

THE NOBEL PRIZE

In-depth: Utopias and Dystopias

Read a Utopia or Dystopia



Here are some ideas for utopias and dystopias you can read and discuss together in the classroom. Look at the ideas for analysis questions in the PDF "Analyse a Utopia or Dystopia".

Utopia (or with elements of utopia)

- Burnett, Frances Hodgson, *The Secret Garden* (1911) – also available as a film
- Gilman, Charlotte Perkins, *Herland* (1915)
- Thoreau, Henry David, *Walden; or, Life in the Woods* (1854)
- Butler, Octavia, *Parable of the Sower* (1993)
- Callenbach, Ernest, *Ecotopia* (1975)
- Garland, Alex, *The Beach* (2000) – also a film
- LeGuin, Ursula K., *The Left Hand of Darkness* (1969) and *The Dispossessed* (1974)
- Robinson, Kim Stanley, *New York 2140* (2017)
- Wells, H. G., *A Modern Utopia* (1905)
- Solarpunk: *Ecological and Fantastical Stories in a Sustainable World* (2014), anthology
- Sunvault: *Stories of Solarpunk and Eco-Speculation* (2017), anthology

In Swedish:

- Engström, Torbjörn, *Syskonplaneten* (1979)
- Lundin, Claës, *Oxygen och Aromasia* (1878)
- *Andra vägar: Tio nya utopier* (short stories, including a manifesto by Jeff Noon, 2015)

Films

- *Avatar* (director: James Cameron, 2009)
- *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind* (director: Hayao Miyazaki, 1984)

Dystopias

Younger readers

- Collins, Suzanne, *The Hunger Games* trilogy
- Dashner, James, *Maze Runner* (2009)
- Itäranta, Emmi, *Memory of Water* (2014)
- Roth, Veronica, *Divergent* trilogy

In Swedish:

- Nilsson, Per, *Otopia* (2014)
- Nordin, Sofia, *En sekund i taget* (2013); *Spring så fort du kan* (2014); *Som om jag vore fantastisk* (2015); *Om du såg mig nu* (2017)
- Söderlund, Mats, "Ättingarna-trilogin": *Hotet* (2018); *Kampen* (2018); *Flykten* (2020)

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Upper secondary school

- Atwood, Margaret, *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985)
- Huxley, Aldous, *Brave New World* (1932)
- Ishiguro, Kazuo, *Never Let Me Go* (2005); *Klara and the Sun* (2021)
- Jemisin, N. K, *The Broken Earth* trilogy
- Orwell, George, *1984* (1949)
- Brown, Pierce, *Red Rising* (Parts 1–3)

In Swedish:

- Boje, Karin, *Kallocain* (1940)
- Nilsson, Johanna, *Det grönare djupet* (2015, a “sequel” to *Kallocain*)

Climate fiction: international examples

- Ballard, J. G., *The Wind from Nowhere* (1961); *The Drowned World* (1962); *The Burning World* (1964, later title *The Drought*)
- LeGuin, Ursula, *The Lathe of Heaven* (1971)
- Butler, Octavia, *Parable of the Sower* (1993)
- Atwood, Margaret, *Oryx and Crake* (2003); *The Year of the Flood* (2009); *MaddAddam* (2013)
- Crichton Michael, *State of Fear* (2004)
- Robinson, Kim Stanley, ‘Science in the Capital’ trilogy (2004-07)
- McEwan, Ian, *Solar* (2010)
- Bacigalupi, Paolo, *The Windup Girl* (2011)
- Kingsolver, Barbara, *Flight Behavior* (2012)
- McCarthy, Cormac, *The Road* (2006)
- Howey, Hugh *Wool* (2011 – part of the “Silo”-thrilogy)
- Ghosh, Amitav, *Gun Island* (2019)

Climate fiction: Swedish and Nordic examples

- Jersild, PC: *Efter Floden* (1982)
- Itäranta, Emmi, *Minnet av vatten* (2012)
- Lunde, Maja, Trilogin *Binas historia* (2015), *Blå* (2017) och *Przewalskis häst* (2021)
- Weithz, Jesper, *Det som inte växer är döende* (2012)
- Heldén, Johannes: *Astroekologi* (2016) and *First contact* (2019)
- Carlsson, Hanna Rut, *Sista hösten i Legoland* (2019)
- Svensson, Amanda, *Ett system så magnifikt att det bländar* (2019)
- Ericson, Eric & Wallstén, Susanna, *Pandokraterna* (2020)

To read and learn more about utopias and dystopias:

Macy Joanna, Johnstone Chris, *Active Hope: How to Face the Mess We're in Without Going Crazy* (2012)

This reading list was developed by Camilla Brudin Borg, PhD in literary criticism at the University of Gothenburg.