Dystopian Societies in Adolescent Literature: Can Compliance and Freedom Coexist Peacefully In A Dark, Dystopian World?

Introduction

I Look at the World

By: Langston Hughes

I look at the world

From awakening eyes in a black face—

And this is what I see:

This fenced-off narrow space

Assigned to me.

I look then at the silly walls

Through dark eyes in a dark face—

And this is what I know:

That all these walls oppression builds

Will have to go!

I look at my own body

With eyes no longer blind—

And I see that my own hands can make

The world that's in my mind.

Then let us hurry, comrades,

The road to find. [1]

-Langston Hughes

Twentieth and twenty-first century philosophers, movie producers, novelists, and poets have created an upsurge of utopian thought the world has seldom seen or read before. Sometimes I wonder what deceased, world-renowned authors like Langston Hughes would make of the recent expansion in dystopian literature and films. While their visions have influenced authors and audiences across the world to enjoy this literary subgenre, the true purpose of their works may have been to emphasize the need for a utopian escape, as evidenced in Langston Hughes' last stanza of *I Look at the World*[2] . Works such as this, make us question; could it be that we can achieve freedom from oppression and control if we just "find the road"? Could it be that an alternative ideal society grounded in equality and liberty is achievable? Could it be that there is a possibility for a true utopia in a dark, dystopian world?

As an English teacher, I want my students to become analyzers of dystopian themes in literature and the society in which they live in order to explore the answers to the aforementioned questions. As they begin to view the world through the lens of a philosopher, movie producer, poet, novelist, and most importantly, a learner, they will begin to understand that a dystopia isn't a future to be diverted; it is unfortunately what is already happening in the world they inhabit. Hopefully, their new understanding of the world will enlighten them to the shortcomings of our society and the potential for our world to shift towards its undeniable destiny – a true utopia.

POLYTECH High School is the only K-12 school in POLYTECH School District. In addition, it has multiple feeder schools. This is because our comprehensive high school serves all of the middle schools in our county, by law. We receive roughly 300 students from 11 middle schools in Kent County, Delaware with different educational needs, disabilities, strengths, weaknesses, learning styles, and socioeconomic backgrounds. While our population of entering ninth graders is diverse, overtime, I have noticed a general decline in students with adequate reading abilities and motivation for reading literature.

Therefore, throughout my unit I will address the Common Core State Standards for ninth grade English Language Arts with special focus on reading literature with connected nonfiction texts. My unit's lessons are planned for daily 85-minute periods as a part of our block-scheduling model. The students to whom this unit is directed are ninth grade students who read on grade level or slightly above or below grade level. The class comes to approximately 50-55% female and 45-50% male. The class size varies but is typically around 22-25 students.

The Dystopian Literature Unit will be the second unit out of six taught this upcoming school year to my English I classes. They will be Literary Texts and Poetry, Dystopian Literature, Informational Texts, Argument and Persuasion, Shakespearian Drama, and APA Research. Each of these units will address skills from the Common Core State Standards that students need to learn by the end of ninth grade. The texts I will be using in the Dystopian Literature Unit are: *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins, *The Maze Runner* by James Dashner, *Divergent* by Veronica Roth, *The Giver* by Lois Lowry, and *Matched* by Ally Condie.

Rationale

Our high school English curriculum maps were finalized last school year, but I feel they could use further improvement. With the recent shift in balance of nonfiction texts representing 70% of what is read at the high school level and 30% fiction, it can be difficult to understand that this is a cross-curricular implementation according to the Common Core State Standards. My fellow colleagues and I have made the case that many of the books once used as great literature at our high school have low lexile scores typically ranging from 650 to 1250. While that is true in most cases, still, that does not mean the readability or complexity of these stories are too low or simple for students to be able to achieve the skills they must learn based on the Common Core State Standards. The use of novels in the classroom should be just as "common" as it was before the Common Core State Standards because of the complexity of their themes and potential for helping students to grow as readers.

So, I've decided to teach a literature-based dystopian novel unit based on common and complex themes that each book shares. Students will participate in an open discussion of unabridged adolescent dystopian novels in literature circles. Groups will be based on choice surveys administered to them at the beginning of the school year asking them about their previous experiences (or lack thereof) with each book and their rating of each book based on how interested they are in reading each one. It is my hope that my students will improve their reading comprehension strategies so that they may eventually interpret evidence from texts at a higher level.

In this unit, our class will explore what "dystopia" means, and whether specific parallels exist between certain dystopian societies and our society, and whether this is a cause for concern. We will focus on what it means to be a reluctant member of a society that persecutes its citizens. I am teaching this unit so that students will connect to characters that had the odds against them and were able to overcome oppressive governmental control with intelligence, bravery, and hope. It is important for students to learn that not every society is ideal and fairness and equality are not the standard in every society.

A unit on dystopian literature can be valuable for various reasons. First, it forces students to consider the liberties they've been afforded and how their lives could be very different. Often times, students fail to appreciate how fortunate they are to have fair and equal constitutional rights, and learning about dystopias will help them understand that not all societies are afforded the same rights and liberties they likely take for granted so often in their lives.

Second, as students transition into high school, it is important that they begin to discuss, read, and write about controversial topics that are found in dystopian literature such as attainment of the American Dream, responsibility to society and authority, freedom of choice, the value of the individual, power, and hope, to name a few. It will be my job to help students understand how these themes are addressed in each novel by improving their ability to read texts critically, question the text, use other texts for added understanding, and analyze texts. The experiences they bring to the classroom, as readers, their understandings, and personal belief systems will add value to our discussions about the readings.

Lastly, what is wonderful about these particular novels is that each of them is part of a series. So, when students read and fall in love with the themes of one book, they can read the other books in the series to continue exploring dystopian themes and improving their close reading skills while engaged in such meaningful literature.

As a result of teaching my dystopian literature unit, I anticipate that students will have evolved opinions, ideas, and understandings about dystopian societies and their relationship with American culture. It will only be a few years before my ninth grade students become adult members of American culture, and I want them to be productive, alert, and high-functioning members of our country. I can foster these skills in my students by empowering them to take action in our world, based on their new understandings they have about complex social and political issues in our society.

Student Objectives

My unit will address several of the objectives of a ninth grade English classroom. The first objective my unit addresses states that students will explore the genre of dystopian literature. The second objective my unit addresses states that students will analyze how different authors approach dystopian themes. The third objective my unit addresses states that students will collaborate in a group setting to learn about themes in dystopian societies. These objectives work because they help students to analyze the similarities and differences between fictional and real life dystopias. In doing so, students will be able to collaboratively and independently deepen their understanding of dystopian themes and the successes and pitfalls of our own society. It important that students interpret different dystopian themes and concepts through in class discussions, writing exercises, and an end of unit project in which they can synthesize information learned throughout the unit. Writing about different pieces of literature will help students to process concepts learned in class and strengthen their writing abilities. It is my hope that these objectives will drive my students to become consumers of literature and research in order to one day become human rights activists in a variety of ways, even if it simply means sharing knowledge.

