

# Dystopian Literature



*All in all, we're just another brick in the wall...*

# What is a Utopia?

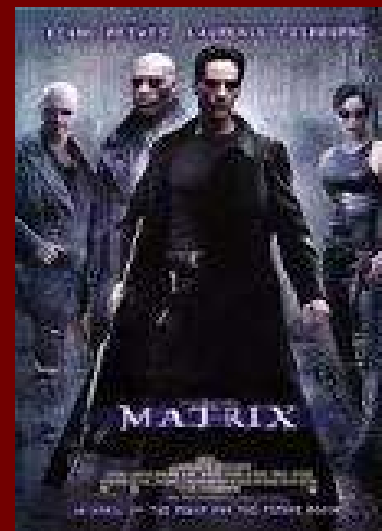
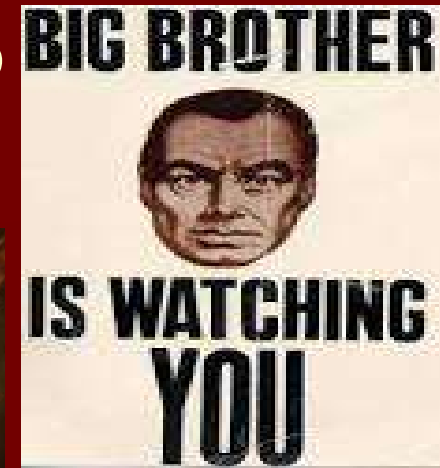
- A place, state, or condition that is ideally perfect in respect of politics, laws, customs, and conditions



[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-lAfg\\_ly7n8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-lAfg_ly7n8)

# What is a Dystopia?

- Futuristic, imagined universe
- Oppressive societal control
- Perfect society is maintained through corporate, bureaucratic, technological, moral, or totalitarian control
- Dystopian literature criticizes current trends, norms, or political systems



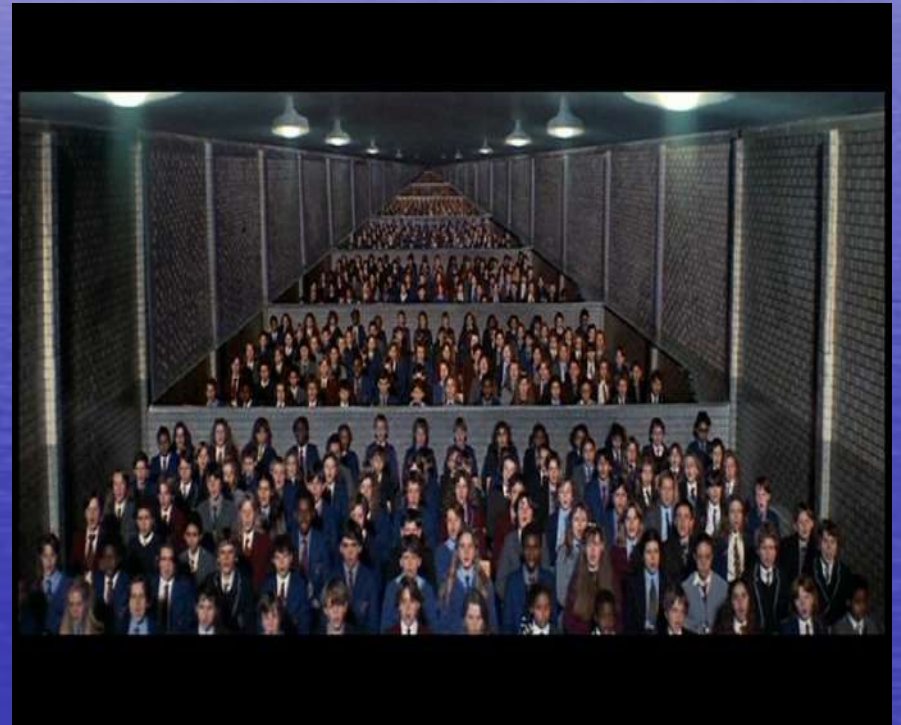
# Characteristics of Dystopian Society

- Propaganda is used to control citizens
- Information, independent thought, and freedom are restricted
- Figurehead or concept is worshipped by the citizens of the society
- Citizens are under constant surveillance and have a fear of the outside world
- Citizens live in a dehumanized state



