



Teachers Notes on *Hunger* by Michael Grant

Hunger by Michael Grant is the second installment in a six book series, the first of which is *Gone*. *Hunger* could be read without having read *Gone* as the author puts in sufficient background but is definitely better read after *Gone*.

'I like surprising people. A reader who guesses that I won't do this or that because it would violate expectations is in for a shock. The biggest rush I get in writing is racing toward a conclusion when I have five running plot lines and fifteen characters in play, and no clear idea how it's all going to come together. It's like jumping off a bridge not quite sure whether the bungee cord will yank you back up in time. Then, amazingly, it works, it all comes together and it's just fun. Hopefully for the reader as well because if I don't know how it ends, they don't know how it ends!' *Michael Grant*

http://www.staticmultimedia.com/print/features/michael_grant_interview

Hunger keeps the reader up late at night, desperate to find out what will happen next. The unpredictable, meticulous, clever plotting is one of the features of the writing to be appreciated and savoured. Michael Grant's craft can also be analysed fruitfully to support students' developing writing skills (see later in these notes)



Plot

It is now three months since the Thanksgiving Battle between Sam and Caine and their respective supporters, three months since Little Pete created the FAYZ (in *Gone*). Battle-weary, Sam is in danger of being overwhelmed by the pressure of maintaining some kind of order in the community of 330 kids at Perdido Beach. The difficulties in this episode are different from those in *Gone*, which revolved around initial reactions to being in world without adults.

Food has now become a major problem and hunger is endemic. More children and creatures are exhibiting mutations, but not all the kids at Perdido Beach have developed superpowers. Divisions amongst the 'freaks' and the 'normals' reach violent levels.

Sam, Edilio, Astrid, Quinn, Brianna and Dekka are still at war with Caine, the increasingly psychopathic Drake, the cold and calculating Diana and their cohorts at Coates Academy. There is now also a sinister power that emanates from deep in the mine at work in the FAYZ. It is called the Darkness, or the Gaiaphage.

Time is still counting down for those who turn fifteen on their next birthday. Now there is a choice to 'step out' or remain in the FAYZ.

Before reading

Invite students to recap on what they recall of *Gone* – both in terms of the plot and characters. This serves two functions: it demonstrates that readers read in their own way, and that different aspects of the story will be important to different readers. Such disparities make for rich discussion. Map what is recalled on an interactive whiteboard and enter onto a class wiki. This can be used for the second function, that is, to record changes to the main and minor players across the two stories during, or at the end of reading *Hunger*. While the books are fast-paced, plot-driven narratives, this is not at the cost of strong, vivid characterisation, and readers might be surprised about the role of some characters in *Hunger* compared with their actions in *Gone*.

During Reading

Michael Grant is highly skilled at maintaining suspense and tension, at creating exciting, tense action scenes and at shocking the reader with horror and the supernatural. So while readers will want to gallop to the finish line, pacing the reading to notice particular elements in the writing is rewarding and increases pleasure.

Mode of telling

Puzzles and clues

The author both respects his readers and expects them to be active in the reading, noticing clues and puzzles, such as Sam being aware that there are no birds in the cabbage field (p7).

This lets us know something bad is going to happen and invites us to think about what that might be. Are we smarter than Sam? There is nothing more satisfying than working something out before the characters do.

Alternate chapters

The story is told through multiple perspectives, and in this book, not only through familiar characters such as Sam, Astrid and Lana, but new ones that we haven't met before, such as Duck and Orsay so that readers have to keep the threads in their minds and be ready to make all the connections.

Cliffhangers

As the novel proceeds we become aware that the switches between alternate viewpoints have another narrative purpose: to relieve and heighten tension, much like edits in a film.

Find examples of both as you read.

- As we get closer to the climax, the cliffhangers become more frequent, such as on p487 when Drake is about to attack Sam. Only eleven pages later, on p498 we are left wondering what Lana will do to Dekka. A mere ten pages later, on page 508 Mike takes aim with his rifle at a floating Duck. On p531 the coyotes are waiting for Edilio. On p541 the coyotes attack Dekka, and a mere seven pages later on p548 Drake moves in for the kill on Diana.