Teaching Strategies

The strategies that I use in this lesson are not that far removed from most strategies that teachers use in any high school English classroom. While many English teachers engage students in powerful literature through short stories, riveting nonfiction texts, and beautiful poetry, it seems novels are beginning to fall by the wayside because of the shift in nonfiction versus fiction at the secondary level as evidenced by the Common Core State Standards for ELA-literacy.

Choice Survey

The first strategy that will be used in this unit is called a "choice survey" (See Appendix 1). This will require that students complete a survey on paper with questions asking them about which of the five dystopian novels they've read before, seen before, and would like to read for this unit. They will have to rank each book from #1-5 according to which book they want to read the most and which the least. #1 will be for students' first choices and #5 will be for students' 5th choices. It is also imperative that I consider their reading levels and relationships with each other when placing students in groups of four or five. Students who are too talkative with one another will not be placed together. Students who are very low will not all be placed in the group. They will be placed with stronger readers so that they do not struggle to read their given novels.

Think-Pair-Share

The activities set up throughout this unit require students to be familiar with a discussion model. My classroom is set up in the form of two very long tables with students on both sides of them. They will be prompted to turn to the partners sitting right next to them and across the table in order to think-pair-share when discussing important themes of their assigned novels. This strategy, the second strategy of my unit, is called "Think-Pair-Share". It was designed to differentiate instruction by providing students time and structure in order to think about topics and themes covered in texts and share their ideas with a partner. Think-pair-share reinforces classroom participation by encouraging deep thought, conversational skills, and cooperative learning. This strategy is more effective in eliciting more student participation than when a teacher poses a question and students raise their hands to respond to his or her question. All students get the opportunity to share their thoughts with someone rather than competing to be called on. In other words, this discussion model promotes the speaking and listening strand of the Common Core State Standards and encourages student-to-student interactions in addition to the tradition model of discussions between the student and teacher alone.

Literature Circles

The next strategy that will be used in this unit is referred to as "literature circles". This teaching approach is a collaborative and student-centered reading strategy that utilizes the book club format to promote in-depth literature discussions of meaningful texts.[3] Students gather together with others who are reading the same text to discuss their assigned novel. Students are then introduced to their five separate roles in the literature circles: discussion leader, diction detective, connector, reporter, and illustrator.

The Discussion Director is the group facilitator for the day. The Discussion Director's job is to keep everyone on task while facilitating effective communication between peers and communicating with the teacher about the group's progress when necessary. The Discussion Director ensures that all group members get to participate and are respected. The Discussion Director may also provide clarification about directions, guidelines, and ideas shared when needed.[4]

The Reporter's job is to identify and report on the key points of the assigned section. They are to make a list or write a summary that describes how the author develops the setting, plot, and character in this section of the book. Then, reporters will share their work with other group members at the beginning of the meeting to help them focus on the key plot elements in the read chapters.[5]

The Diction Detective's role is to examine the vocabulary and language (word choice) used in the assigned chapters of their group's novel. These students must search for words, phrases, and portions of text that are descriptive, meaningful, interesting, comical, thought-provoking, shocking, or confusing.[6]

The Connector makes connections between the events of the novel and other people, places, events in school, the community, other books or articles, movies, and the world. The connector can also make connections to other portions of the novel, just as long as they are significant. For instance, the connector may make a connection between conflicts experienced by the main character in one chapter and connect it to a solution read about in a future chapter while detailing what this connection is meaningful to a theme in the novel.[7]

The Artist's role is to draw the most important event read about in the novel. It can be a cartoon, diagram, chart, or some other interpretation of the events of the chapters read. Students will use show their illustration

to the group without any explanation during discussion time. Each student will be given time to comment on their artist's picture. This will allow group members to guess what is happening in the picture, which will in turn build further understanding of the portions of text they read. After all students have commented and/or guessed what is happening in the picture, the artist will explain what is happening in the picture and what evidence helped them to illustrate it.[8]

Double-Entry Journal

Another strategy that will strengthen the implementation of this unit is the use of a double-entry journal. Double-Entry Journaling enables them to become more actively engaged with the text they are reading. Students record their responses to text as they close read by first recording quotes or sentences from their assigned reading to which they will respond later with their reactions to them. Double-Entry Journaling improves students' reading comprehension, vocabulary use, and content retention. Through reading, writing, and discussion of texts and writing, students are able to collaborate with peers and their teacher in order to deepen their understanding of literature.[9]

Jigsaw

The last strategy I plan to use in my instruction is called jigsaw. Jigsaw is a highly effective method for group sharing and learning of specific content and literature. This strategy helps students work collaboratively and fosters responsibility because each student becomes responsible for each other's learning by trying to master content in order to share it effectively. First, students must complete their assigned reading. Then, they must meet with others assigned to the same topic for about 20 – 30 minutes. The teacher may also choose to have them share about the same topic but from different texts. Students will then discuss the material in order to identify pertinent or interesting information worth bringing back to their "home groups" to instruct them about information that was learned or heard while in their "expert groups". Each student must teach what was learned to the other "home group" members.[10]

What is Dystopian Literature and Why Should We Teach It?

In order to teach this unit effectively, teachers must have a basic understanding of what dystopian literature is and why, in some ways, it is a reflection of our society's environmental, political, and social state of being. First, it is important to understanding the complexities of a dystopian culture and how utopian culture can result in one.

The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines "dystopia" as, "An imagined place or state in which everything is unpleasant or bad." [11] Simply put, it is a futuristic, or present day place in which society is controlled in undesired ways. *Wikipedia* defines dystopia as, "The idea of a society generally of a speculative future, characterized by negative and anti-utopian elements varying from environmental, or political/social issues." The word itself is derived from the Greek, "dys," which means bad or difficult. "Topia," is a place or landscape. But, how can a society become a dystopia?[12]

A "utopia" is an ideal or perfect society in present day or future times, but is thought to be unachievable or non-existing. It is a vision of a much-improved world not yet in existence but better than the society we

currently live in. Though this very concept is revolutionary, "utopia" is often times referred to as "no place" because many of its characteristics are beyond actualization. While the events in adolescent dystopian literature are often times exaggerated forms of tyranny and suffering, at the core, there is truth in them.[13]

In our world, we know the suffering caused by utopias in history that were much better characterized as dystopias: Stalin's Soviet Union, Maoist China, and of course, Nazi Germany. Existing in each society were oppressive governmental rule and the unfortunate "have-nots", which led to death and destruction of the masses. So, history has shown us that utopias are dystopias in disguise: a wolf in sheep's clothing or the wolf with sharp teeth, piercing eyes, and no sympathy for the sheep he hunts. The wolf's utopia is the sheep's dystopia or disguised one. This means that history has also proven that utopias, while justifiable in theory, are not sustainable in reality. Therefore, they are destined to fail.

So, why should students read and understand adolescent dystopian literature? Books are our way of examining the faults in our society and lives in comparison to the utopia we all deep down wish to achieve, though it is unachievable. Dystopian literature, specifically, helps us to realize the immoral nature of our society as well as its potential to change. Mankind has experienced oppression, slavery, war, death, and utter ruin that we never thought would come to pass. If books could have revealed the events of history before their arrival, we'd be reading more dystopian literature to learn more about historical dystopian events so that we could prevent further destruction of human society.