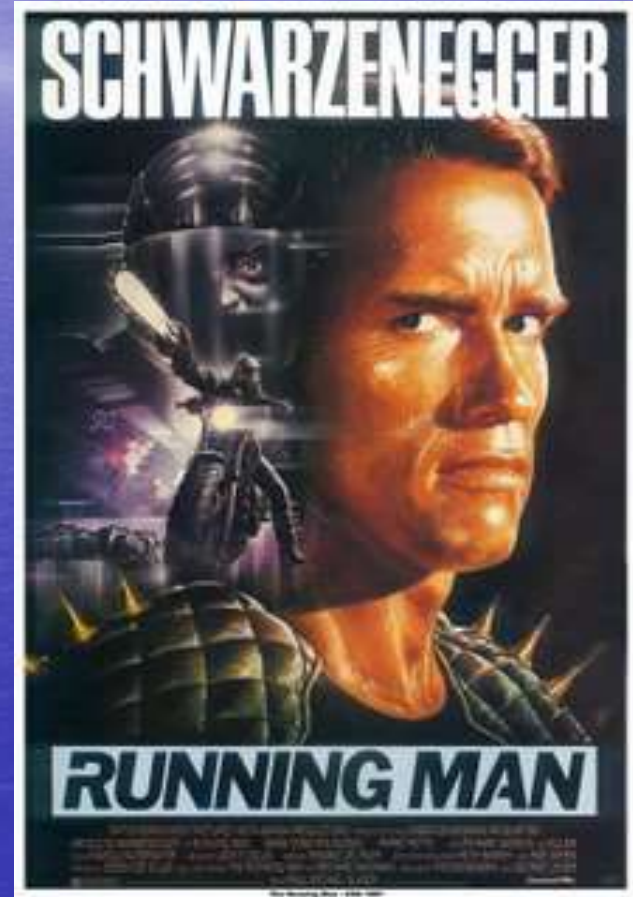
# Characteristics of Dystopian Society

- The natural world is banished and distrusted
- Citizens conform to uniform expectations
- Individuality and dissent are bad
- Society is an illusion of a perfect utopian world



# Types of Dystopian Controls

- Corporate control:  
One of more of the large corporations control society through products, advertising, and the media



# Bureaucratic Control

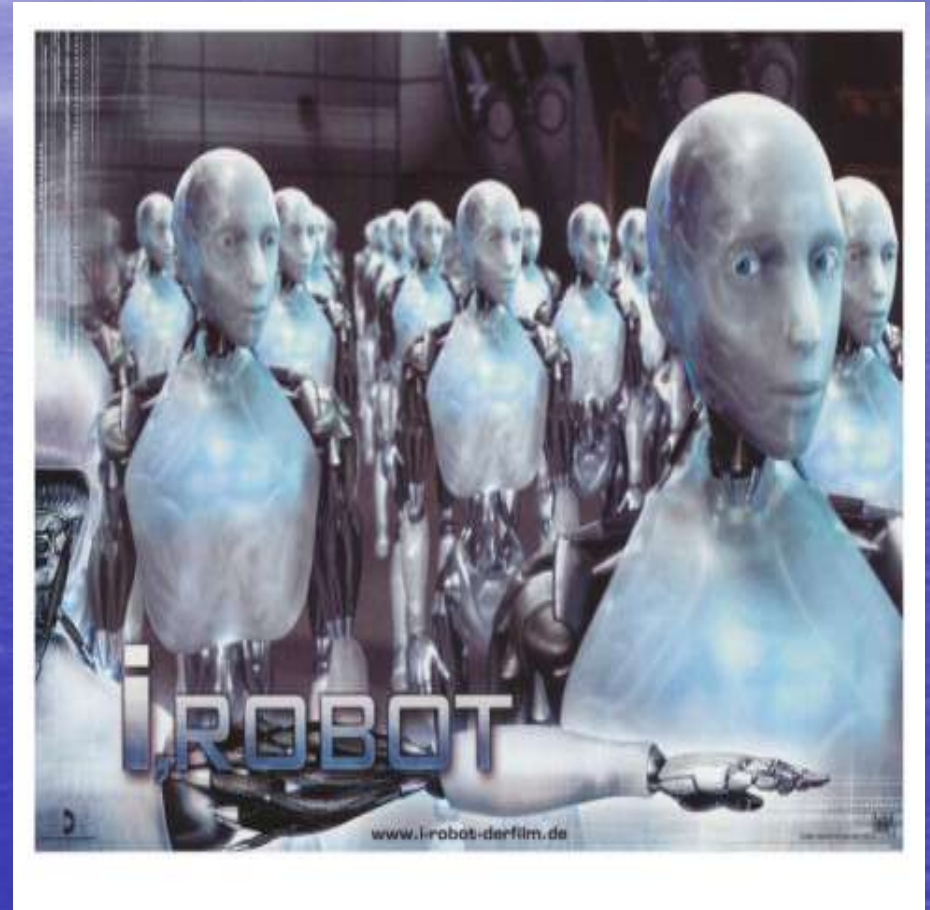
Society is controlled by a mindless bureaucracy through a tangle of red tape, relentless regulations, and incompetent government officials



