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DYSTOPIAN LITERATURE

- A genre of literature, set in an imagined society (usually the future) which is meant to be disturbing and unsettling
- Characterized by oppressive and dehumanizing conditions
- Displays the suspected, plausible dangers of political and social effects on the world

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ELEMENTS

- Includes a didactic message; teaches readers a moral lesson
- Suffering of society is taking place
- Shows great injustice in the world
- Explores social and political structures
- Illustrates a dehumanized society

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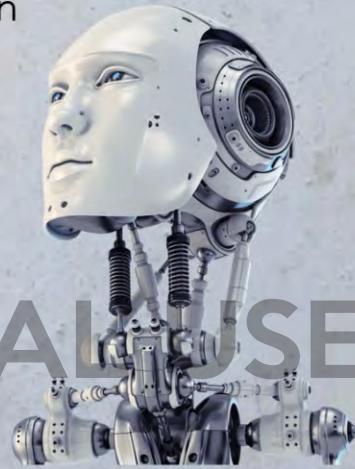
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COMMON CHARACTERISTICS

- Uniformity/conformity
- Free thought is restricted
- Citizens are under surveillance
- Fear of change
- Poverty
- Oppression
- Extreme government control, such as authoritarianism, dictatorship, or totalitarianism
- Corruption/greed
- Society is an allusion of a utopia
- Protagonist questions the current system
- Environmental destruction
- Advanced technology
- Survival
- Overcrowding
- People are desensitized
- Propaganda
- Inequality



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POPULAR TITLES

- George Orwell *1984*
- Aldous Huxley *Brave New World*
- Margaret Atwood *The Handmaid's Tale*
- Ray Bradbury *Fahrenheit 451*
- Lois Lowry *The Giver*
- H.G. Wells *The Time Machine*
- Scott Westerfield *The Uglies*
- Orson Scott Card *Ender's Game*
- James Dashner *The Maze Runner*
- Suzanne Collins *The Hunger Games*
- Ernest Cline *Ready Player One*
- George Orwell *Animal Farm*
- Cormac McCarthy *The Road*
- Veronica Roth *Divergent*
- Jeanne DuPrau *The City of Ember*

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UTOPIAN LITERATURE

• Utopia is a hypothetical society that is perfect and peaceful in the physical world. It's paradise—the ideal society!

- The author of a utopian text sets their narrative in a world that aligns with their broader ethos and personal philosophy.
- Utopian and dystopian fiction are related genres because both criticize social and political structures.
- Examples of popular utopian titles include: *Gulliver's Travels* by Jonathan Swift, *Equality* by Edward Bellamy, *Island* by Aldous Huxley, *Walden Two* by B. F. Skinner, *A Modern Utopia* by H. G. Wells, and *Republic* by Plato.

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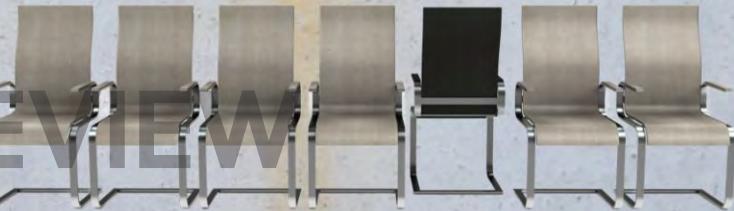
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DYSTOPIAN LITERATURE

- Foreshadowing
- Conflict
- Irony
- Allegory
- Symbolism
- Paradox



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FORESHADOWING

- Foreshadowing is a warning or hint about something that will occur later in the story
- Foreshadowing provides a dramatic effect where the audience thinks they can figure out what will happen next
- For example, in *The Giver*, Jonas notices a red apple in a black and white world. The appearance of this apple foreshadows the revelation of color in the community as well as Jonas's ability to "see beyond".
- Dystopian authors might use this technique to illustrate a warning to readers:
"If we don't change as a society,
this will be the consequence."



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CONFlict: MAN VS. SOCIETY

- A type of external conflict when the main character has a strong belief against the majority of the community
- The protagonist will object or fight against society, breaking the rules; this develops the main conflict in the story and propels the plot
- For example, in Veronica Roth's *Divergent*, The protagonist, Beatrice struggles against the rigid faction system. She doesn't fit neatly into one faction's mold and is labeled "divergent."

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IRONY

- When something occurs that is completely different or opposite than what is expected
- Irony is used to display the vast change and problems that can take place in a society if led down a certain path
- Illustrates the dark, futuristic setting
- For example, in Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451*, a fireman's job is to burn books. They start fires as opposed to put them out (in an attempt to ban freedom of thought).



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ALLEGORY

- Allegories are stories, poems, or art that criticize current events, people, religion, or governmental policies in a subtle way
- Allegories are a type of extended metaphor that can entail multiple hidden messages
- Characters and events equate to a bigger message
- Dystopias are almost always allegories
(but not all allegories are dystopias)
- For example, in *Animal Farm* by George Orwell, different farm animals represent different societal classes and political figures during the Russian Revolution and the rise of Stalinism.



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SYMBOLISM

- Because dystopian literature can be riddled with criticisms about society, authors use symbols to encrypt their message in a less obvious way
- Symbolism is where an object, person, or situation in a story has another meaning other than its literal, surface meaning
- The deeper meaning that is implied is essential to the greater context of the whole story
- For example, in *The Hunger Games*, the Mockingjay becomes a symbol of defiance and rebellion against the Capitol's tyranny.

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PARADOX

- A statement that contains contradictory ideas, that appear both true and untrue at the same time.
- Have you ever heard the saying “less is more” ?
- Often used in literature to reveal a truth that is hidden and challenge the reader’s way of thinking
- For example, in 1984 by George Orwell, one of the Party’s slogans is "War is Peace." This paradoxical statement suggests that perpetual war is a tool for maintaining domestic stability.

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Name:

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Introduction to Dystopian Literature
Guided Notes

What is Dystopian Literature?

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Elements of Dystopian Literature

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Common Characteristics Dystopian Literature

Utopian Literature

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Foreshadowing

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Allegory

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Symbolism

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Paradox

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