Further, while dystopian novels can dishearten even the most highly motivated human rights activist, there is truth hidden in the pages of dystopian literature that depicts a very unfortunate but inevitable future world. History has shown us that our governments and military are capable of creating oppressive laws and enforcing them, a reality that our students have or will come to accept with maturity and learning. Our society is far from perfect, and dystopian literature helps our students to acknowledge the imperfections in our world and analyze why they exist, if we're headed for dystopian conflicts, and what we can do to thwart further contamination of our society.

While future improvements to society are integral to the sustainability of mankind, it is important to consider how students' own lives motivate them to read and learn from dystopian literature. Adolescent readers are able to relate with characters and events and connect aspects of their lives to the novel. These connections are a particularly important part of adolescents' experiences because they are going through a transition from childhood to adulthood. In this transition, adolescents experience similar conflicts with conformity, rebellion, and personal identity. Adolescents are able to recognize that there are other teenagers going through similar transitions and this allows them to come to terms with their place and purpose in our world. They finally begin to realize that this stage in life presents the best opportunity for identity exploration and their purpose in society. Adolescents finally begin to discover different possibilities for changing the world through integration of their own identities with their responsibilities to society and themselves.

Characteristics of Dystopian Literature

There are certain characteristics of dystopian literature that set it apart from other types of fiction. These characteristics include the restriction of information, independent thought, and freedom. Totalitarian control prevents the people in the story from acting and speaking freely. This control is typically an authoritarian

government within a society that is characterized by absolute power over the lives of its citizens. This type of system is rarely, if ever, challenged. In many dystopian novels, the people are constantly watched and in fear of consequences that may be given if they so choose to rebel against the laws of their government. They are controlled by rules, caste systems, and specialized jobs, and therefore, must conform to the expectations of the government. As we already know, conformity conflicts with citizens' rights to expression, choice, and individuality.

The idea of specialization was notably introduced in Greek philosopher Plato's *The Republic*, in which he emphasizes that each member of society is most suitable for a specific role in society and must remain in each of their places.[14] Specialization guarantees that all people remain in their specific roles in society without power or influence to interfere with governmental rule. People in this society are convinced that this is a true utopia, when in fact it is oppressive, demoralizing, and unwanted – which is the true definition of a dystopia.

On the other hand, in order to understand the complex nature of a dystopia, one must understand a utopia and its very dissimilar characteristics. The modern world "utopia" was first popularized in English philosopher Thomas More's 16th century book, *Utopia*. In this narrative, Portuguese traveler Raphael Hythloday contrasts the laws and customs of 16th century Europe while admiring the ideal characteristics of the island of Utopia. In *Utopia*, and in a utopian society, public welfare, selflessness, peace, tolerance, and specialization, as stated in Plato's work, are the common goals of government and people.[15] There are no laws, private poverty, crime, war, or oppression. However, not even the paradise described in *Utopia* relinquished control and avoided laws that would dictate the actions of the utopians.

In *Paradise Lost*, John Milton narrates his poem about the loss of what was supposed to be the first utopia known to man, the Garden of Eden. Unfortunately, the sins of Adam and Eve when tempted by Satan's lies of knowledge and freedom destroyed the only utopia that Earth had ever known and *will* ever know. Satan achieved his mission, to introduce sin to the world through manipulation and disempowerment of God's people.[16] Therefore, it is important to note that even in a utopian society, there will always be people who must sacrifice their freedoms (or are tricked into giving them up) for the hidden agenda of those with power and influence. That leaves us to conclude that a utopia can never really exist in today's age, and creating a utopia means creating a dystopia in place of it.

Types of Dystopian Controls

Dystopian societies are maintained through one or more dystopian controls that oppress the weaker class in those societies. They include corporate control, bureaucratic control, technological control, and philosophical/religious control. In a dystopian society that imposes corporate control on its people, corporations have dictatorship over products, advertising, and media. Bureaucratic control involves governmental control of policies and regulations that impose on the individuality and desired lifestyle of the people. Technological control is achieved through technological means, including computers, cellphones, robots, and/or other forms of technology. A dystopian government that uses philosophical or religious control over its people, controls the beliefs and religious ideologies of its people.[17]

Themes in Dystopian Literature

There are several themes that should be discussed when teaching dystopian literature. The first is politics. As stated before, dystopias are defined by governmental rule that invites negative feelings from its citizens. This pessimism typically leads to an uprising or revolution of the oppressed members of society. These people are referred to as protagonists. Another theme found in dystopian literature is economics. The government controls the economy by deciding whom works, what jobs they have, and how much money they make, if any. This controlled economic system leads to deprivation of meaningful job responsibilities, minimal compensation, and no opportunity for career advancement. Money and opportunity are reserved for the elite. Social stratification is yet another theme found in dystopian literature. Dystopian societies are typically divided into the very privileged ruling class and the overworked working class. The lower class often times is conditioned for job satisfaction and acceptance of the difficulties that come with being a part of the working class.[18]

In many dystopian novels, you will also find that family is a central theme of the book. Families are often, eliminated from the beginning as yet another way to control people through assignment and social systems. As a theme, religion can play a positive or negative role in dystopian literature. In certain novels, religious groups are in favor of more rights and freedoms for the working class. In others, religious groups are the oppressive government who enforces totalitarian control on the helpless. Often times in dystopian literature, the government will try to strip its' society's citizens of their identities in order to reprogram them to accept being ruled. Identity is a theme that shows up many times in dystopian literature.[19]

Violence is also common in this genre of literature. Eventually the working class becomes tired of being controlled and an uprising ensues. This war is typically the climax of the story, but not always. Though subtle in some novels, nature can also be a theme in dystopian novels. Often times, dystopian settings will be urban or rural, desolate, polluted, and/or dangerous. Many of them depict a post-apocalyptic era where a major global change has happened, the atmosphere has been contaminated, or nature is controlled like everything else. It shouldn't be surprising that in this genre, the main characters or the entire working class must live underground at some point in the book. Finally, technology is also a theme found in dystopian novels. Technology, instead of having a positive effect on human society, poses a threat to the liberties of the lower class of those living in a dystopia. Technology is used to reinforce hierarchies, control the spread and use of information, and even destroy nature. It can also be true that technology acts as its own ruler with all of the people acting as the oppressed lower class. Inventions and advancements in technology merely create more control of the working class.[20]

Why Pair Fiction and Nonfiction?

I have previously discussed the Common Core State Standards English Language Arts and Literacy demands for use of fiction and nonfiction in the high school classroom. The Common Core calls for what seems to be a significant increase in informational texts, but is that entirely true? While the balance of informational texts is 70% nonfiction and 30% fiction at the secondary level, the other content area classes share in this responsibility to make sure that students are reading more informational texts than fiction across the

curriculum.[21] That isn't the only message we should take away from the 70/30 divide in Common Core for English Language Arts. This new distribution should encourage teachers to limit the amount of unnecessary literary works used in the classroom.

While reading for joy should remain our students' purpose for reading, the literary texts we use in the classroom as instructional pieces should evoke rich discussions and deeper understanding of themes and content in all subgenre of literature used. They should also increase and improve students' use of reading strategies when encountering any literary work. This is the perfect opportunity to hone in on the necessary works and skills students need to have in order to extend their learning and become lifelong consumers of literature. Therefore, pairing fiction and nonfiction enables teachers to meet several lesson goals in a shorter amount of time.