# Technological Control

Society is controlled by technology—through computers, robots, and/or scientific means

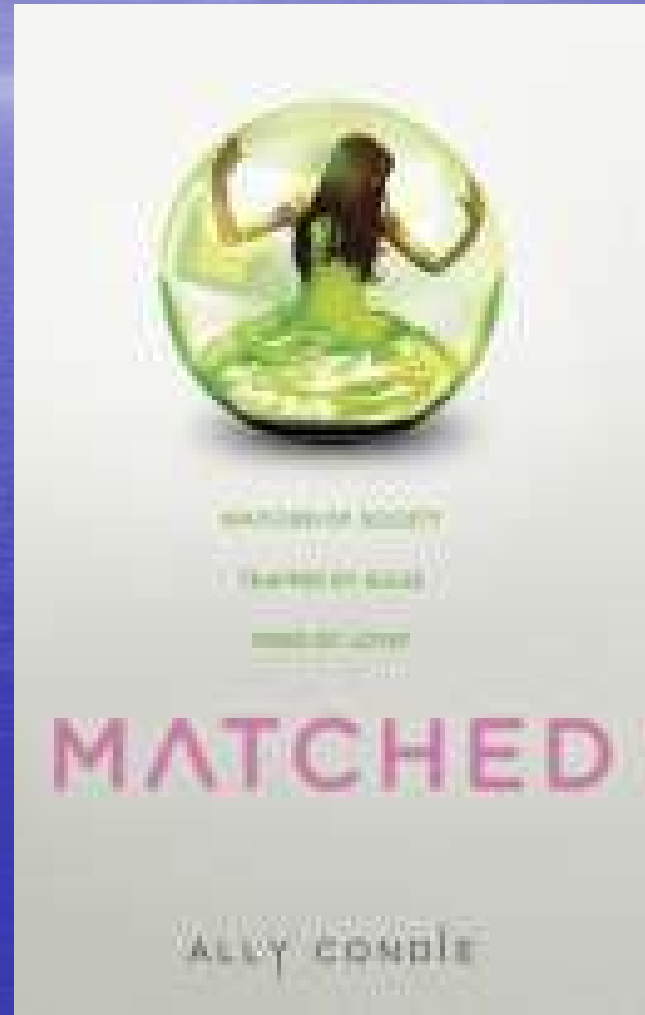
Examples: The Matrix,  
The Terminator, and  
I, Robot





# Philosophical/Religious Control

Society is controlled by a philosophical or religious ideology often enforced through a dictatorship or theocratic government



# Dystopian Protagonist

- Often feels trapped and is struggling to escape
- Questions the existing society and political systems
- Believes or feels that something is terribly wrong with society in which he or she lives
- Helps the audience recognize the negative aspects of the dystopian world through his or her perspective



# Optional discussion questions

1. Why would an author choose to write a novel about a futuristic society with serious and sometimes dangerous faults?
2. What current trends, or ideas, exist in our world today that the author might be thinking of when writing this type of story?
3. What benefits do dystopian stories lend to you and your world?

