

**What is a Dystopia?**

- There are many examples of dystopia in literature and media – from classics like 1984 and Brave New World, to modern texts like The Hunger Games.
- Writers craft these worlds using archetypal dystopian techniques such as a controlling and totalitarian government, violence, punishment and rules.

**Crafting a Dystopian Setting**

- A setting can be integral (important) to the plot of dystopian stories. Dystopian settings are often bleak and dismal; they often have decaying buildings. Stormy weather and technology also feature heavily.
- Writers craft these in order to create different effects – especially feelings of oppression, misery and entrapment.

**Dystopian Protagonists**

- Characters in dystopian fiction are often oppressed, so writers give them tough and resilient personalities. The protagonist rises up from a traumatic and difficult situation to fight back and rebel against those in control. This leads the reader to root for them and believe in their resistance.
- Katniss Everdeen in The Hunger Games is a great example of a tough dystopian protagonist who takes on those in control.

**Surveillance Culture**

- Dystopian novels can often open with dramatic, attention-grabbing lines.
- 1984 by George Orwell starts with a famous opening line – and describes a world watched constantly by Big Brother.
- Surveillance culture is common in dystopian texts; it is designed to make those within the dystopian world more submissive and pliable.

**Dystopian Societies**

- A short story contains all of the sections of a full narrative arc, but moves at a much quicker pace, building the tension and climax much faster.
- Shirley Jackson wrote The Lottery in two hours in 1948. It is a prime example of the disadvantages or conformity in a dystopian text.



Dystopia	An imagined world or society in which there is great suffering or injustice.
Utopia	An imagined place or state of things in which everything is perfect.
Archetypal	Very typical of a certain kind of person or thing.
Setting	The place where an event in a story takes place.
Narrator	The perspective a text is written from. Can be first or third person, omniscient (all-knowing) or not.
Oppression	Cruel or unjust treatment or exercise of authority. An oppressive setting is one that creates a feeling of the characters being mistreated.
Protagonist	The lead character in a text.
Antagonist	The character who opposes the protagonist in a story.
Dictatorship	A society with a ruler who has total power over everything and everyone – typically by force.
Surveillance	Close observation, especially of a suspected spy or criminal.
Motif	A dominant or repeating idea in a story.
Paranoia	An irrational suspicion or mistrust of others.
Narrative arc	A term that describes a story's full progression, from beginning to end.
Conformity	Behaving or acting in an accepted way to fit in with others.
Monolithic	In terms of people: implies they are all alike and act as one. In terms of society: closed off from others, indivisible and unlikely to change.
Ritual	A series of actions or type of behaviour regularly followed.