If teachers can teach skills that are present in both genres, they can help students make the connection between literature and informational texts. For instance, information about the real world setting of a literary work read in class can help deepen students' understanding of the story itself *and* prepare them for learning about how setting evokes emotions in the reader. Incidentally, setting in dystopian literature is very important because it is the author's way of painting a vivid picture of the culture in which the people of that society live.[22] The setting alone can be very telling about the mayhem in a particular society. When students take special interest in specific topics read about in fiction (i.e. war, nature, society, government, etc.) they become curious about the real events that inspired those literary works. Helping students to make scientific or historical connections between topics in fiction and nonfiction helps students to deepen their understanding of the connection between *all* content areas in order to broaden and deepen their understanding of background knowledge and new knowledge.

Moreover, as students become older, it is expected that they develop the endurance to read longer works in order to synthesize a wide range of specific information or literary elements. This is best achieved with novels. However, not all novels have the broad and deep information students need to best understand the complex themes they examine. Because of this, it is important to supplement novels with other texts that are more informative or fill in gaps of information needed for full textual understanding.

Regarding dystopian novels specifically, it is true that they are of better use in the secondary classroom than simply having students read dystopian articles or shorter texts about utopias and dystopias. This is true because students need the full scope of events that are possible in a dystopian society, or even our society. For example, our society has never had annual televised events where the "Capitol" or government selects children to kill each other in a game of survival. However, societies around the world have engaged in forced warfare, decision-making influenced by social classes and power, and technological advances that have jeopardized citizens' rights to privacy, all of which are present in the novels of this unit. In this respect, dystopian literature is important because it mirrors the harsh truths of our own society *and* depicts the reality that our society may one day become very similar to many of the dystopian societies we read about in fiction. In brief, dystopian literature is the bridge between fiction and nonfiction. It crosses freely between fiction and nonfiction, utopian culture being fictional and dystopian culture being more realistic, or nonfiction.

Classroom Activities

Unit Essential Questions and Discussion Prompts

1. Can a society ever achieve a utopia?
2. How are utopian and dystopian societies similar and dissimilar?
3. What are your own visions and ideas for a perfect world?
4. What can someone do when faced with lack of power and choice?
5. What kind of responsibility does a person have to society when he disagrees with authority?
6. What is the American Dream? Could it be different for different people?
7. Is the American Dream achievable for a member of a dystopian society?
8. How do people show resilience in the face of extreme oppression?
9. What is the value of having differences?
10. Why would a community choose to eliminate differences?
11. How would our world change if everyone were the same?
12. How do people's differences impact your life?
13. How do multiple authors address themes in dystopian literature?
14. Why is dystopian literature prevalent today?

Week One

Day 1 – Utopia and Dystopia

Before class, I will place four statement posters ("Strongly Agree," "Agree Somewhat," "Disagree Somewhat," and "Strongly Disagree") in the corners of my classroom. Students will move around to stand beneath the statements with which they most agree or relate. I will read the following statements aloud:

1. In an ideal society, everyone is equal.
2. It is better to be ignorant and happy than to be aware and upset.
3. Rules exist to help us live our lives properly.
4. The police should be allowed to do whatever they can to protect the community.
5. Schools are places where teens are subject to dress codes, have few free speech rights, and are constantly under surveillance, where they rise and sit at the sound of a bell. This is too controlling.
6. It is okay to upset some people as long as you're doing what is best for society.
7. If you know you are right, you shouldn't listen to anyone else.
8. We should understand how small and powerless we really are against the immense forces that control our existence.

I will use each statement to discuss with students their beliefs about our societies and what would make an ideal society versus an unwanted society. A word wall that students and I will add to throughout the unit will be made available for students to refer to when discussing and writing about dystopian literature. I will then have students view the following film clips and brainstorm individually about the two different societies they see. The first clips are "The Real World" from *The Matrix and "Matrix – Desert of the Real"* which depict the *same controlling society. The links are* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SF2iImTqaTs *and* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tgBViHeiSKM*. The clip which depicts a perfect society is "Pandora Discovered" from Avatar, which students will view using the following link:* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GBGDmin_38E*. I will ask students to compare the societies in each clip to*

each other.

After placing them in their literature circle groups, I will have them come up with a group definition for the terms "utopia" and "dystopia" and write the definitions on the poster in a T-chart with the definitions and characteristics of both societies inside of the T-chart. After discussion, students will use group and class discussions to complete the *Utopia/Dystopia Characteristics* chart (See Appendix 2). I will pass out the *Dystopias: Definitions and Characteristics* sheet, which can be found by searching for it online. Its purpose is to aid in their completion of the aforementioned worksheet after introducing the actual definitions of "utopia" and "dystopia".

Day 2 – Literature Circles

Students will meet in their literature circles with their assigned books. I will instruct students to read either *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins – Chapter 1, *The Maze Runner* by James Dashner – Chapters 1-3, *Divergent* by Veronica Roth – Chapter 1, *The Giver* by Lois Lowry – Chapter 1, or *Matched* by Ally Condie – Chapter 1, depending on their literature circle groups. They will be assigned the following roles and given the following worksheets: *Discussion Leader,Diction Detective, Connector*, and *Artist*, which can all be found online. As students fulfill their roles while reading, they must also jot down notes about the general plot of the story and any questions or connections they may have in their individual *double-entry journals*, which can be found by searching online for it. The *Reading Schedule* can also be found online and will be used as reference to follow each day's activities accurately.

Day 3 – Rights of Social Classes

I will show the following film clip: *Joker's Social Experiment* found at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K4GAQtGtd_0&spfreload=10 in order to start a discussion with students about the treatment of people in different social classes and their perceived rights and privileges based on how they are defined. It is important for students to understand how the working or perceived lower class is afforded less privileges and rights than the ruling or upper class based on laws and/or societal expectations. I will also prompt students to think of other examples in American society where there are at least two different classes of people and they are treated differently. We will discuss the pros and cons of establishing different social classes. I will then prompt students to discuss what classes have already been established in their books and to jot them down in their double entry journals. If they do not know as of yet, I will instruct them to read to find out about the social classes established in their readings.

On this day, I will instruct students to read either *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins – Chapters 2-3, *The Maze Runner* by James Dashner – Chapters 4-6, *Divergent* by Veronica Roth – Chapters 2-3, *The Giver* by Lois Lowry – Chapters 2, or *Matched* by Ally Condie – Chapters 2-3. Students will be given another one of the five literature circle roles and will be told that they are to complete each of the five literature circle roles per week and will share their double entry journal with their group members throughout the week and on Friday with a student from a different group. After they have read their specific chapters, responded on their literature circle worksheets, and completed personal and peer double entries, I will discuss with them the assignments for the next 3-½ weeks. In addition to the aforementioned readings and literature circle assignments, they include comparing their understanding of the chapters they've read to the major concepts in either a weekly dystopian video clip (every Monday and Wednesday) or group articles (every Tuesday and Thursday) that highlight dystopian societies and themes. Assessments include daily peer and teacher evaluations as well as an end of unit Dystopian Unit Final project. Class discussion will be about what aspects of life in students' novels are controlled. We will also discuss whom controls them and why in order to further establish classes of

people and emphasize defining characteristics of dystopian society.