- This is fast-paced writing which students might like to try. It means having multiple strands to the plot, which need to be thought through carefully. Students could try it on a small scale: a single episode that is experienced by different characters in different ways and with different consequences. For example, a character might be rushing to save someone and encounter an obstacle.

Elements of Horror

- These novels juxtapose 'realism' with the supernatural. We see young people trying to live ordinary lives in extraordinary circumstances. There are frightening beings and horrible aberrations, such as the monsters in Pete's room on p170–173. They are monstrous and offend our sense of normality; they make unearthly sounds, such as an 'eerie mewling'. What makes them even creepier is that they are trying to speak. The intelligent worms as big as snakes that attack E.Z. and cause his gruesome death are horrifying too (p8–9). However, these creatures and episodes are not gratuitously presented. For instance, Grant gives a snapshot of E.Z. as an easy going, fun-loving kid, prompting us to think that this makes his death worse somehow. Why is that? Would we react differently had it been one of the Coates kids who had been killed? Is there 'deserving death' and 'non-deserving death'? Consider that news reports often refer to 'innocent victims'.
- Also, on p24, Sam is horrified that when E.Z. was burning, his (Sam's) mouth watered at the smell of meat. In juxtaposing the everyday with the out of the ordinary Grant asks us if one is really more confronting than the other.

Action sequences

- Grant writes action that leaps off the page and that is so tense that we can hardly bear to read it. How can black marks on a page achieve this effect?
- Students can learn and appreciate much from being aware of the use of shortening sentences and providing snapshot images, such as on p278–279.
- Grant also employs strong verbs to great effect and students can be encouraged to look out for them as they read and collect ones they like, such as on p316: 'peeled off', 'dodging', 'racing', 'ploughed into it', 'reared back', 'gunfire erupted', 'raced away', 'hugging the wall'.

Realism

- Another strength of Grant's writing is that not everything goes to plan. Not everything that Sam designs works. He is out-maneuvered, distracted, and makes wrong choices, as Caine's attack on the power plant exhibits.
- Problems to be solved aren't always solved by action and confrontation, but sometimes by strategy. Chart the ways that problems are solved: confrontation versus strategy. Add to the class wiki on *Hunger* as the reading progresses.
- Grant also reminds us that the players are kids. For example, we see Josh on p328 breaking down and wanting his mother.

Language

Grant shows us that language can be used powerfully for different purposes. In doing so he asks us to consider whether the most important battles being fought are the physical ones between Caine's and Sam's opposing forces or the ideological ones on the streets of Perdido Beach.

- One of the major developments in this episode of the *Gone* series is the increasing antagonism between the 'normals' and those with powers. A whole new insulting vocabulary is developed by the kids at Perdido Beach: 'moofs', 'freaks', 'muties', 'chud'. As Diana remarks sardonically 'We're out of food, but we've got plenty of nicknames.' (p17). And Sam muses 'each new term seemed just a little more derogatory than the last.' (p73).
- There is also a phrase for what happens at the fifteenth birthday. It is called 'stepping out' (p37) and it becomes a choice after Caine and Sam survived it and learned how. However, no one knows what it is stepping out to – death? The old world? A new world?
- Consider encouraging students to use invented words (neologisms) in their writing to demonstrate the power of language.

Descriptive writing

Grant uses a number of literary devices to great effect. There are many examples of vivid writing and strong images, of Orc for instance, on p114. Students can be invited to create an image of him from this description.

Similes

One way in which Grant makes his writing so vivid is through the use of original similes, rather than adjective and adverbs. Students can analyse this and see how effective similes can be and use them in their own writing.

Here are some of my favourites but students can be invited to choose their own, that are effective in conveying particular emotions, actions or images: p121 'like she was a doctor with a fatal diagnosis she hadn't quite nerved herself up to deliver yet'. p249 'The containment towers were as tall as sky scrapers'. p317 'The cinderblock collapsed in like a fallen pie crust'.

Personification

Used to great effect: 'The big turbine building was blank and hostile, like a giant, windowless prison.' 'The pain [was] a roaring tiger that ripped him with every step'.