# Vocabulary for HOS

- Pg. 8...crucifix-A cross viewed as a symbol of Jesus's crucifixion
- Pg. 9...desolation-deprivation of companionship; loneliness
- Pg. 13...voluminous-of great volume, size, or extent
- Pg. 17...chupacabra-a purported creature resembling a gargoyle, said to exist in parts of Mexico and on Puerto Rico; also called Jersey Devil
- Pg.21...upholstered-to furnish
- Pg. 27...grillwork-material so formed as to function as or to have the appearance of a grille
- Pg. 28...tetanus-an infectious, often fatal disease caused by a specific bacterium that enters the body through wounds
- Pg. 31...feverishly-excited, restless, or uncontrolled, as if from fever
- Pg. 37...senile-Of, relating to, or characteristic of old age
- Pg. 38...disconsolately-without consolation or solace; hopelessly unhappy; inconsolable
- Pg. 56...instinctively-prompted by or resulting from or as if from instinct
- Pg. 77...opium-a narcotic substance, poisonous in large doses; a drug
- Pg. 81...pustule-a small swelling similar to a blister or pimple
- Pg. 84...lavishly-to expend or give in great amounts or without limit
- Pg. 86...listless-lacking energy or disinclined to exert effort
- Pg. 87...domain-the territory governed by a single ruler or government
- Pg. 89...entranced-to fill with delight or wonder
- Pg. 94...furtively-surreptitiously or by stealth
- Pg. 99...deteriorated-to make or become worse or inferior in character
- Pg. 118...mulish-of or like a mule, as being very stubborn, obstinate, or intractable
- Pg. 129...agonized-to suffer extreme pain or anguish
- Pg. 138...laudanum-a tincture of opium, formerly used as a drug

# Vocabulary for HOS

- Pg. 147...impulse-the influence of a particular feeling
- Pg. 156...paranoid-of, like, or suffering from paranoia
- Pg. 167...abomination-anything greatly disliked or abhorred
- Pg. 174...hostile-not friendly, warm, or generous
- Pg. 183...gnarled-having a rugged, weather-beaten appearance
- Pg. 192...vanity-excessive pride in one's appearance, qualities, abilities, achievements, etc.
- Pg. 211...erected-upright in position or posture
- Pg. 223...toadstool-a poisonous mushroom, as distinguished from an edible one
- Pg. 239...mercenary-working or acting merely for money or other reward
- Pg. 246...convent-the building or buildings occupied by such a society; a monastery or nunnery
- Pg. 255...plumes-a vertically or longitudinally moving, rising, or expanding fluid body, as of smoke or water
- Pg. 261...emblem-an object or its representation, symbolizing a quality, state, class of persons
- Pg. 270...quota-a proportional part or share of a fixed total amount or quantity
- Pg. 288...aristocrat-A member of a ruling class or of the nobility
- Pg. 290...wisecrack-a smart or facetious remark
- Pg. 318...lackey-a footman or liveried manservant
- Pg. 329...fragment-a part broken off or detached
- Pg. 338...electrolytes-any substance that dissociates into ions when dissolved in a suitable medium or melted and thus forms a conductor of electricity

# Chapters 1-5: Comprehension Questions

- 1. What did Lisa, a senior technician; prevent Eduardo from doing to the newborn child?
- 2. What did Matt do each day while Celia was away at work?
- 3. Where did Celia go to work each day?
- 4. What unexpected surprise happened on a day as he was watching television soap operas?
- 5. Whose clone was Matt?
- 6. Why couldn't Matt simply go outside and play with the children?
- 7. What caused Matt to smash out a window and then leap outside onto broken glass?
- 8. What happened to Matt when he leaped to the ground?

