



The Testing

By Joelle Charbonneau

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It's graduation day for sixteen-year-old Malencia Vale, and the entire Five Lakes Colony (the former Great Lakes) is celebrating. All Cia can think about—hope for—is whether she'll be chosen for The Testing, a United Commonwealth program that selects the best and brightest new graduates to become possible leaders of the slowly revitalizing post-war civilization. When Cia is chosen, her father finally tells her about his own nightmarish half-memories of The Testing. Armed with his dire warnings ("Cia, trust no one"), she bravely heads off to Tosu City, far away from friends and family, perhaps forever. Danger, romance—and sheer terror—await.

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The Testing By Joelle Charbonneau Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Gr 7 Up—Like almost every 16-year-old in the United Commonwealth, Cia Vale hopes to be called for the Testing, her ticket out of rural Five Lakes Colony and into the University in Tosu City. Cia's father was selected, but only vaguely remembers the experience in nightmares. Her four older brothers were passed over. Just when she has resigned herself to life as a mechanic or farmer, she gets word that she is one of four students selected from Five Lakes and is expected to board the skimmer to Tosu City the next day, most likely never to return. The bulk of the book is taken up with the Testing-devious exercises to identify those with superior leadership skills as society has suffered through Seven Stages of War and desperately needs to repair the damage to living creatures and the environment. The mental and physical trials will weed out 80 percent of the candidates, leaving several maimed or dead. Cia teams up with Tomas for both practical and romantic reasons. She is independent and smart for the most part, and Tomas seems almost too good to be true. There are double-crosses, mutant life-forms, and booby traps to navigate before 20 hearty souls receive word that they have passed. Cia's story is expected to span a trilogy. The influence of *The Hunger Games* is obvious, and *The Testing* will satisfy readers who want similar dystopian adventures.—Maggie Knapp, Trinity Valley School, Fort Worth, TX
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From [Booklist](#)

Mystery writer Charbonneau throws her hat into the YA dystopian ring with this series opener that bears more than a slight resemblance to *The Hunger Games*. Sixteen-year-old newly graduated Cia Vale is selected to take part in The Testing, a process that offers the only chance at a college education and training to become part of the next generation of leaders. Cia has spent years preparing for this—it's her chance to help the United Commonwealth recover from the devastating Seven Stages War. Cia's father, who took part in The Testing himself, warns her to trust no one. Charbonneau is treading familiar ground as she sets her young heroine against a government machine that is focused, brutal, and duplicitous. Though the story moves quickly, readers might be confused as to the reasons behind the government's methods. Why the brutality against students? There is no indication that the citizens are oppressed, and they're unaware of how gruesome The Testing is. The ending will ensure interest in the next installment, but hopefully book two will deliver some answers. Grades 7-12. --Kara Dean

Review

VOYA Top Shelf for Middle School Readers 2013 list

"Electrifying."—[EntertainmentWeekly.com](#)

"*The Testing* is a chilling and devious dystopian thriller that all fans of *The Hunger Games* will simply devour. Joelle Charbonneau writes with guts and nerve but also great compassion and heart. Highly recommended."—Jonathan Maberry, *New York Times* best-selling author of *Rot & Ruin* and *Flesh & Bone*

"I galloped through this excellent read; I was in suspense the whole time."—Charlaine Harris, author of the Sookie Stackhouse series

"There is nothing standardized about this Testing. Charbonneau's imagination will surprise readers at every turn."—Jennifer M. Brown, children's editor, Shelf Awareness

"Action-packed and full of twists, *The Testing* will keep you guessing until the very last page—and desperate for the next book!"—Erica O'Rourke, author of the Torn Trilogy

* "The rising tension, skillfully executed scenarios, and rich characterizations all contribute to an exciting story bound to capture readers' imaginations. . . . Charbonneau works action, romance, intrigue, and a plausible dystopian premise into a near-flawless narrative."—*Publishers Weekly*, starred review

"Charbonneau jumps into the packed dystopia field with a mashup of Veronica Roth's *Divergent* and Suzanne Collins' Hunger Games trilogy, but she successfully makes her story her own."—*Kirkus*

"Charbonneau is a fantastic story teller and this book is a tribute to that background. The intrigue in *The Testing* passes evaluation of what a good dystopian novel should represent."—VOYA, 4Q 5P M J S

"The plot twists are well integrated and will keep readers on edge awaiting the next volume."—*Horn Book*

"The influence of *The Hunger Games* is obvious, and *The Testing* will satisfy readers who want similar dystopian adventures." —*SLJ*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

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