

THE NOBEL PRIZE

Teacher's Guide: Utopias and Dystopias

This is a lesson plan for the Nobel Prize lesson "Utopias and Dystopias", which has been created within the framework for the citizen science project Utopian Stories. If your class is participating in the project, this lesson provides an excellent introduction to the subject and to the questionnaires the students will be working with. But the lesson can also be given separate from the project as an in-depth study of the genres of utopia and dystopia. The lesson is estimated to take about 60 minutes.

Preparation

- Make sure the slideshow works in the classroom.
- Print out the assignment sheet for your students. If they're working from home, send them the assignment as a PDF.

Warm-up (5 min)

Ask the students the following questions:

- Have you come across the terms utopia and dystopia before?
- Have you ever read or seen a utopia or dystopia? What was it about?

Show the slideshow (30–40 min)

Show the slideshow, using the speaker's manuscript to narrate. The slideshow has two parts – one about utopias and one about dystopias. Each part includes one or two discussion questions and takes about 15–20 min.

Work with the student assignment (20 min)

- Hand out the assignment sheet.
- Let the students work individually with the assignment and then discuss their answers with their neighbour.

Ideas for more in-depth study (refer to the material in the PDFs)

- Film: Kjell Espmark on Utopia, Dystopia and the Nobel Prize – short presentation by Swedish Academy member Kjell Espmark, with discussion questions
- Kazuo Ishiguro: Technology and Humanity – working with two works by Ishiguro
- Read a Utopia or Dystopia – reading list
- Analyse a Utopia or Dystopia – ideas for analysis questions
- Your Future – assignments for discussion and writing

This Nobel Prize lesson was developed in collaboration with Camilla Brudin Borg, PhD in literary criticism at the University of Gothenburg.