Day 4 - Control

Students will begin the period by reading *The Declaration of Independence*. In their groups and as a class, we will discuss _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ of control and restriction and how that theme is represented in their specific novels. We will discuss the specific restrictions (taxes) the British placed on the American colonies and how this led to the Declaration of Independence and American Revolution. We will also discuss how this document and accompanied events are similar to the laws and restrictions created to control the societies in their own novels. Then, **I will instruct students to read either** *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins – Chapter 4, *The Maze Runner* by James Dashner – Chapters 7-9, *Divergent* by Veronica Roth – Chapter 4-5, *The Giver* by Lois Lowry – Chapters 3, or *Matched* by Ally Condie – Chapters 4-5. Students will complete literature circle role sheets and double entries that they will share with peers when finished note-taking. Class discussion will focus on the types of societies that the communities in each of the five novels are a part of. We will use a six-part venn diagram to take notes on the board after groups have discussed and jotted down notes about the government, behaviors, and values of each novel's society. We will discuss how this further perpetuates dystopian environments in each society and how their societies are similar and different from our own. Students will be prompted to record discussion points in their double-entry journals.

Day 5 - Jigsaw

I will instruct students to read either *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins – Chapters 5-6, *The Maze Runner* by James Dashner – Chapters 10-12, *Divergent* by Veronica Roth – Chapters 6-7, *The Giver* by Lois Lowry – Chapter 4, or *Matched* by Ally Condie – Chapters 6-7. During each student's literature circle discussion, they will trade their double entry journals with another group member and respond to his/her entry in the Peer Response column as they've done throughout the week. I will instruct students to then use their double entry journals and peer responses as talking points to share the events, important passages, quotes, and opinions about the plot so far with group members in another group through an activity called *Jigsaw*. Students will meet with their "expert groups" who all have the same role within their own "home groups" but have read and completed double entry journals on different novels. Every Friday, students will meet with their expert groups to discuss their readings with them after reading, completing their literature circle roles, discussing their writing, and recording in their own and a peer's double-entry journal. Every student will also need to complete the *Literature Circles Reflection* sheet (See Appendix 11) to evaluate their experiences working in groups. On this Friday, I will discuss with students their Dystopian Novel Study projects that are due the day after the unit is complete.

Week 2

Day 6 – Setting and Technology

I will begin the class period with a video clip called *Terminator Salvation 4 Minute Trailer* which can be found at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IcYdjHpJUV8 that students will use to focus on how setting and technology influence dystopian societies. Students will jot down notes about the setting and use of technology in the film clip in order to find similarities in how they add to the dystopian culture of the clip and their specific novels. Students will discuss this with their groups first and then with the class. We will use a six-part venn diagram to take notes on the board after groups have discussed and jotted down notes about the physical environments of their dystopian societies and of the films. Then, we will discuss what adjectives describe those types of societies and why those adjectives can also describe the social environments in which the

characters live. We will discuss how this further defines dystopian societies. Students will be prompted to record discussion points in their double-entry journals. Then, students will be instructed to read, depending on their given novel, either *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins – Chapter 7, *The Maze Runner* by James Dashner – Chapters 13-15, *Divergent* by Veronica Roth – Chapters 7-8, *The Giver* by Lois Lowry – Chapter 5, *Matched* by Ally Condie – Chapters 8-9. Students will complete literature circle role sheets and journal entries that they will share with peers when finished note-taking.

Day 7 – Fair Government

On this day, students will read *The Preamble to the Constitution.* I will discuss with students the purpose of The Preamble and why it was needed to establish peace and fair laws. As class discussions about liberty, equality, and the most basic laws needed in any successful government continues, I will prompt students to jot down notes about each of their dystopian societies, how they are governed, and whether or not this is fair rule. We will discuss how this further perpetuates dystopian environments in each society. Then, students will be instructed to read, depending on their given novel, either *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins – Chapters 8-9, *The Maze Runner* by James Dashner – Chapters 16-18, *Divergent* by Veronica Roth – Chapters 9-10, *The Giver* by Lois Lowry – Chapter 6, or *Matched* by Ally Condie – Chapters 10-11. Students will complete literature circle role sheets and journal entries that they will share with peers when finished note-taking.

Day 8 – Social Classes

I will begin the class by showing *In Time – #4 Movie Clip: Cost of Living (2011) HD.* This YouTube clip can be found at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bDCWEJK5r6k**.** Class discussion will focus on how the governments in their novels ensure that the lower classes remain weaker and dependent on their totalitarian governments. We will discuss how their governments evoke fear and frustration in the characters of the video clip and their novels. Students will be prompted to record discussion points in their double-entry journals. Then, students will be instructed to read, depending on their given novel, either *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins – Chapter 10, *The Maze Runner* by James Dashner – Chapters 19-21, *Divergent* by Veronica Roth – Chapters 11-12, *The Giver* by Lois Lowry – Chapter 7, *Matched* by Ally Condie – Chapters 12-13. Students will complete literature circle role sheets and journal entries that they will share with peers when finished note-taking.

Day 9 – The American Dream

Students will read the *I Have A Dream* speech by Martin Luther King Jr. with special focus on what Martin Luther King Jr. hopes for. The class will discuss what Martin Luther King Jr. meant by "the American Dream" when he stated that his dream was based in the American Dream. Students will discuss the utopian dream the characters of their novels hope for and how they begin to take action in order to move society or themselves closer to that dream. Students will also make comparisons through class discussion between their novels and the speech in order to better understand how influential people can help to bridge the gap between dystopian culture and a more desirable society. Then, students will be instructed to read, depending on their given novel, either *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins – Chapters 11-12, *The Maze Runner* by James Dashner – Chapters 22-24, *Divergent* by Veronica Roth – Chapters 13-14, *The Giver* by Lois Lowry – Chapter 8, or *Matched* by Ally Condie – Chapters 14-15. Students will complete literature circle role sheets and journal entries that they will share with peers when finished note-taking.

Day 10 - Jigsaw

On this day, I will instruct students to read either *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins – Chapter 13, *The Maze Runner* by James Dashner – Chapters 25-27, *Divergent* by Veronica Roth – Chapters 15-16, *The Giver* by Lois Lowry – Chapter 9, or *Matched* by Ally Condie – Chapters 16-17. During each student's literature circle discussion, they will trade their double-entry journals with another group member and respond to his/her entry in the Peer Response column as they've done throughout the week. Students will visit other groups in an activity called *Jigsaw*. They will then meet with their "expert groups" who all have the same role within their own "home groups" but have read and completed double entry journals on different novels. Every student will also need to complete the *Literature Circles Reflection* sheet to evaluate their experiences working in groups.

