**Dystopias: Definition and Characteristics**

**Utopia:** A place, state, or condition that is ideally perfect in respect of politics, laws, customs, and conditions.

**Dystopia:** A , imagined universe in which oppressive societal and the illusion of a perfect society are maintained through corporate, bureaucratic, technological, moral, or totalitarian control. , through an exaggerated worst-case scenario, make a criticism about a current trend, societal norm, or political system.

**Characteristics of a Dystopian Society**

• is used to control the citizens of society.

• Information, independent thought, and freedom are .

• A figurehead or concept is by the citizens of the society.

• Citizens are perceived to be under constant .

• Citizens have a of the outside world.

• Citizens live in a state.

• The world is banished and distrusted.

• Citizens conform to uniform expectations. and dissent are bad.

• The society is an of a perfect utopian world.

**Types of Dystopian Controls**

Most dystopian works present a world in which oppressive societal control and the illusion of a perfect society are maintained through one or more of the following types of controls:

• Corporate control: One or more large corporations control society through , and/or .

• Bureaucratic control: Society is controlled by a mindless bureaucracy through a tangle of red tape, relentless regulations, and .

• Technological control: Society is controlled by technology—through computers, robots, and/or . Examples include *The Matrix*, *The Terminator*, and *I, Robot*.

• Philosophical/religious control: Society is controlled by philosophical or religious ideology often enforced through a dictatorship or theocratic government.

**The Dystopian**

• often feels trapped and is struggling to .

• the existing social and political systems.

• believes or feels that something is with the society in which he or she lives.

• helps the recognizes the negative aspects of the dystopian world through his or her perspective.

**Words you might need:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **bureaucracy:** | A large group of people who are involved in running a government but who are not elected and/or A system of government or business that has many complicated rules and ways of doing things |
| **oppression** | unjust or cruel exercise of authority or power |
| **norms:** | standards of proper or acceptable behavior |
| **dissent** | To publicly disagree with an official opinion, decision, or set of beliefs |
| **Aspect** | The way a person, place, or thing appears |
| **banish** | To force (someone) to leave a country as punishment |
| **scenario** | A description of what could possibly happen |
| **propaganda** |  Ideas or statements that are often false or exaggerated and that are spread in order to help a cause, a political leader, a government, etc. |
| **theocracy** | a form of government in which a country is ruled by religious leaders and/or a country that is ruled by religious leaders |
| **dictatorship** | Rule, control, or leadership by one person with total power and/or a government or country in which total power is held by a dictator or a small group |
| **philosophy** | a set of ideas about how to do something or how to live |

**2 column notes**

**Utopia:** A place, state, or condition that is ideally perfect in respect of politics, laws, customs, and conditions.

**Dystopia:** A futuristic, imagined universe in which oppressive societal control and the illusion of a perfect society are maintained through corporate, bureaucratic, technological, moral, or totalitarian control. Dystopias, through an exaggerated worst-case scenario, make a criticism about a current trend, societal norm, or political system.

**What is it?**

Definition:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Word

Examples Non-Examples

Illustration

**Characteristics of a Dystopian Society**

• Propaganda is used to control the citizens of society.

• Information, independent thought, and freedom are restricted.

• A figurehead or concept is worshipped by the citizens of the society.

• Citizens are perceived to be under constant surveillance.

• Citizens have a fear of the outside world.

• Citizens live in a dehumanized state.

• The natural world is banished and distrusted.

• Citizens conform to uniform expectations. Individuality and dissent are bad.

• The society is an illusion of a perfect utopian world.



**Cluster**

**Types of Dystopian Controls**

Most dystopian works present a world in which oppressive societal control and the illusion of a perfect society are maintained through one or more of the following types of controls:

• **Corporate control**: One or more large corporations control society through products, advertising, and/or the media. Examples include *Minority Report* and *Running Man*.

• **Bureaucratic control**: Society is controlled by a mindless bureaucracy through a tangle of red tape, relentless regulations, and incompetent government officials. Examples in film include *Brazil*.

• **Technological control:** Society is controlled by technology—through computers, robots, and/or scientific means. Examples include *The Matrix*, *The Terminator*, and *I, Robot*.

• **Philosophical/religious control:** Society is controlled by philosophical or religious ideology often enforced through a dictatorship or theocratic government.

Topic/Main Idea

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
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|  |  |  |  |

**Hierarchical chart**

**The Dystopian Protagonist**

* often feels trapped and is struggling to escape.
* questions the existing social and political systems.
* believes or feels that something is terribly wrong with the society in which he or she lives.
* helps the audience recognizes the negative aspects of the dystopian world through his or her perspective.

Supporting details

Main Idea

 Supporting details

**Herringbone**