Analogy

- The wire cutting Brianna would be 'like a wire cheese cutter going through a brick of Swiss' (p295).
- p567 Analyse this powerful description of the Gaiaphage forming. Why it is so evocative? So powerful? What language choices has the author made? What is the language doing?

Characters - Perdido Beach

There is a comprehensive description of the main characters in the Teachers Notes on *Gone* that can be referred to.

Grant does not rely on stock standard protagonists – all have changed or been changed in some ways. All have made decisions for better or worse about how they will behave.

Sam Temple

- the reluctant appointed leader, now 'mayor'. His position is challenged in this book, not only by those who want power themselves but by his own sense of inadequacy. We are asked to ponder, do the kids obey Sam because they respect him or because of the threat of his power – that he can 'fry' them? The pressure of having to set a good example all the time, of having to arbitrate on every tiny thing and of having to fight all the big battles, tells on Sam, who has a near breakdown and is nearly killed by Drake.

Edilio

- is his consistent reliable self and a real support to Sam, though barely survives being shot by a Gaiaphage-controlled Lana.

Astrid

- has no 'powers' apart from her own considerable intelligence and unwavering support for Sam. She is also his (chaste) love interest. She documents the changes and mutations that are happening in Perdido in order to better understand them.

Quinn

- working towards redeeming himself. Lana thinks of him on p148 as 'Unsteady Quinn. Unreliable Quinn. Quinn, who had sold Sam out to end up being tortured by Caine and Drake. Quinn who had almost got Astrid killed.'

Little Pete

- brother of Astrid, five years old and severely autistic is involved in the emergence of the Gaiaphage, but it takes Astrid some time to work out his warnings.



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Characters - Perdido Beach continued

Albert

- is the entrepreneur. He develops a system of barter and then a currency based on gold and monopoly money. His motives appear equivocal.

Lana

- the Healer, loved by all in the FAYZ but tormented by a previous encounter with the Darkness.

Mary

- looks after the little kids and is suffering from anorexia nervosa and bulimia. Her secret is discovered but her return to health is going to be slow.

Brianna

- moves at super fast speeds and has joined Sam from Coates after being tortured by Drake.

Computer Jack

- now has super strength. In *Gone* he switched sides to Sam but is persuaded back to Caine by Diana. He stands up against Caine to save Brianna. Does this prove that he has some humanity left, or is it just that he fancies Brianna? He does nothing to help Brittney.

Orc and his 'minder' Howard

- their transformation is worth documenting.

Characters - Coates Academy

Caine

- something happened to him when he was in the desert for three days and now the Gaiaphage haunts him. He admits he is in love with Diana but doesn't trust her. While violent and power hungry he draws back from Drake's excesses. For instance on p251 he 'feel[s] shamed at Drake's cold-blooded performance'. He is an ambivalent character and charting his decisions in this novel will be fruitful.

Diana

- the ice queen is full of contradictions still. Discuss what motivates her? She manipulates Jack for Caine's unpleasant reasons, but places an old lady's book carefully back where she found it. Why would she do that?

Drake

- 'Whip Hand' has mutated, a psychopath, wants to challenge Caine but is still afraid of him. Find examples of how increasingly language is used to describe him as less than human, such as on p252: 'feral snarl...teeth bared, eyes wild'.

New characters

Duck Zhang

- when angry, he plunges through the ground. He can control his body density. He makes the ultimate sacrifice. Are his motivations clear?

Zil, Hank, Lance and Antoine

- bad boys, bullies, thugs who twist events to their own ends. Zil becomes their leader.

Bug

- nasty piece of work at Coates who has chameleon abilities.

Orsay Pettijohn

- has been living in the national park twenty kilometres from Perdido Beach. She can see the dreams of others.

Freaks versus Normals

While there has been ongoing warfare and a struggle for power between Sam and Caine, now there is also a conflict between 'freaks' and 'normals'. This is largely manufactured and fuelled by Zil and his gang who have no powers. As a result of a minor dispute, a boy, Harry, is killed by Hunter's microwave powers, which sets off a lynch mob and allows Zil and his henchmen to whip up antagonism and manufacture prejudice. This gives food for thought and discussion as Grant shows clearly how such divisions and hatreds can be established, how facts can be distorted. For instance, on p214 kids outside Albert's club say that freaks get in while normals are excluded. Small events are gradually built up. This apartheid is not resolved at the end of the novel.