Week 3

Day 11 – Breaking the Law

Students will view the YouTube video clip *Freedoms Must Be Surrendered* from *I, Robot* found at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LH-G8c3TUac and discuss under what circumstances is it okay to break a law? I will discuss the rules of the robots in the movie clip and whether or not breaking the rules was necessary. Students will also discuss whether breaking laws are ever appropriate in any society and if so, what events in their novels call for such actions. I will also reference real world examples of seemingly justified law breaking, such as the confederate flag controversy. Then, students will be instructed to read, depending on their given novel, either *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins – Chapters 14-15, *The Maze Runner* by James Dashner – Chapters 28-30, *Divergent* by Veronica Roth – Chapters 17-18, *The Giver* by Lois Lowry – Chapter 10, or *Matched* by Ally Condie – Chapters 18. Students will complete literature circle role sheets and journal entries that they will share with peers when finished note-taking.

Day 12 – Courage

On this day, students will be prompted to read and discuss a poem by Edgar Albert Guest called, *Courage* which can be found at http://www.poemhunter.com/poems/courage/page-/39546271/. Students will discuss the meaning of each line and stanza as well as how fitting the lines and the relationship they have to the characters' personalities and actions in their own novels. Then, students will be instructed to read, depending on their given novel, either *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins – Chapter 16, *The Maze Runner* by James Dashner – Chapters 31-33, *Divergent* by Veronica Roth – Chapters 19-20, *The Giver* by Lois Lowry – Chapter 11, or *Matched* by Ally Condie – Chapters 19-20. Students will complete literature circle role sheets and journal entries that they will share with peers when finished note-taking.

Day 13 - Choice

Students will explore the theme of choice through the *The Host: (2013) – Ending Scene* YouTube video clip found at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XSyzDaJBbcQ. Students will discuss how choice impacted the dystopian society in the video clip as well as in their novels. More specifically, students will discuss how the characters' choice to pick a side advanced the plot of the story. Then, students will be instructed to read, depending on their given novel, either *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins – Chapters 17-18, *The Maze Runner* by James Dashner – Chapters 34-36, *Divergent* by Veronica Roth – Chapters 20-21, *The Giver* by Lois Lowry – Chapter 12, or *Matched* by Ally Condie – Chapter 21. Students will complete literature circle role sheets and journal entries that they will share with peers when finished note-taking.

Day 14 – Parallels Between Dystopian Worlds and the Real World

I will begin the class period by providing each group with their own set of articles specific to that group's novel. They will include *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins,

The Maze Runner by James Dashner, http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/feb/24/drone- warfare-life-on-the-new-frontline, *Divergent* by Veronica Roth, http://www.heathwoodpress.com/why-recent-global- uprisings-are-led-by-youth-gayle-kimball/

The Giver by Lois Lowry, http://time.com/3639041/the-invention-of-teenagers-life-and-the-triumph-of-youth-culture/, http://www.thomashine.com/the_rise_and_fall_of_the_american_teenager_3432.htm *Matched* by Ally Condie, and http://thenewinquiry.com/essays/dating-in-the-expanded-field/. We will discuss what parallels are present between the dystopian characteristics of their novels and American society as evidenced in the articles. I will jot these similarities down on the board to be discussed with the whole class before they begin reading their novels. **Then, students will be instructed to read, depending on their given novel, either** *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins – Chapter 19, *The Maze Runner* by James Dashner – Chapters 37-39, *Divergent* by Veronica Roth – Chapters 22-23, *The Giver* by Lois Lowry – Chapter 13, or *Matched* by Ally Condie – Chapters 22-23. Students will complete literature circle role sheets and journal entries that they will share with peers when finished note-taking.

Day 15 - Jigsaw

I will instruct students to read either *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins – Chapters 20-21, *The Maze Runner* by James Dashner – Chapters 40-42, *Divergent* by Veronica Roth – Chapters 24-25, *The Giver* by Lois Lowry – Chapter 14, or *Matched* by Ally Condie – Chapter 24. During each student's literature circle discussion, they will trade their double-entry journals with another group member and respond to his/her entry in the Peer Response column as they've done throughout the week. Students will visit other groups in an activity called *Jigsaw*. They will then meet with their "expert groups" who all have the same role within their own "home groups" but have read and completed double entry journals on different novels. Every student will also need to complete the *Literature Circles Reflection* sheet to evaluate their experiences working in groups.

Week 4

Day 16 – The Uprising

Students will explore the theme of choice again after I show them *Harry Potter is Dead – Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part 2* clip located at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ieibsVyVYnU. I will state that although uprisings are typically prevalent in dystopian societies, it can be difficult to have courage when being a part of one because of the chance of death and destruction. I will ask students, "If you were guaranteed protection for yourself, your family, and your friends, would you choose to give up your rights and freedom, or fight alongside those being oppressed? Then, students will be instructed to read, depending on their given novel, either *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins – Chapter 22, *The Maze Runner* by James Dashner – Chapters 43-45, *Divergent* by Veronica Roth – Chapters 26-28, *The Giver* by Lois Lowry – Chapter 15, or *Matched* by Ally Condie – Chapters 25-26. Students will complete literature circle role sheets and journal entries that they will share with peers when finished note-taking.

Day 17 – Peace and Equality

Students will read *Robert F. Kennedy: Remarks on the Assassination of Martin Luther King Jr.* with their group members while focusing on the themes of peace and harmony. I will hold a discussion with students about whether or not they believe the peace and equality Robert F. Kennedy requested in his speech has been achieved today. We will then discuss whether or not they believe this peace and equality can be achieved in their novels between the oppressed people and the government. Then, students will be instructed to read, depending on their given novel, either *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins – Chapters 23-24, *The Maze Runner* by James Dashner – Chapters 46-48, *Divergent* by Veronica Roth – Chapters 29-31, *The Giver* by Lois Lowry – Chapters 16-17, or *Matched* by Ally Condie – Chapter 27. Students will complete literature circle role sheets and journal entries that they will share with peers when finished note-taking.

Day 18 – Can Compliance and Freedom Coexist in a Dark, Dystopian World?

On this day, students will answer the question: Can compliance and freedom coexist in a dark, dystopian world? By now, students should have come to understand that freedom of choice and individuality is what creates a society that is fair for all. Complying with conformity and loss of power will only disrupt peace and conflict with citizens' rights to freedom, which leads to an inevitable uprising. The *X-Men First Class: Fire* video clip found at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HROuYFRJepQ on YouTube is evidence that when faced with oppression and control, violence and hatred become likely. In dystopian societies, war typically tears it down even more unless the people can find freedom. They will first discuss this question with their group members and then write their answer using evidence from the video clips, articles, poem, and chapters they've read. Then, students will be instructed to read, depending on their given novel, either *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins – Chapter 25, *The Maze Runner* by James Dashner – Chapters 49-52, *Divergent* by Veronica Roth – Chapters 32-34, *The Giver* by Lois Lowry – Chapters 18-19, or *Matched* by Ally Condie – Chapters 28-29. Students will complete literature circle role sheets and journal entries that they will share with peers when finished note-taking.