# Chapters 1-5

## Comprehension Questions

- 9. Where did Steven, Emilia, and Maria decide to carry Matt in order to care for him?
- 10. Who insisted that Matt be brought inside for medical attention after Mr. Alacran threw him out? Why did he insist?
- 11. What words were inscribed on the bottom of Matt's foot? How did people react?
- 12. Where was Matt taken after the tattoo on his foot was revealed?
- 13. List two people who stopped by Matt's window and promised to help set him free.
- 14. Angry at having to take care of Matt, how did Rosa treat the boy?
- 15. Describe the relationship between the doctor and Rosa.
- 16. How many years passed between Chapters 1 and 2?
- 17. Who secretly visited Matt? What did she bring him?
- 18. What did Matt do to fight off the dullness that could overtake him?

# Comprehension Questions

## Chapter 6-10

- 1. What unexpected treatment did Rosa give Matt at the beginning of Chapter 6?
- 2. Who was Matt being prepared to meet?
- 3. According to El Patron's orders, how was everyone in the Big House to treat Matt?
- 4. How old was El Patron?
- 5. After examining Matt, what health report did the doctor give El Patron concerning his clone?
- 6. Who did Matt choose to be his personal bodyguard? Why?
- 7. What health problem did Matt display at the beginning of chapter 7?
- 8. What breakthrough happened after six days of home schooling with Teacher?
- 9. What is an eejit?



# Comprehension Questions: Chapter 6-10 (cont.)

- 10. How was Matt's education conducted after Teacher was dismissed?
- 11. Who besides Matt found Tom to be "an unnatural little weevil"? Why?
- 12. How did Tam Lin help Matt celebrate his breakthrough?
- 13. List two reasons why Tam Lin took Matt on a picnic to the secret oasis.
- 14. What did Matt learn about the horses Tam Lin and he rode to the picnic area?
- 15. Who was Furball?
- 16. Who was Felicia?
- 17. Why did Matt like to hide behind the potted plants in the music room each afternoon?
- 18. What discovery did Matt make on day while hiding inside a closet off the music room?
- 19. What part of the day was the music room available for Matt to use?
- 20. Why did Tam Lin secure the services of Mr. Ortega, a deaf man? Why was he considered desperate?
- 21. What birthday did el Patron celebrate in Chapter 10?

# Comprehension Questions: Chapter 11-14

- 1. What did Tom show the kids at the hospital?
- 2. What made Matt different from other clones?
- 3. What was Matt's purpose when he kidnapped Maria's dog?
- 4. Why did El Patron banish Tom to a year-round boarding school with no holidays?
- 5. What did Matt do with Tom's place card after he found it near his at the head table?
- 6. Who had set Felicia up to deliver the message?
- 7. Matt observed that the clone in the hospital resembled whom?
- 8. Describe laudanum and its effects.
- 9. What did Matt request from Maria at El Patron's birthday party?
- 10. List two unexpected effects of Matt's kidnapping attempt.

# Comprehension Questions:

## Chapter 11-14

- 11. What did Celia have in common with El Patron?
- 12. Who joined Matt and Maria at the hospital?
- 13. What was El Patron's attitude towards birthday gifts?
- 14. According to Celia, what happened to all clones at birth?
- 15. What unexpected message did Felicia deliver to Matt one day after the party?
- 16. Who was Maria's father?
- 17. What did Celia tell Matt about Tom's parents?
- 18. Why did Matt steal a small bottle of Felicia's laudanum?
- 19. What evidence pointed to Matt as the one who'd killed Maria's dog?
- 20. What special skill led Celia to belong to El Patron?
- 21. Where did Matt find bottles of laudanum?

# Comprehension Questions: Chapters 15-18

- **Chapters 15-18**

- 1. Who wrote A History of Opium, one of the books Tam Lin had left Matt in the metal chest?
- 2. Where did Senator Mendoza send Maria and Emilia to live, soon after Furball was killed?
- 3. What crime did Maria and Matt overhear Felicia admit to while hiding in the secret passageway?
- 4. How did Matt manage to get back to the Big House from the waste treatment plant?
- 5. Where did Matt take Maria as the two fled El Viejo's funeral?
- 6. Where was the country of Opium and who ruled it?
- 7. Why was Matt pulled out of bed in the middle of the night and then rushed to the hospital with Celia?
- 8. List two couples Matt noticed holding hands at El Viejo's funeral.
- 9. Why did El Patron acquire and use such men as Tam Lin, Ralf, Hugh, and Wee Willie, to use Farm Patrol workers?