Superpowers

- Are there any rules about the superpowers that the children develop, or are they random? For instance, Duck can sink or float depending on his emotional mood and Sam's power was discovered when he became angry.
- Have students develop a 'laws of superpowers' to identify how they operate.
- Michael Grant in an interview at <http://www.teenreads.com/authors/au-grant-michael.asp> says: Like most of my specific ideas for the book, I just try to think, 'what would be cool?' It's really just about wondering what readers would have some fun with, and what would be fun to write about. I especially have fun with Brianna's super speed because it has all these problems attached: does she wear out shoes really fast? Are her lips constantly chapped? What happens if she hits a bug at 400 mph?
- Have students invent some other superpowers including how they solve any of the problems associated with them.

Mutations

- Allied to the superpower mutations of the children are those of the creatures – the worms, blue bats, intelligent coyotes with speech etc.
- They are increasing, and as Astrid records on p330 they all seem to be dangerous and designed to be used as weapons or defence mechanisms – the point of evolution, she muses is survival. Is that what is happening here – vastly speeded up evolution?

Question

- Has the FAYZ offered anything positive to any of the young people? Who has been changed for the better? For the worse? Remained the same? Create a Venn diagram to map this. Think of Orc and Howard, Computer Jack, Brianna, Dekka, Mary.

The Darkness - Gaiaphage

- Gaiaphage: Look up its meanings – gaia and phage. 'gaia' is Greek and was the name of 'mother earth'; 'phage' (also Greek) means 'eat'.
- On p357 Jack says phage is a computer virus, a worm. 'A phage is code. Software that sort of eats other software.'
- Does looking at the meaning of the word give greater clues to its genesis and intent? Links could be made with mythology and the role of the worm in Norse mythology, for example.
- Caine and Drake and Lana hear the voice in their heads after encountering whatever is in the mine.
- p135 Lana is determined to defeat it. Why? Is she braver than the others? A better person than the others?
- p400 what is it? Where is it from? What does the reference to the nesting dolls mean? Is Little Pete part of it?
- What is its purpose? To walk the FAYZ and destroy? Why? Is the horror that it has no purpose other than to destroy?
- The phrase that it constantly puts into people's heads is: *hungry in the dark*.

Food

- This is the big issue in this story, both the initial wastage, and that being hungry feeds (excuse the pun!) divisions between freaks and normals.
- p109 'Two weeks from now it's Darfur, or whatever, if we don't figure something out.'
- Why has it taken them so long to recognise that this will be a terrible problem?
- Why have obvious sources, such as the fish and the birds and the wildlife in the forest not occurred to them before? Is it just because they are city kids and know nothing of hunting?

Names

- These are always carefully chosen by authors. For instance, Orsay is associated with French Foreign Office. Does that suggest Orsay is a spy? Diana suggests it on p123.
- Names are also an important part of our identity. On p132 Orc wants to be called by his real name – Charles Merriman.
- On p398 when Lana is fighting the Gaiaphage, she asserts her identity through her name – and the meanings of its three parts – including Lazar short for Lazarus who rose from the dead. Does that name protect her in the end?

Social situation

- Daily life and social structures have changed in Perdido Beach over the three months of the FAYZ. Share them and discuss whether they are to be expected. Some examples are provided below but classes might find others.
- p30–31 The adoption of adult vices – pot, cigarettes, alcohol – confirmed drinkers, even little kids.
- When the kids turn five they have to leave day care and find someone to look after them.
- p73 Edilio has set up an army or militia of twenty-six kids (consider there are over three hundred in Perdido Beach).
- Fourteen kids work for Mother Mary; Fire Chief Ellen has six kids dealing with emergencies; Albert has twenty-four kids working with him. Only seventy-eight kids do jobs. Discuss possible reasons for this and whether it seems realistic. Also, have a wiki in which students can contribute what they would do. This 'class FAYZ' can be compared with what Michael Grant devises.
- p76 Howard and Orc – Howard Orc's 'manager' gets beer for him for tasks.
- p77–78 Everyone over seven has to pick fruit or vegetables for three days a week.
- Why do so few turn up? Are they just lazy? Expect someone else to take responsibility? Don't like being told what to do? No real understanding of the severity of the situation? (p104) Or is it that Sam has no real authority, that it is based in fear? For instance, on page 115 Orc only complies because of Sam's power. How would students solve the problem of the kids not turning up?
- How about Albert's suggestion (p116)? 'The farmers needed motivation. They needed to get paid like anyone. People didn't do things just because it was right: people did things for money, for profit.' Is that how society works?



