



Year 7 Bridging Learning

- Next term you will study the novel, *The Giver* by Lois Lowry. It is set in a world that appears to be utopian at first, but is later revealed to be dystopian.
- Complete the 4 tasks and bring your learning to your first English lesson in September. You can work in your Year 7 exercise book or on paper.

Task 1: What is Utopia?

Read the extract from the Kids Britannica, which is an encyclopaedia and answer the questions.

- 1) Who first used the word “utopia” and what does it mean? (paragraph 1)
- 2) What year was More’s book “Utopia” published? (paragraph 1)
- 3) Why did Thomas More write “Utopia”? (paragraph 2)
- 4) List 5 details about the perfect society in Thomas More’s book? (paragraphs 2 and 3)
- 5) What are the two main characteristics of utopian literature? (paragraph 4)

From Kids Britannica

The Greek term *ou topos* means “no place.” From it Sir Thomas More created the word utopia to describe an ideal human society. His book *Utopia* was published in Latin in 1516 and in English translation in 1551. More wrote at a time when the social institutions that held society together during the Middle Ages were beginning to break down. New economic undertakings were laying the foundations of capitalism. Thousands of people in England had been driven from their villages by land enclosures to make room for sheep raising.

More realized that a way of life was passing and that a new, uncertain one was being formed. He wrote *Utopia* as a protest against the breakdown of the old order. To make his protest effective he described an ideal society in which people have to work only six hours a day, leaving plenty of time for leisure. Everyone lives in a pleasant home surrounded by a garden.

Communities have good schools and hospitals. Education is compulsory, and every student learns at least one trade. Food is given out at public markets and community dining halls. Children, after their earliest years, leave home and are brought up by public authorities. The rulers are selected by secret ballot from



among the best-educated citizens. Lawyers are unnecessary because there are so few laws.

More's book shares two primary characteristics of all utopian literature. It criticizes the present as an unhappy time, and it proposes an alternative society in which the state is exalted over the individual.

Task 2: Utopian Fiction

Read the extract, which comes from the novel, *Tom's Midnight Garden*.

Highlight or copy 3 quotations which show that the garden Tom visits is utopian or perfect.

- In the novel Tom has been sent to stay with his elderly aunt and uncle for the school holidays because his brother is ill with measles. The area where Tom's aunt and uncle live is drab and uninteresting. They only have a small backyard and he feels lonely without any friends.
- At night though Tom discovers that the backdoor opens onto a beautiful garden in the grounds of a Victorian mansion.

From *Tom's Midnight Garden* by Philippa Pearce

Tom opened the door wide and let in the moonlight. It flooded in, as bright as daylight – the white daylight that comes before the full rising of the sun. The illumination was perfect, but Tom did not at once turn to see what it showed him on the clock-face. Instead he took a step forward on to the doorstep. He was staring, at first in surprise, then with indignation, at what he saw outside. That they should have deceived him – lied to him – like this! They had said, "It's not worth your while going out at the back, Tom." So carelessly they had described it: "A sort of back-yard, very poky, with rubbish bins. Really, there's nothing to see."

Nothing... Only this: a great lawn where flower-beds bloomed' a towering fir-tree, and thick, beetle-browed yews that humped their shapes down two sides of the lawn; on the third side, to the right, a greenhouse almost the size of a real house; from each corner of the lawn, a path that twisted away to some other depths of garden, with other trees. Tom had stepped forward instinctively, catching his breath in surprise; now he let his breath out in a deep sigh. He would steal out here tomorrow, by daylight. They had tried to keep this



from him, but they could not stop him now – not his aunt, nor his uncle, nor the back flat tenants, nor even particular Mrs Bartholomew. He would run full tilt over the grass, leaping the flower-beds; he would peer through the glittering panes of the greenhouse – perhaps open the door and go in: he would visit each alcove and archway clipped in the yew-trees – he would climb the trees and make his way from one to another through thickly interlacing branches. When they came calling him, he would hide, silent and safe as a bird, among this richness of leaf and bough and tree-trunk. The scene tempted him even now: it lay so inviting and clear before him – clear-cut from the stubby leaf-pins of the nearer yew-trees to the curled-back petals of the hyacinths in the crescent-shaped corner beds.

Task 3: Dystopian Fiction

Dystopian fiction is the opposite of utopian fiction. A dystopia is a society where there is great suffering or injustice.

Read the extract, which is the opening of the dystopian novel, *1984* by George Orwell.

List 5 details that suggest the world that Orwell describes is dystopian.

From *1984* by George Orwell

It was a bright cold day in April, and the clocks were striking thirteen. Winston Smith, his chin nuzzled into his breast in an effort to escape the vile wind, slipped quickly through the glass doors of Victory Mansions, though not quickly enough to prevent a swirl of gritty dust from entering along with him. The hallway smelt of boiled cabbage and old rag mats. At one end of it a coloured poster, too large for indoor display, had been tacked to the wall. It depicted simply an enormous face, more than a metre wide: the face of a man of about forty-five, with a heavy black moustache and ruggedly handsome features. Winston made for the stairs. It was no use trying the lift. Even at the best of times it was seldom working, and at present the electric current was cut off during daylight hours. It was part of the economy drive in preparation for Hate Week. The flat was seven flights up, and Winston, who was thirty-nine and had a varicose ulcer above his right ankle, went slowly, resting several times on the way. On each landing, opposite the lift-shaft, the poster with the enormous face gazed from the wall. It was one of those pictures which are so contrived that the eyes follow you about when you move. BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU, the caption beneath it ran.



Task 4: Key Vocabulary

Learn the key words and their meanings for a test in September.

Concept Words:

Chastise: punish or discipline

Conform: obey rules

Freedom: liberty or having choices

Injustice: unfair treatment and behaviour

Justice: fair treatment and behaviour

Memory: a recollection or something you remember

Morality: ethics, or how far something is right or wrong.

Nurture: look after or care for

Remembrance: commemorating or remembering someone who has died

Ritual: a ceremony

Violation: breaking a rule

Literary / English Key Words:

Autobiography: life story, or first person account of your own life

Climax: most intense or exciting part of a story

Dialogue: speech

Dystopia: a place which is unjust or where people suffer

Euphemism: a pleasant word to replace an offensive word

Foreshadow: hint what will happen later

Symbolism: something that represents something else

Turning point: a change that alters the course of events

Utopia: ideal or perfect place