Day 19 – Obligation to Society

I will discuss with students that in all of their novels, the main character had an awakening that obligated them to try and change their dystopian societies. We will read Plato's *The Allegory of the Cave* and watch the YouTube version of it at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=69F7GhASOdM as well to discuss how true understanding and happiness comes from knowledge of reality and freedom to choose your path in life. We will also discuss that once dystopian citizens have awakened to the reality of their world, they have an obligation to society to educate or awaken others so that they may become free as well. Then, students will be instructed to read, depending on their given novel, either *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins – Chapter 26, *The Maze Runner* by James Dashner – Chapters 53-57, *Divergent* by Veronica Roth – Chapters 35-37, *The Giver* by Lois Lowry – Chapters 20-21, or *Matched* by Ally Condie – Chapter 30.

Day 20 – Literature Circles

I will instruct students to read either *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins – Chapter 27

The Maze Runner by James Dashner – Chapters 58-62, *Divergent* by Veronica Roth – Chapters 38-39, *The Giver* by Lois Lowry – Chapters 22-23, or *Matched* by Ally Condie – Chapters 31-32. Students will complete literature circle role sheets and journal entries that they will share with peers when finished note-taking. Every student will also need to complete the *Literature Circles Reflection* sheet (See Appendix 3), which can be

found online to evaluate their experiences working in groups.

Day 21 – Final Project Presentation

Students will present their *Dystopian Unit Final Projects* (See Appendix 4) and will be scored on content and presentation skills. I will use the *Dystopian Unit Project Rubric* (See Appendix 5) to begin scoring them while they are presenting. I will discuss their scores with them individually once all presentations have been completed.

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Suggestions for Further Research

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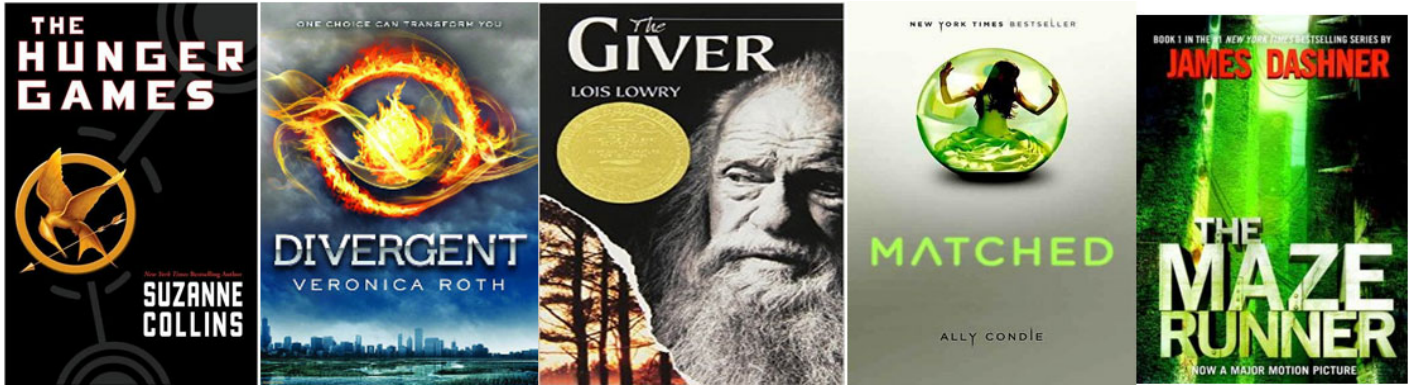
Appendices

Appendix 1

Dystopian Novel Choice Survey

Name: Date:

Have you read any of the following novels?

                                    Yes No Partially
 Hunger Games by Suzanne Collins
 The Maze Runner by James Dashner
 Divergent by Veronica Roth
 Matched by Allie Condie
 The Giver by Lois Lowry

Have you seen the film interpretation of either of the following novels?

                                    Yes No
 Hunger Games by Suzanne Collins
 The Maze Runner by James Dashner
 Divergent by Veronica Roth
 Matched by Allie Condie
 The Giver by Lois Lowry
 Hunger Games by Suzanne Collins

Please rate the novels based on your desire to read them:

                                    Rate: 1=Low 5=High
 Hunger Games by Suzanne Collins
 The Maze Runner by James Dashner
 Divergent by Veronica Roth
 Matched by Allie Condie
 The Giver by Lois Lowry

Appendix 2

Utopia/Dystopia Characteristics Chart

Utopia Characteristics Chart

Definition of the Society
Goals of the Society
Pros to Society
Cons to Society
Economic System
Government and Legal System
Educational System
Admirable Characteristics

Dystopia Characteristics Chart

Definition of the Society
Goals of the Society

Pros to Society
Cons to Society
Economic System
Government and Legal System
Educational System
Detestable Characteristics

Appendix 3

Name: _____   **Meeting Date:** _____

Book: _____

Literature Circle Reflection Sheet

Reflect on your participation:

Reflection Statements	Yes	Mostly	Somewhat	Not At All
I completed my assigned reading before the meeting				
I wrote thoughtful and complete double journal entries				
I asked questions to clarify my understanding of this week's reading or helped someone else understand				
I shared parts of the book that were important with reasons and examples to support my opinions.				
I listened carefully and respectively to my groups members when they spoke.				

Reflect on your group members' participation: 1 = Poor 3 = Okay 5 = Fantastic

Group member (include yourself)	Score you would give him/her	Explanation for Score

The most important contributions I made to the discussion were…

Comments, questions, and/or other information…

Teacher Comments:

Appendix 4

Name: _____   **Book:** _____

Dystopian Unit Project

For this project, inspired by all five of your dystopian novels and related readings, you will develop your own interpretation of what new understandings have come from our unit on Adolescent Dystopian Literature. Choose one of the projects below to complete. If you decide on your own idea, or change a project from the menu, please get my approval beforehand. Projects are to be completed individually and will be presented and handed in on the predetermined due date.

This project is worth 100 points. You will be scored on **content/development**, **organization**, **grammar**, **graphics,** and **presentation**. You may check in with me throughout the unit to decide whether or not your project meets the standards of each category.

Chosen Project – _____ *Due Date* – _____

Diary – Write fictional diary entries by a person living in your dystopia. Diary entries should total at least 400 words.

Painting – Make a painting or large illustration representing your own utopia or dystopia. Explain your choices of materials to me. Your picture should be detailed, represent a high level of effort, and represent specific characteristics of a dystopia. Describe those characteristics in writing as well as what makes your utopia or dystopia thrive. This should contain at least 350 words.

Newspaper Article – Write a fictional newspaper article of at least 400 words describing an event in your novel's dystopia. Follow the format of a newspaper article: headline, byline, professional tone, and a picture/photograph. Microsoft Word has templates for completing this assignment.

Photo Essay – Take a series of photographs that represent your novel's dystopia or a desired utopia. Include an essay that has a minimum of eight photographs. For each photograph, include a caption of at least 50 words that explains them. Each photograph can combine to follow a story or they can simply represent your novel's dystopia or your desired utopia.

Short story – Write a short story that takes place in your novel's dystopia. Your story must be at least 500 words, and it should include the parts of a plot i.e., exposition, rising action, conflict, climax, falling action, and resolution.

Poems – Write a poem or a series of poems that describes your dystopia or tells the story of a fictional character living in your dystopia. Your poem(s) should be at least 200 words, and you must perform your poem(s) for the class.