Teachers Notes on *Hunger* by Michael Grant

Social situation continued

- Social breakdown – five- and six-year-olds living alone – leads to (p86-87) near electrocutions, burning a house, drinking, food poisoning, accidental deaths.
- Sam seems unsettled by people taking initiative, such as Albert and Quinn going fishing. Sam thinks he has to have rule about it. Are rules a good solution?
- Albert's solution (p133) is the barter system. Is this going to be more successful than Sam's rules? Why or why not?
- p519 Zil's speech to the crowd about Hunter. Zil dehumanises Hunter, calls him 'mutant, nonhuman scum'. He whips up the crowd – not all are with him but they do nothing to resist except for Astrid. (p521). Is this how prejudice begins? By saying that people are less than human? You might consider historical examples.

Moral complexity of the story

- Are there absolutes? Good and bad? Is Drake completely evil and Sam completely good?
- p535 Sam wants to kill Drake. Has he crossed the same line as Zil and company? Sam calls Drake a 'rabid animal'.
- p539 Amoral Diana. Is she the worst of the lot – being used and using?

Stages in the plot

This is a tightly plotted and carefully structured narrative and tracing this as the book is read might be a useful approach to putting all the clues together.

- p66 Duck sees the glow of radiation.
- p70 Sam calls a town meeting but only a third of the kids turn up – losing control of them.
- p89 killing and eating a cat.
- p97 Drake captures Orsay.
- Little Pete floats and materializes creepy images he was fighting.
- p110 missing mints at the power plant – security lax – who is responsible? Predict? p155 it nags at Sam again so we know it is going to be significant. Any more predictions?
- p159 Caine wants Computer Jack. What is he planning?
- p170 Pete's dream monsters and p177-178 'I made him be quiet' and 'Hungry in the dark'.
- p182 Caine says 'feed the –'? What is 'feed' in this context? Orsay says the Gaiaphage was learning creation.
- p199–200 Lana and target practice.
- p225 Zil calls Hunter horrible names and provokes a fight in which innocent Harry dies. The powers are dangerous yet Sam doesn't invent any rules about their use. Do the 'normals' have a point?
- p229 Sam realises that Bug is responsible for the stolen mints.
- p234–238 Albert and Lana go for the gold in the mine, though Lana has another purpose
- p249 the battle for the power plant begins – reveals holes in Sam's organisation
- p255 Confrontation with Zil's gang who want Hunter's blood. Edilio and Astrid are bashed.
- p282 Lana plans to kill the Gaiaphage.
- p289 Caine and Drake's plans to destroy Sam and mates are getting completely sadistic – 'slice and dice' says Drake about the wires he has strung.
- p300 halfway point in the novel is a battle for the power plant – Caine wins and the lights go out in Perdido Beach. But Sam outsmarts him and Caine realises he has been manipulated by the Gaiaphage which wants the uranium.

