

YEAR 7 SUMMER 1 ENGLISH HOMEWORK

DYSTOPIAN NOVELS

This half-term, you are expected to read **for the first time** whole books or short stories based in a dystopia (you will have to look this up for Task 1!). Some examples I recommend are *Pax* by Sara Pennypacker, *Darkbeast* (Morgan Keyes), *Animal Farm* (George Orwell), *Maze Runner* (James Dashner), *The Hunger Games* (Suzanne Collins), *The City of Ember* (Jean DuPrau), *Divergent* (Veronica Roth), *Uglies* (Scott Westerfield) ... however there are many more to choose from! **NOT ALL DYSTOPIAN FICTION IS SUITABLE FOR YOUR AGE GROUP THEREFORE YOU MUST DISCUSS BOOK CHOICES WITH PARENTS AND ABIDE BY THEIR WISHES.**

You are expected to select and complete one of the activities from below to hand in each week (in any order). Read each box fully so that you understand the task properly. For *most* of the tasks, you will not need to have read the whole book. **Anything substandard, insufficient or that has not been proof read will be returned to be rewritten at lunchtime. If you hand in work without the header page, you will be expected to rectify this for 10 minutes during the next break. COPYING AND PASTING WORK FROM THE INTERNET (OR ANY OTHER SOURCE), THEN CLAIMING IT AS YOUR OWN IS PLAGIARISM.**

Each piece of work needs to be headed in the following way:

NAME:

DATE:

TASK NUMBER:

TITLE OF BOOK:

PAGES READ THIS WEEK:

THE STORY SO FAR:

<p>1. <u>COMPULSORY FIRST TASK: DYSTOPIA</u> Explain what both utopia and dystopia mean and what has happened/is happening in your book to make it a dystopia. Describe what would need to happen for the society in your book to become utopian.</p>	<p>2. <u>Create a New Character.</u> Create an A3 (or double-sided A4) poster with an image of the new character, surrounded by information boxes on their personality, physical appearance and 'backstory'. Write an explanation of how they fit in the story and the effect they may have on it.</p>	<p>3. <u>Graphic novel</u> Select a key scene from the story so far and turn it into a graphic novel, comic strip or story board. You may also do this electronically if you prefer, but it must then be printed out to be handed in. As well as including words and images, you must explain in one paragraph or more why you selected it as an important scene.</p>
<p>4. <u>Write a New Ending.</u> Are you going to change the genre, or the style of the opening? Will you reveal more or less? Write at least 2 paragraphs, then explain what you have changed & why.</p>	<p>5. <u>Predict what will happen.</u> <i>2 paragraph minimum.</i> Using quotations from several parts in the story, use a PEE format to explain what you think will happen next.</p>	<p>6. <u>Movie soundtrack.</u> Imagine the book is turned into a film, decide on the soundtrack to accompany the film and describe which songs would be played at which moments.</p>
<p>7. <u>'About the Author'</u> PowerPoint or handwritten. 6 slides or 1 page MINIMUM Use a combination of words and images (sound and video optional if in PowerPoint). Find out facts about them: their life, interests, work, inspiration etc.</p>	<p>8. <u>Persuasive speech.</u> Write a speech persuading your class to read the book. Choose at least 3 reasons why, then use AFOREST techniques to persuade your class that this is a must-read story! <i>Don't forget your introduction and conclusion.</i></p>	<p>9. <u>Write a New Opening.</u> Are you going to change the genre, or the style of the opening? Will you reveal more or less? Write at least 2 paragraphs, then explain what you have changed and why.</p>

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WHAT PARENTS NEED TO KNOW - www.common sense media.org

According to reviews, there's not much to worry about in *Darkbeast*, by Morgan Keyes, which is recommended for ages 9+. Although a central theme is the ritual slaying of children's companion animals when the kids reach adulthood at age 12, no slaying is described. The Inquisitors are scary enforcers, and it's hinted that they use torture, but again, not described. Wine is mentioned once but no one's shown drinking it. Twelve-year-old heroine Keara still has a lot of lessons to learn, but she's a good, hardworking, loyal child.

The City of Ember by Jean DuPrau is rated as 8+. Ember is a city in eternal darkness, only kept light by its increasingly unreliable electric system. Other systems are falling apart as well, and stockpiles of food and essentials that have lasted hundreds of years are running out. The city was only meant to last 220 years, and now it has been 241. But the instructions the Builders left have been lost and forgotten.

Scott Westerfield's *Uglies* is set in the future and deals with our culture's obsession with physical perfection and hedonism. There's some fighting and a minor character is killed, not seen. A gruesome operation is described. Girl characters especially are brave and stand up to an oppressive regime. (FL note – the rest of the series is less suitable for younger readers).

Suzanne Collins' *The Hunger Games* is a story about a reality show where 24 teens must kill one another until only one survives. They do so with spears, rocks, arrows, knives, fire, and by hand. It's not unduly gory, but there is lots of violence, all of it teen on teen. (FL note – we do not study or watch the violent parts in school, therefore the only way your child would be exposed to these is by reading the novel independently.)

