

## Classification Paper

**Due:** Thursday, October 4<sup>th</sup> by 5pm

**Submission format:** Via Sakai in Word format (.doc/.docx) or as a PDF (.PDF). All papers should have student's last name in the file name (FitzsimmonsClassification.doc)

**Paper Requirements:** 4-6 pages (1000-1200 words), MLA format, Work Cited page in MLA format with 5 sources

**Instructions:** Students will choose a primary text that is considered by some (authors, reviewers, fans, publishers) to be a dystopia. Students are encouraged to choose a YA text but may also choose a television show, film, or non-YA book (they may not choose a text listed on the class syllabus for this semester). In their essay, students will aim to complete two goals:

- 1) **Define dystopia:** Students should draw on textbook chapters, articles and class discussion in formulating their own definition of dystopia. The definition should be original, well-supported and thorough in considering various approaches to dystopian tradition. Students may choose to define a more specific sub-set of dystopian literature (YA Dystopia, Sci-Fi Dystopia) or may stick with the broader definition. Students should support their definition with some of the texts we have read in class, or they may research other academic definitions of dystopia as they see fit.
- 2) **Classify the primary text in question:** Once students have clearly established a definition for dystopia, they should then evaluate the text they have chosen based on that definition. Students should evaluate multiple facets of the primary text, such as form, content, author's intent, feasibility, and other elements discussed in class or in the textbook. Specific examples from the text will aid in formulating a persuasive argument. Students must also clearly establish, through the citation of paratexts (reviews, book blurbs, advertisements, press releases, author interviews) that the primary text they have chosen is considered by some to belong to the dystopian tradition or that there is a debate over the classification of the primary text.

A successful essay will balance these two goals, while asserting a clear position or argument for both. In order to receive an A, students will accomplish both of these goals, will use 5 sources (1 primary, 4 secondary) and will turn in a polished essay, free from grammatical errors and in MLA format.

### Source Checklist

	Type of Source	Title/Author
1	Primary Text (Fiction, TV show, film)	
2	Critical Text (Textbook chapter, academic article)	
3	Critical Text (Textbook chapter, academic article)	
4	Paratext (Book blurb, review, advertisement, author interview)	
5	Paratext (Book blurb, review, advertisement, author interview)	

Grade Rubric for Classification Paper

Required Elements	Grade Criteria	Points earned
<p>Definition of dystopia (30%)</p> <p>A/B =30-24 pts C =23-21 pts D/E=20-0 pts</p>	<p><b>A/B level:</b> student creates an original, complete and well-reasoned definition of dystopia, drawing on elements of class discussion and readings, with clear boundaries and concrete reasoning for them</p> <p><b>C level:</b> student relies heavily on an already established definition of dystopia, with little original reasoning or without explaining clearly why this definition is the best. Definition is hazy or unclear.</p> <p><b>D/E level:</b> no definition is present, or definition is a poor replica of class discussion, without clear boundaries or reasoning explained.</p>	
<p>Evaluation of book, film, or television show (30%)</p> <p>A/B =30-24 pts C =23-21 pts D/E=20-0 pts</p>	<p><b>A/B level:</b> student chooses an appropriate primary text (film, television show, book from outside course syllabus). Student evaluates various aspects of this primary text based on established definition. Complex evaluations (some aspects fit, others do not) are permitted, so long as the paper concludes with a unified argument (see below). Specific examples, quotes or close readings of scenes support the evaluation.</p> <p><b>C level:</b> Primary text is appropriate for evaluation. Student evaluates one or two aspects of the primary text, but evaluation is shallow, vague, with few or no specifics.</p> <p><b>D/E level:</b> Primary text chosen is inappropriate for the paper or evaluation of the text is missing all together. Student asserts text is/isn't a dystopia without support, specific examples or references to the established definition.</p>	
<p>Advances a clear argument (10%)</p> <p>A/B=10-8 pts C= 7 pts D/E =6-0 pts</p>	<p><b>A/B level:</b> Student advances a clear argument about why their definition of dystopia is the most accurate. Student also persuades the reader that based on their definition, the primary text is/isn't a dystopia. Appropriate persuasive techniques and organization are used to advance both arguments.</p> <p><b>C level:</b> Student focuses heavily on definition or evaluation of primary text, to the detriment of the other half of the argument. Structure and persuasive techniques do not add to the arguments.</p> <p><b>D/E level:</b> One or both of these arguments are missing. Student relies on "yes and no" thesis ("Primary text both is and isn't a dystopia.) Reader is unsure of student's positions by the end of the paper.</p>	
<p>Sources and citations (15%)</p> <p>A/B=15-12 pts C = 11 pts D/E =10-0 pts</p>	<p><b>A/B level:</b> Student uses proper MLA in-text citations and work cited page. Student cites 5 total sources (1 primary text, 2 secondary/critical texts like chapters from the textbook, 2 marketing/para-texts) and uses those sources to add to their overall argument.</p> <p><b>C level:</b> Student attempts to use MLA in-text and work cited page, with minor errors. 5 sources are used, but not fully integrated into the essay, or not used persuasively to augment the argument.</p> <p><b>D/E level:</b> Fewer than 5 texts are cited. Student does not use MLA citation style, or attempts to use MLA with lots of errors.</p>	
<p>Mechanics (15%)</p> <p>A = 15-14 pts B/C=13-11 pts D/E =10-0 pts</p>	<p><b>A level:</b> Paper is free of mechanical errors (spelling, grammar, typos). Paper is formatted in MLA style (heading, margins, font). Paper meets word count requirements (1000-1200 words).</p> <p><b>B/C level:</b> Paper is mostly free of mechanical errors (3 or fewer). Paper is formatted in MLA style. Paper meets word count requirements.</p> <p><b>D/E level:</b> Paper has more than a few mechanical errors. MLA formatting is incomplete or missing.</p> <p>Papers failing to meet the minimum of 1000 words will automatically receive an E grade.</p>	
	<p>Total points</p>	