

Characters

1	The Protagonist	The main character.
2	The Rebels	An secret/underground group working against those in control of society.
3	The Dictator	The leader of the state, who has total control over the people living in the society.
4	Secret Police	Security forces of the dictator, who carry out surveillance of everyone in society.
5	Unreliable Narrator	A storyteller who misleads, lies to or withholds information from the reader.

Conventions

1	Character Goal	What the protagonist needs to accomplish by the end of the story.
2	Conflict	Anything that stops the protagonist achieving their goal.
3	Setting	Where and when the story happens.
4	Exposition	Any important 'back-story' that needs to be understood.
5	Equilibrium	This is the 'normal' state of affairs for the protagonist, where they are at peace.
6	Propaganda	Media used to control the citizens of a society.
7	Restriction	Information, independent thought and freedom are restricted.
8	Surveillance	Citizens are perceived to be under constant surveillance.

Common Themes

1	Environmental destruction	Dystopian world caused by extreme weather, peak oil, loss of forest and natural vegetation, desertification.
2	Nuclear disaster	A world that was previously obliterated and no longer inhabitable.
3	Government control	The government is the cause of the dystopian world.
4	Religious control	Religion controls the population by making them believe their actions are sins/blasphemies.
5	Technological control	Physically controlling citizens using technology, controlling minds or controlling cities.
6	Survival	Quest for survival as a result of one of the other themes.
7	Loss of individualism	Loss of physical appearance, identity and choice.

Examples of utopia and dystopia

1	Robinson Crusoe	A castaway spends 28 years on a tropical island.
2	Brave New World	Citizens are environmentally engineered into an intelligence-based social hierarchy.
3	1984	Imagined future in which the world has fallen victim to perpetual war, government surveillance and propaganda.
4	Noughts and Crosses	An alternative history in which the African people have colonised the European people, with society segregated based on skin colour.
5	Herland	An isolated society of women who reproduce without men in order to create an ideal social order.
6	The Handmaid's Tale	A totalitarian religious state has overthrown the U.S government and categorised women according to their reproductive capabilities.
7	The Road	Journey of a father and son through a post-apocalyptic world.

Key Vocabulary

1	Utopia	A place that is ideally perfect.
2	Dystopia	The illusion of a perfect society maintained through oppressive control.
3	Ecotopia	An ecologically ideal form of society.
4	Femtopia	A utopia based on gender equality.
5	Totalitarian	System of government characterised by total control.
6	Autonomy	Individual freedom.
7	Censorship	Suppression of any materials e.g. books, films that are perceived as a threat to security.
8	Communism	All property is owned by the community and each person contributes and receives according to ability and needs.
9	Dictator	Ruler with total power.
10	False utopia	A place that seems to be perfect but its faults are hidden from its inhabitants.