Chapter 11

Sixty seconds. That's how long we're required to stand on our metal circles before the sound of a gong releases* us. Step off before the minute is up, and landmines blow your legs off. Sixty seconds to take in the ring of tributes all equidistant from the Cornucopia, a giant golden horn* shaped like a cone with a curved tail, the mouth of which is at least seven metres high, spilling over* with the things that will give us life here in the arena. Food, containers of water, weapons, medicine, garments, fire starters. Strewn around the Cornucopia are other supplies, their value decreasing* the further they are from the horn. For instance, only a few steps from my feet lies a metre square of plastic. Certainly it could be of some use in a downpour*. But there in the mouth, I can see a tent pack that would protect me from almost any sort of weather. If I had the guts* to go in and fight for it against the other twenty-three tributes. Which I have been instructed not to do.

We're on a flat, open stretch of ground. A plain of hard-packed dirt*. To my right lies a lake. To my left and back, sparse piney* woods. This is where Haymitch would want me to go. Immediately.

I hear his instructions in my head. "Just clear out, put as much distance as you can between yourselves and the others, and find a source of water."

But it's tempting, so tempting, when I see the bounty* waiting there before me. And I know that if I don't get it, someone else will. [...] Something catches my eye. There, resting on a mound of blanket rolls, is a silver sheath of arrows and a bow*, already strung, just waiting to be engaged. That's mine, I think. It's meant for me.

I'm fast. I can sprint faster than any of the girls in our school, although a couple can beat me in distance races. But this forty-metre length, this is what I am built for. I know I can get it, I know I can reach it first, but the question is, how quickly can I get out of there? By the time I've scrambled up* the packs and grabbed the weapons, others will have reached the horn, and one or two I might be able to pick off, but say there's a dozen; at that close range, they could take me down with the spears and the clubs*. Or their own powerful fists*. [...] 

I know the minute must be almost up and I'll have to decide what my strategy will be and I find myself positioning my feet to run, not away into the surrounding forests, but towards the pile, towards the bow. When suddenly I notice Peeta. He's about five tributes to my right, quite a fair distance; still, I can tell he's looking at me, and I think he's looking at me, and I think he might be shaking his head. But the sun's in my eyes, and while I'm puzzling over it the gong rings out...

TO BE CONTINUED...
1 - Read the text and draw the starting area below:

You must include the following words / names:
Katniss - Peeta - Cornucopia - 
lake - woods - metal circles - 
tent - plastic - bow and arrows.

2 - Read the text again and answer the question:

• What will happen if the tributes don’t wait for a whole minute to start from their launch pad?

• “Food, containers of water, weapons, medicine, garments, fire starters”. In your opinion, what is the most important? What would you try to grab if you were in the Games? Why?

• Where are the most valuable items? (Tick several boxes):
  □ in the woods □ near the lake □ close to the Cornucopia □ far away from the horn
  □ near the tributes □ far from the golden horn

• “If I had the guts to go in and fight for it against the other twenty-three tributes. Which I have been instructed not to do.” What should Katniss NOT do, and who advised her that, in your opinion?

• “I hear his instructions in my head. “Just clear out, put as much distance as you can between yourselves and the others, and find a source of water.”” Whose instructions was it? Rephrase his advice in simple words:
  According to ........................., Katniss should ......................... and she ought to .........................

• What item is Katniss tempted to grab? Why is it so tempting? .................................

• At the end of the text, Katniss is weighing the pros and cons of taking this item. What ideas make her hesitate?

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<tr>
<th>Yes, she should take it because...</th>
<th>No, she should not because...</th>
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• What would you do if you were in her shoes? .................................................................

3 - What happens next? Continue the story. (By the way, the start of the Hunger Games is often called “the bloodbath...”)