Investigator- your job is to find out background information on your novel and any topic related to it. Write a 400-word summary of your findings. Topics may include:

- The geography, culture, and/or history of the book's setting
- Biographical information about the author and his/her works
- Information about the surrounding events of the novel

Graphic Story/Comic Book – Create a short graphic story/comic book that takes place in your dystopia. Your comic book must have at least 10 panels and contain dialogue. Total words used in the comic book should total to 200 or more.

Illustrated Timeline – Make a timeline of the key events in the history of your dystopia, including its rise (and possibly its fall). Your timeline must contain at least 15 events, with detailed information about each; at least five of the key events must be illustrated with an accompanying small drawing. Please be neat. Total words should total to at least 250 words.

Speech – Write and deliver for the class a speech given by a fictional character living in your dystopia. Your speech should be at 400 words and should discuss specific aspects of the society. After giving your speech, you will turn in a written copy.

Song/Rap – Turn the theme or plot of your novel into a song or rap that describes your dystopia or tells the story of one of its characters. Your song/rap lyrics must be at least 250 words. You may use the tune of a song you already know. Perform your song or rap on the day it is due or play a recorded version, and turn in a final copy of the song or rap's lyrics.

Appendix 5

Dystopian Unit Project Rubric

		Reading/Research	Development/Grammar	Organization	Class Presentation	Overall Effectiveness
4	Exceeds the standard	Shows a high level of understanding and synthesis of the novel. Skillfully uses specific evidence (examples, quotes, details, etc.) to show insight into the text's plot, themes, and messages. Makes very effective use of available resources (novel, websites, discussions, etc.).	Addresses all aspects of the project task with a tight focus on directions given and reading/research completed. Writing is fluent and expressive with relevant and sufficient evidence used. Follows the conventions of standard written English skillfully. A professional tone is used.	Writing is strategically structured in a way that best suits the task. Writing is easier to understand because of structure. There is a clear beginning, middle, and ending to ideas written in work.	Presentation is positive, clear, content-rich, and done with enthusiasm and professionalism. Dystopian vocabulary is plentiful and used correctly and frequently. Little to no grammatical errors are present. Project is visually stimulating.	Meets or exceeds all requirements.
3	Meets the standard	Makes adequate use of resources. Uses specific evidence to show insight into the text's plot, themes, and messages. Makes effective use of available resources.	Addresses the project task with an adequate focus on directions given and reading/research completed. Writing is acceptable and relevant with sufficient evidence used. Follows the conventions of standard written English accurately. A professional tone is used.	Writing is structured in a way that suits the task. Writing is easier to understand because of structure. There is a beginning, middle, and ending to ideas written in work.	Presentation is positive, clear, content-rich, and professional. Dystopian vocabulary is plentiful and used correctly. Few errors are present. Project is visually stimulating.	Meets nearly all expectations and require-ments.

2	Approaches the standard	Project shows understanding just below expectation with an inadequate amount of evidence or use of resources. Evidence used is not most effective for main ideas expressed.	Addresses the project task with an inadequate focus on directions given and reading/research. Writing is underdeveloped or some details are irrelevant. Insufficient evidence used. Has trouble following conventions of standard written English. A professional tone is sometimes used.	Writing is structured in a way that somewhat suits the task. Writing is a bit difficult to understand because of structure. A beginning, middle, or ending to ideas written in work is missing.	Presentation is positive, clear, and professional. Dystopian vocabulary is plentiful and used correctly. Some errors are present. Project is somewhat visually stimulating.	Effectively meets some but not all requirements.
1	Below the standard	Project shows lack of understanding of the novel with an inadequate amount of evidence or use of resources. Evidence used is not effective for main ideas expressed.	Has extreme difficulty with addressing the project task with an inadequate focus on directions given and reading/research. Writing is very underdeveloped or many details are irrelevant. Insufficient evidence used. Does not follow conventions of standard written English. A professional tone is not used.	Writing is structured in a way that best suits the task. Writing is easier to understand because of structure. A beginning, middle, and/or ending are missing from writing.	Demonstrates little or no effort to present using vocabulary, professionalism, knowledge, and clarity. Many errors are present. Project is not visually stimulating and/or looks rushed.	Fails to meet many or all requirements.
0	Project was not approved or did not fit one of the tasks given. Effort is inadequate or nonexistent.					

Appendix 6

Dystopian Literature Unit Calendar

1	2	3	4	5
-Introduction to Dystopian/Utopian Definitions and Characteristics	-Begin novels in literature circles -Double entry journals -Discuss weekly activities and final project	-*Dark Knight Rises* Film Clip (whole class) -Reading Novels in Literature Circles -Double Entry Journals	-*Declaration of Independence* (whole class) -Reading Novels in Literature Circles -Double Entry Journals	-Read Novels in Literature Circles -Double Entry Journals -Jigsaw Double-Entry Journals -Expert Groups
6	7	8	9	10

-*Terminator Salvation* Film Clip (whole class) -Reading Novels in Literature Circles -Double Entry Journals	-*Preamble to the Constitution* (whole class) -Reading Novels in Literature Circles -Double Entry Journals	-*In Time* Film Clip (whole class) -Reading Novels in Literature Circles -Double Entry Journals	-*I Have A Dream* Speech (whole class) -Reading Novels in Literature Circles -Double Entry Journals	-Read Novels in Literature Circles -Double-Entry Journals -Expert Groups
11	12	13	14	15
-*I, Robot* Film Clip (whole class) -Reading Novels in Literature Circles -Double Entry Journals	-*Courage* Poem (whole class) -Reading Novels in Literature Circles -Double Entry Journals	-*The Host* Film Clip (whole class) -Reading Novels in Literature Circles -Double Entry Journals	-Group-specific Articles (whole class) -Reading Novels in Literature Circles -Double Entry Journals	-Read Novels in Literature Circles -Double-Entry Journals -Expert Groups
16	17	18	19	20
-*Harry Potter* Film Clip (whole class) -Reading Novels in Literature Circles -Double Entry Journals	-*Kennedy* Speech -Reading Novels in Literature Circles -Double Entry Journals	-*X-Men* Film Clip (whole class) -Reading Novels in Literature Circles -Double Entry Journals	-*Plato's Allegory of the Cave* & Film Clip -Reading Novels in Literature Circles -Double Entry Journals	-Read Novels in Literature Circles -Double-Entry Journals -Final Project Presentations on Day 21

Appendix 7

Implementing Common Core State Standards

The Reading Literature Common Core State Standards addressed in my unit are: RL.9-10.1 Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text; RL.9-10.2 Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text; RL.9-10.3 Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme; RL.9-10.7 Analyze the representation of a subject or a key scene in two different artistic mediums, including what is emphasized or absent in each treatment.

The Writing Common Core State Standards addressed in my unit are: W.9-10.2a Introduce a topic; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information to make important connections and distinctions; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension; W.9-10.2a Develop the topic with well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic; W.9-10.7 Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

The Speaking and Listening Common Core State Standards addressed in my unit are: SL.9-10.1a. Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas; SL.9-10.1c. Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that relate the current discussion to broader themes or larger ideas; actively incorporate others into the discussion; and clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions.

Notes

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