# Comprehension Questions: Chapters 15-18

- 10. How was El Viejo related to El Patron?
- 11. What was the priest's reaction when Matt filed past El Viejo to pay his last respects?
- 12. As Matt set out for a horse ride, what was the first thing he searched for?
- 13. What is a Safe Horse?
- 14. What happened to Matt's safe Horse when he set out to investigate the wastelands in the north?
- 15. Who defended Matt's presence at El Viejo's funeral?
- 16. What crime had Tam Lin committed?
- 17. What pleasant surprise did Matt discover in the secret oasis?
- 18. How did Matt's story of St. Francis, who gave stuff away to the poor, affect El Patron?
- 19. What was the main crop of Opium and where was it marketed?
- 20. Who passed away while Matt was enjoying a brief horse ride to the oasis?

# Comprehension Questions: Chapters 19-22

- How did Matt manage to view Steven and Emilia's wedding, even though he was forbidden to attend?
- Who came to the secret passage to warn Matt his life was in danger?
- What was Maria's plan to help Matt escape?
- How old was Matt at the end of Chapter 19?
- Why was Matt able to escape using El Patron's secret passage, which opened only if the old man's hand pressed against the "red scorpion"?
- Lying in bed after his party, what horrible reality did Matt begin to understand?
- Where did the secret passage from El Patron's room lead?
- How did the long swim at the oasis seem to affect Matt at night?
- As Matt sat at El Patron's side, what did he notice about the old man's mind?
- What catastrophe happened at the very end of the wedding?
- Who has already on the hovercraft when Maria and Matt climbed aboard?

# Comprehension Questions: Chapters 19-22

- When Matt returned to the secret oasis, what information did he read and learn about Maria's mother, Esperanza Mendoza?
- Why had El Patron arranged a forced marriage between Benito and Fani, the daughter of the Nigerian president?
- What happened if a wrong person touched the red scorpion to open the wall for the secret escape route?
- How did Celia and Tam Lin help Matt celebrate his growth into manhood?
- How did Emilia and Maria arrive for Emilia's wedding?
- How had Celia recently changed her garden?
- Hiding in the closet off the music room, who did Maria tell Matt she was going to marry?
- What happened one day as Matt played his guitar and sang a Spanish ballad for El Patron?

# Comprehension Questions: Chapters 23-27

- 1. How did Tam Lin protect Celia from becoming an eejit?
- 2. Why did Matt recognize the hospital room he was taken to?
- 3. Where did Tam Lin actually take Matt's duct-taped body?
- 4. After working his way through a canyon with dense bushes, what new obstacle did Matt encounter?
- 5. What awoke Matt just before dawn on the morning of his escape to Aztlán?
- 6. After telling Matt his service was no longer needed, what order did Mr. Alacrán give Tam Lin?
- 7. What situation gave Matt an opportunity to escape past the Farm Patrol and reach the border safely?
- 8. Why was Matt's destination going to be San Luis?
- 9. Why didn't Tam Lin help Celia escape with Matt?
- 10. What two substances did Celia secretly feed Matt so that his heart would not be a healthy transplant for El Patrón?
- 11. Why was Matt told to get to the border the very next day?



# Comprehension Questions: Chapters 23-27

- 10. What two substances did Celia secretly feed Matt so that his heart would not be a healthy transplant for El Patrón?
- 11. Why was Matt told to get to the border the very next day?
- 12. As Matt neared the border, what problem did he observe through his binoculars?
- 13. After testing Matt's blood and urine, what did the doctor report?
- 14. According to Tam Lin, why was Matt going to find Aztlán a confusing place?
- 15. Where did Tam Lin announce he'd dispose of Matt after being dismissed by Mr. Alacrán?
- 16. How did Matt learn the route to Aztlán's border?
- 17. How many miles did Matt travel before reaching the Aztlán border?
- 18. How was Matt able to escape the Farm Patroller who grabbed him by his backpack?
- 19. What story was Matt to tell the Aztlános when he reached their border?
- 20. In what way did Tam Lin note that Matt was different than the seven clones before him?