Stages in the plot continued

- p340 Drake: 'It's the Darkness. Caine is no longer running things. There's a new boss.'
- p359 slogan 'Death to freaks'
- p369 Lana is defeated by the Gaiaphage.
- p370–378 all getting out of control – no lights, no food, factions fighting and Zil challenges Sam.
- p380 Zil organizes the Human Crew to oppose Sam.
- p407 Albert reinvents money.
- p417 Sam has a meltdown, can no longer cope.
- p444 Astrid puts the pieces of the puzzle together – can you?
- p451 She tells what she has worked out. What do you think of Astrid's theorizing?
- p458 Hank persuades Human Crew to kill Hunter
- p482 Sam has a plan. Any ideas? What is the resource, a weapon he has forgotten?
- p485 Sam meets Drake and is badly hurt
- p500 Why does he want Duck? What is his plan? (How can Duck be a 'resource'? Is Sam dehumanising him?)
- p498–503 events speed up: Sam is hurt. Zil is on the march. Dekka is going to kill Lana at the mine.
- p515 Lana is taken over by the Gaiaphage and shoots Edilio
- p523 Hank knocks out Little Pete during the lynch mob party and captures Astrid
- p529 Astrid knows once they lynch Hunter they 'would have drawn a line in blood down the middle of the FAYZ'.
- p546 What is now 'Lana' recognises the greater power than the Gaiaphage – Nemesis (who/ what is it do you think?) What does 'nemesis' mean in this context?
- p549 The battle between Drake and Caine. Caine destroys Drake but is it because of Diana, or the need to quell the Gaiaphage, or pure hatred?
- p556 Is there intended irony in Orc and Howard the coward saving the day at Perdido Beach?
- p572 Duck is sacrificed to save them all – how do you feel about that?

Ideas

- *I'd love it if readers used Gone [series] as a taking-off point for political or philosophical discussion.*
Michael Grant

- Albert suggests paying for work. Discuss this. Are we only motivated by what we can get? Not by altruism or a sensible sharing of resources and skills? Questions how societies operate, set up systems, values etc. Set up a class society under a similar sort of disaster. Would it be a democracy? How would it be organised and governed? How would problems be addressed?

- Moral dilemmas – Sam allows Orc to have his beer for the sake of food. Astrid is against it (p76). Who is right?

- p104 Astrid says 'All I know is you can't expect kids to just automatically behave the right way. I mean, when I was little my mom would give me a gold star when I was good and take away a privilege when I wasn't.' Discuss behaving well.

- p139 Albert's club offers socialising and relaxation to be paid for in kind instead of kids sitting feeling lonely and focusing on how hungry they are. (p142)

- p140–142 Albert and Astrid conflicting: Albert is the pragmatist while Astrid takes the high moral ground. Who is right? Sam is caught between them. Does he make the right decision or is he currying favour with Astrid?

- p248 Sam insists that there aren't going to be lines like that, between freak and normal. Dekka says, 'there are always lines'. Is she right? Why are there always lines?

- p268 'There were two kinds of kids in the FAYZ [...] kids who had been changed for the worse, and the kids who had been changed for the better. The FAYZ had changed them all.' Chart the changes of the characters. What is the balance – for good or for ill? What does that suggest about the future of the FAYZ – optimistic or pessimistic?

- p268 Quinn's loss of identity – the loss is too great.

- p338 Caine is in love with power but once he has won he doesn't know what he wants. Discuss 'Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Great men are almost always bad men' (Lord Acton 1887) Does this apply to Caine and Drake and explain why Sam keeps failing?

- p167 'That's the problem with having one person in charge. People expected you to come up with all the answers. They stopped coming up with answers for themselves.' Discuss. Why are they relying on one person? Can you think of alternatives? Better organisation? Is it evolving anyway?

Ideas continued

- p356 Is the Darkness some sort of god as Diana suggests? Is this a metaphoric critique of religion and the 'control' of belief? Is the Darkness the devil as per the poem – the beast? Does Sam represent the forces of light? Astrid is religious, as is Brittney. She sees Caine, Drake and Diana as an evil trinity.
- p464 Zil's crew is an example of how hatred develops out of lies.
- p468 Is this type of vicious, callous, inhuman thuggery more chilling and horrifying than the supernatural Darkness? The supernatural exists only in the imagination but human experience is full of cruelty and inhumanity.
- p481 'A leader had to be ruthless and manipulative, not just a thug. Great leaders had to know when to manipulate and when to confront. Most of all, a great leader had to know when to take great risks.' Discuss in terms of the implications for the future of the FAYZ. You might draw on knowledge of famous historical and contemporary leaders.
- Why was Duck ready to sacrifice himself? Do you think he hoped he would survive?
- Hunger. The title. It operates literally in terms of food but also metaphorically. Consider the Darkness's urges. What is the author inviting us to think about?

