



Dystopian Fiction Lesson 1

Teaching Ideas

Learning Objective:

To develop an understanding of the difference between a utopia and a dystopia.

Success Criteria:

- To define what a utopia and a dystopia are.
- To identify the ingredients of dystopian fiction.
- To discuss my opinions about the world in a mature and sensitive way.

Context

This is the first lesson of the new topic on dystopian fiction. Students do not need any prior knowledge of the genre but they should be comfortable identifying the features of a genre and applying them to their own writing.

Video Disclaimer

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Starter

Provide students with the **Agree or Disagree** Starter Activity Sheet.

Students can work individually, in pairs or in small groups. Prompt them to consider the statements on the sheet and decide if they agree or disagree with each one. Encourage the students to develop their reasoning and explain each choice they make.

Feedback should be taken from students and a discussion encouraged about their opinions on each statement. There isn't a right or wrong answer here and it can be really interesting to hear why they have made the decisions they have.

Main Activities

What Is a Dystopia?

The images of a dystopia should be displayed for the students (or they could be printed out and passed around the class). Ask students to look at the images and note down what they think a dystopia might be based on the images. Make sure that they fully develop their responses. They could create a mind map of their ideas.

Take feedback from students so they can add to their notes using the ideas of other classmates.

What Is a Utopia?

The images of a utopia should now be displayed for the students (or they could be printed out and passed around the class). Ask students to look at the images and note down what they think a utopia might be based on the images.

Take feedback from students so they can add to their notes using the ideas of other classmates.

Defining a Dystopia

Show the definitions of a dystopia and a utopia on the board for the students. Do they match the ideas they noted down from the images? They should add to their notes using these definitions.

Dystopian Worlds

Students should be shown 2 – 3 different trailers for dystopian films for them to create a list of conventions of Dystopia. This can be done through them spotting common themes and ideas in the trailers or by noting down words to describe the scenes they are seeing dependent on ability/confidence.

Some suggestions of the trailers that could be watched are:

- [The Hunger Games](#)
- [V for Vendetta](#)
- [Children of Men](#)
- [I am Legend](#)
- [Minority Report](#)

Plenary

Learning Review

Students should answer the questions that have been posed on the board to demonstrate their new learning from the lesson.

What is a dystopia?

What are the conventions of a dystopian world?

What do you think it would be like to live in a dystopian world?

Moving On

Students should return to the statements from the starter. Have any of their opinions changed now they have gained more of an understanding of what a dystopian world is?