Parents need to know that the scenes of violence are stronger in *The Maze Runner* and in some ways more graphic than those of, say, *The Hunger Games*. They have their memories wiped, but they are still aware on some level that they are being held captive and endangered by adults, not monsters or other children. Some of the teens in the Maze go insane from the fear, the attacks, or in one case, the memory of the world he had left behind. Main characters are conscientious and risk their lives to save others. (FL note – many boys get hooked into reading with these books).

Animal Farm is a biting satire of totalitarianism, written in the wake of World War II and published amid the rise of Soviet Russia. Although it tells a fairly simple story of barnyard animals trying to manage themselves after rebelling against their masters, the novel demonstrates how easily good intentions can be subverted into tyranny. It can be confusing for younger readers, although a brief understanding of the history behind it can help.

Rook is an imaginative page-turner by Sharon Cameron that features dystopian futuristic-retro world. A strong, much-miscommunicated romantic attraction between the two lead characters is expressed in banter, squabbling, and swordplay as much as the occasional kiss. It's all set in what was once Paris, against a Reign of Terror backdrop with hordes of innocents, including children, being sent to the guillotine by a villainous politician who also murders inconvenient associates. Determined to bring him down and save his luckless prisoners is the mysterious Red Rook, aka 18-year-old Sophia Bellamy.

Pax, by Sara Pennypacker is the story of a deeply bonded 12-year-old boy and his pet fox caught up in an increasingly dystopian nightmare. It begins with an act of betrayal as the boy's father forces him to abandon the fox and compellingly describes the two friends' struggle to find each other and make things right. Plenty of bad things happen, from the death of the boy's mom years ago to a crazy, senseless war that destroys everything in its path. Some of the scenes (e.g., the car speeding away, leaving a bewildered Pax in the woods, or a deer wandering into a field and being blown to bits by a land mine) may be too much for sensitive kids. But the story, set in a nameless country, also offers strong positive messages about knowing yourself, doing what you know to be right, and doing your best to fix things if you've done wrong.

The Always War is a "fast-paced dystopian science-fiction adventure" that details the stresses brought on by constant military conflict and examines the ways in which governments can misinform their populations about how and why wars are fought.

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Divergent includes the markers of the genre, including fantasy violence, a fractured society, Big Brother-esque monitoring, as well as romance. The 16-year-old protagonist chooses to live in the "brave" faction, where members routinely try to out-do each other physically and recklessly act like daredevils to prove their fearlessness. The initiation process is brutal, and kills or seriously injures a few characters. Violence escalates as the end of the book approaches, culminating in a blood bath. The romance is sweet and progresses from lingering looks to a few kissing sessions, but there's no sex and characters express fear of going too far, too fast. Tris Prior is a strong, generous and flawed female protagonist.

Matched – Darianne Stewart's heroine is a model daughter and citizen who begins to suspect the pursuit of perfection comes with too steep a price. While there's danger and romance here, there's not very much violence or sex. Instead, it encourages readers to think long and hard about their relationships -- to people, to technology, and to authority -- and could lead to some spirited debates about how to best balance personal freedoms and government control. Parents and teens who read this book together will certainly find a lot to talk about.

Across a Star-Swept Sea is a dystopian novel by Diana Peterfreund, based on the classic novel *The Scarlet Pimpernel* and includes political discussion about the responsibilities of the rich to those less fortunate. A young girl goes on dangerous spy missions to protect people from being imprisoned. Though there are hints of violence toward prisoners -- perhaps even torture -- there's no graphic detail. There's romance and three passionate kisses.

The Fog Diver by Joel Ross is reviewed as a 'spirited apocalyptic steampunk fantasy novel' about a future where a deadly fog has moved all remaining people on earth into the mountains. They travel in airships and fight for resources, and only a chosen few can survive in the remaining atmosphere. The book has some mild violence, a dying major character, and teens facing life-and-death peril at every turn, but the characters are lively and resilient. 'Best for kids who are adept readers drawn to futuristic stories, but it may hook reluctant readers too'.

The Selection by Keira Cass is "a dystopian romance ... as 35 girls, including the main character, named America, enter a televised competition to marry a prince. Although set in a futuristic United States, *The Selection* is fairly tame as far as dystopian stories go. The romance leads only to flirting and kissing, and America is a positive role model, a respectful daughter, and a level-headed heroine. America and her fellow competitors express body and self-esteem issues. The only actual violence is a rebel attack on the palace, but the scenes are brief and not very frightening. An attempted rape of a servant by a rebel intruder is discussed but not shown".

Among the Hidden: Shadow Children – Margaret Haddix. Recommended for ages 9+. "In the not-so-distant future, overpopulation has led to draconian laws limiting families to no more than two children, and Population Police ruthlessly enforce the law. Thus Luke, his family's third child, has lived his entire life in hiding, and now that a new development is being built on the edge of his family's land, he can't even go into the yard anymore, nor can he go into rooms with windows, as the neighbors grow suspicious if the shades are pulled all the time."