Close Read Activity for Chapter 19 of *The Giver*

The passage I will be focusing on is chapter 19 of The Giver on page 146-151. In this section, the protagonist, Jonas realize that “release” means killing someone in the community and witnesses his father kill a “newchild” because he was an identical twin, and identical twins are prohibited in their community. When identical twins are born, they assess the twins to determine which one is stronger, which might come down to which twin weighs more. The twin that Jonas’ father kills is considered the weaker twin because he weighed a few ounces less than his twin. I know that, in the past when I have taught this novel, the kids are horrified when they realize that the community murders people so deliberately and emotionlessly. This is such a turning point of the story because everything Jonas believed about his life, his family, and his community is shattered and, this once fully obedient boy is now willing to abandon nearly every aspect of existence.

**One of my essential questions is,** “When is it better to stand alone and when is it better to conform?”

**Some focus questions I have for the novel are:**
- Who should decide what rules/laws govern us?
- What price should we be willing to pay for progress?
- What is love and what is the purpose of love?
- What is our responsibility to vulnerable human beings in our community?

Before we start reading the passage, the students will create the following chart in their interactive notebooks and will fill the chart out.

Brainstorm three times earlier in the book when the narrator has mentioned that people have been released. What has the community’s response been to those releases?

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<th>Times When People Have Been Released From the Community</th>
<th>Response From the Community</th>
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After they have had a few minutes to fill in their charts, we will break the chapter into three parts and will number each part. The first part goes from the start of the chapter until just before the recording is played. They will then answer the question, “Explain at least three specific examples from earlier in the book that show Jonas’ community lacks a strong emotional connection to each other.”

The second part goes from the video recording playing until the middle of page 151 when the screen goes blank. They will then answer the following questions:

1. What is the Giver’s attitude during the playing of the release video and give specific details about the Giver’s behavior that led you to your conclusion.
2. Explain exactly what the twin does after he is injected that reminds Jonas of the memory of the soldier.
3. Describe, in detail, Jonas’ father’s actions and comments as he performs the ceremony of release. What does that reveal about the emotional state his father is in during the release?

The third part goes from when the screen goes blank on page 151 to the end of the chapter at the bottom of that page. They then answer the following question, “Describe the type of person Rosemary is citing specific things the Giver has told Jonas about her before and at the end of chapter 19 to support your opinions.”

**Text-Dependent Questions for Chapter 19**

1. Explain at least three specific examples from earlier in the book that show Jonas’ community lacks a strong emotional connection to each other.
2. What is the Giver’s attitude during the playing of the release video and give specific details about the Giver’s behavior that led you to your conclusion.
3. Explain exactly what the twin does after he is injected that reminds Jonas of the memory of the soldier.
4. Describe, in detail, Jonas’ father’s actions and comments as he performs the ceremony of release. What does that reveal about the emotional state his father is in during the release?
5. Describe the type of person Rosemary is citing specific things the Giver has told Jonas about her before and at the end of chapter 19 to support your opinions.