

# Dystopian Intro

Creative Writing Prompt  
Inspired by *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury  
Ms. Krupa - English II

## Writing Prompt:

Dystopias, through an exaggerated worst-case scenario, make a criticism about a current trend, societal norm, or political system. When writing a dystopian story, authors create an if, then scenario. If this continues, then this will happen.

Format:

If societal trends or problem that you think could have a negative impact on society, then explanation or description of what the world might be like.

Take the if, then statement you created in class and use it to create the introduction to your own dystopian novel. You will need to include elements found in the introduction of *Fahrenheit 451*.

## Requirements:

- Begin with an amazing opening line
- Dystopian elements & setting (details may seem strange to the reader and make them curious about what is going on)
- Descriptive writing, imagery, and figurative language (similes, metaphors, personification)
- Introduce the main character
- Introduce a secondary character
- One of these characters doesn't quite "fit" in the dystopian world; they are different.
- Dialogue between the two characters
- End with a turning point - a realization or epiphany of some kind for the character who believed their society was "normal."

Length - 3 pages **MAX** (Single spaced). You must include the above items.

## — Getting Started —

There are many different kinds of dystopian worlds you could create. Below are some suggestions to help spark your imagination. You are not required to choose a topic from these lists.

### Environmental

Global Warming  
Bees dying off  
Pollution  
Deforestation  
Ozone Layer Depletion  
Loss of Biodiversity  
Ocean Acidification

### Political

Gun Control  
Terrorism / War on ISIS  
Syrian Refugee Crisis  
Freedom of the Press  
Gerrymandering Districts  
Free higher education  
Illegal Immigrant Detainment

### Social Issues

Social Media as a News Source  
Black Lives Matter  
Overreliance on Smartphones  
Cyberbullying  
Discrimination of the disabled  
Loss of direct communication  
Rape Culture

### Technological/Medical

Police Body Cams  
Sentient AI  
Designer Babies  
DNA Hacking  
Cyberwarfare  
Drones  
Geoengineering

# Dystopias: Definition and Characteristics

**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.

## 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.

## 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.

## 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 recognize the negative aspects of the dystopian world through his or her perspective.