Intertextual connections

- Reading *Hunger* will remind readers of other texts, such as *Lost*, *Heroes*. Record these as the book is read.
- The author also mentions particular texts, such as *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* by Doctor Seuss; 'Tom Sawyer/Huck Finn kind of experience'; *V for Vendetta*; 'Gollum-like, "My precioussss"' (p272).
- The poem *The Second Coming* by William Butler Yeats that Astrid remembers on p332 – read the whole poem available at <http://www.online-literature.com/yeats/780/>
- Music at Albert's club – Tim Armstrong's *Into Action*.
<http://blog.kexp.org/blog/2007/07/20/song-of-the-day-tim-armstrong-into-action/>
Lucinda Williams and Bob Marley's *Three Little Birds*.
- Discuss the various purposes and effects of these references, such as to remind us the FAYZ is not hundreds of years into the future. Does recognizing these references make the reading more pleasurable? More powerful?

What next?

- There is no electricity for heating, light, cooking and Perdido Beach has descended into civil unrest.
- Does Albert's money suggest a return to order?
- The rule of law has been established – Hunter is exiled. A temporary council is established.
- But something is buried with Brittney. Where are Caine and Diana? Record all the class's predictions before you read the opening chapter of *Lies*.

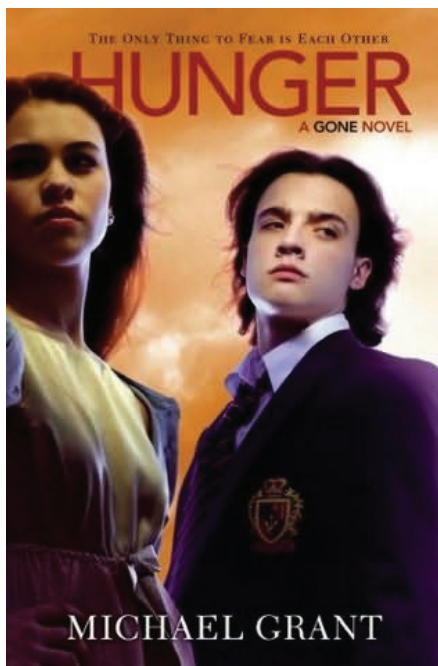
Responding to *Hunger*

- *Me? I'm a little bit Albert, a little bit Quinn and a little of Astrid. Though not the whole genius thing. Or the long blond hair. More the pedantic part. I wish I was Sam, but I doubt that I am. I guess if I was suddenly to find myself in the FAYZ I'd probably turn out to be Albert. Albert is ambitious, likes to work, stays focused and has no social life. Yep, Albert. A sad realization. Thanks for forcing me to confront my non-heroic nature.* - Michael Grant in response to the question about which character he most closely associates with.
- Invite students to answer the same question giving reasons for their choice. Is identifying with certain characters an important part of reading?
- You might also like to consider the utopia/dystopia possibilities for the next book. Look at Sam's speech on p559 and its inclusiveness, contrasted with Caine's journey to the Darkness.

Writing task

- The opening chapter of *Lies* suggests that all is not well in Perdido Beach. There are separate parts of town. Zil has triumphed in a way. And fear is what characterizes the FAYZ. Food is still an issue as is evident by the greeting. Kids drink and walk around with home-made weapons. New characters are emerging, such as Sinder, and Orsay has become the Prophetess with a manager, Nerezza.
- Write the next chapter in the story either individually or with a partner. Keep the tension.
- There are two very different cover images for *Hunger*.

This is the America cover



This is the British cover



- These are very different interpretations/representations of the story. Discuss the merits/limitations of both.
- Have students individually or in groups create their own cover images. Have a class vote on which best expresses the reading experience of *Hunger*.
- Website: <http://www.egmont.co.uk/gone/> has a trailer for *Hunger*.
- Create your own trailer and again vote on whose best matches the reading experience.



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Further reading/viewing

<http://www.egmont.co.uk/gone/michael-grant.htm> – author speaking

The Declaration and *The Resistance* by Gemma Malley

The Enemy by Charlie Higson

The Phoenix Files by Chris Morpew

The Stand by Stephen King

The Lord of the Flies by William Golding