that Jonas was beginning, now, to know.”

3. **isolation** (ahy-suh-ley-shuhn) *n.* separation from other persons or things; aloneness; loneliness

derivatives: **isolation**, isolate, isolating

Chapter 14

“*They have never known pain*, he thought. The realization made him feel desperately lonely, and he rubbed his throbbing leg. Eventually he slept. Again and again he dreamed of the anguish and *isolation* on the forsaken hill.”

4. **ominous** (om-uh-nuhs) *adj.* portending evil or harm; foreboding; threatening; inauspicious

derivatives: omen, ominously

Chapter 14

“Back and back and back.” Jonas repeated the familiar phrase. Sometimes it had seemed humorous to him. Sometimes it had seemed meaningful and important. Now it was *ominous*. It meant, he knew, that nothing could be changed.”

5. **release** (ree-leesd) *v.* free from confinement, bondage, obligation, or pain

derivatives: release

Chapter 14

“I’ll have to select the one to be nurtured, and the one to be released. It’s usually not hard, though. Usually it’s just a matter of birthweight. We *release* the smaller of the two.”

6. **carnage** (kahr-nij) *n.* the slaughter of a great number of people, as in battle; butchery; massacre

Chapter 15

“He lay sprawled, his gray uniform glistening with wet, fresh blood. The colors of the *carnage* were grotesquely bright: the crimson wetness on the rough and dusty fabric, the ripped shreds of grass, startlingly green, in the boy’s yellow hair.”

7. **ecstasy** (ek-stuh-see) *n.* an overpowering emotion or exaltation; a state of sudden, intense feeling; rapturous delight

derivatives: ecstatic, ecstatically

Chapter 16

“In one *ecstatic* memory he had ridden a gleaming brown horse across a field that smelled of damp grass, and had dismounted beside a small stream from which both he and the horse drank cold, clear water.”

8. **perceive** (per-seev) *v.* to become aware of, know, or identify by means of the senses; to recognize, discern, envision, or understand

derivatives: perception, perceptive, perceivable

Chapter 16

“What did you *perceive*?” The Giver asked.

‘Warmth,’ Jonas replied, ‘and happiness. And—let me think. *Family*. That it was a celebration of some sort, a holiday. And something else—I can’t quite get the word for it.’”

9. **permeate** (pur-mee-yet) *v.* to pass into or through every part of; to be diffused through; pervade; saturate

derivatives: permeation, permeative

Chapter 17

“And his new, heightened feelings *permeated* a greater realm than simply his sleep. Though he knew that his failure to take the pills accounted for some of it, he thought that the feelings came also from the memories.”

10. **luminous** (loo-muh-nuhs) *adj.* radiating or reflecting light; shining; bright.

derivatives: luminosity, luminously

Chapter 18

“And [Rosemary] listened carefully. Her eyes were very *luminous*, I remember. . . . She was so enthusiastic. So delighted to experience new things.”

List 5
Chapters 20–23

augmented
diminished
efficient
emphatically
fugitives

lethargy
rueful
sing-song
stealthily
vigilant

1. **efficient** (ih-fish-uhnt) *adj.* performing or functioning in the best possible manner with the least waste of time and effort; competent; capable

derivatives: efficiency, efficiently

Chapter 20

“‘Fiona is already being trained in the fine art of release,’ The Giver told him. ‘She’s very **efficient** at her work, your red-haired friend. Feelings are not part of the life she’s learned.’”

2. **rueful** (roo-fuhl) *adj.* feeling, showing, or expressing sorrow or pity; mournful; doleful

derivatives: rue, ruefully

Chapter 20

“The Giver gave a **rueful**, anguished, empty laugh. ‘Jonas, you and I are the only ones who *have* feelings. We’ve been sharing them now for almost a year.’”

3. **emphatic** (em-fat-ik) *adj.* uttered with emphasis; strongly expressive

derivatives: emphasis, emphasize, emphatically

Chapter 20

“Jonas shook his head **emphatically**. ‘No, Giver,’ he said. ‘I want you to keep that, to have with you, when I’m gone.’”

4. **stealthy** (stel-thee) *adj.* done, characterized, or acting by stealth; furtive

derivatives: stealth, stealthily

Chapter 21

“It was terribly dangerous because some of the work crews were still about, but he moved **stealthily** and silently, staying in the shadows, making his way past the darkened dwellings and the empty Central Plaza, toward the river.”

5. **sing-song** (**sing-sawng**) *adj.* monotonously jingly in rhythm and pattern of pitch

Chapter 21

“It’s bye-bye to you, Gabe, in the morning,’ Father had said, in his sweet, sing-song voice.”

6. **fugitive** (**fyoo-ji-tiv**) *n.* a person who is fleeing from prosecution, intolerable circumstances, etc.; a runaway

Chapter 21

“It would not be safe to travel in daylight. They would be looking for him soon. . . . Gabriel’s head nodded, after a moment, and fell against Jonas’s chest. Together the *fugitives* slept through the first dangerous day.”

7. **augmented** (**awg-men-tid**) *adj.* made larger; enlarged in size, number, strength, or extent; increased

derivatives: augmentation, augment

Chapter 21

“The journey had become automatic; the sleep by days, hidden in underbrush and trees; the finding of water; the careful division of scraps of food, *augmented* by what he could find in the fields.”

8. **vigilant** (**vij-uh-luhnt**) *adj.* keenly watchful and alert to detect danger; wary

derivatives: vigilance, vigilantly

Chapter 21

“As he pedaled through the nights, through isolated landscape now, with the communities far behind and no sign of human habitation around him or ahead, he was constantly *vigilant*, looking for the next nearest hiding place should the sound of engines come.”

9. **diminish** (**dih-min-ish**) *v.* to lessen; decrease

Chapter 22

“But the frequency of the planes *diminished*. They came less often, and flew, when they did come, less slowly, as if the search had become haphazard and no longer hopeful.”

10. **lethargy** (leth-er-jee) *n.* the quality or state of being drowsy and dull, listless and unenergetic, or indifferent and lazy

derivatives: lethargic

Chapter 23

“But his mind was alert now. Warming himself ever so briefly had shaken away the **lethargy** and resignation and restored his will to survive. He began to walk faster on feet that he could no longer feel.”