

DYSTOPIA

LOOK at the movie poster **the Hunger Games** and **DESCRIBE** it.

Do you know either the book or the film?

What is the meaning of the quote **“the world will be watching you?”**



READ the plot of the film

THE HUNGER GAMES. The story is set in a futuristic dictatorship called Panem, where every year 12 boys and 12 girls, between the age of 12 and 18 and known as Tributes, are chosen to take part in a TV reality survival programme The Hunger Games. During the game the Tributes fight each other to death on live TV. The game finishes when only one Tribute is alive.

The director of the film tried to avoid scenes of violence, but increased tension with fast action and handheld cameras.

LOOK and ANALYSE the mural

Alexis Rockman, Manifest Destiny 2004,

Sunrise or sunset? Yellow – orange light. Very hot

The ruins of Brooklyn Bridge

Sea level rise – global warming



Seagulls and pelicans fly over the city

Many kinds of fish swim among the buildings

DISCUSS. Analysing the movie poster and the plot of The Hunger Games and the mural by Rockman, can you list typical elements of DYSTOPIA?

Many writers and artists have dealt with the idea of a **dystopian world** to denounce the actual society and its biggest issues about politics, environment, ethics, technology, science ...**Scott Westerfeld** is an American writer of YA fiction¹ whose themes are often free thinking and questioning authority. His trilogy **The Uglies** Series is set in a futuristic world where teenagers have to undergo cosmetic surgery at the age of 16 to become pretty. In this way the government thinks they will be able to eliminate all social injustice. The books is about Tally Youngblood who can't wait for the operation, then in the end decides to rebel against society's conformity, when she meets her new friends Shay and David. They go to the Smoke, a hidden community of runaway Uglies. Soon, Special Circumstances arrive at the Smoke and ... I'm not going to spoil the rest of the book.

THEMES of The Uglies:

- **Identity:** the government controls what happens and creates uniformity and sameness with the operation
- **Beauty:** the society in this book is obsessed by image

Read the excerpts from THE UGLIES

1.

Any other summer, a sunset like this would have been beautiful. But nothing had been beautiful since Peris turned pretty. Losing your best friend sucks, even if it's only for three months and two days. Tally Youngblood was waiting for darkness. She could see New Pretty Town through her open window. The party towers were already lit up, and (...). Laughter and music skipped across the water (...). Around the outskirts of the city, cut off from town by the black oval of the river, everything was in darkness. Everyone ugly was in bed by now.

Who is Peris? What do you understand about him? _____

What do you guess about The Uglies' and The Pretties' different lives? _____

¹YA fiction = Young Adult Fiction: books written for readers from 12 to 18

2.

Tally took off her interface ring and said, "Good night." "Sweet dreams, Tally," said the room. She chewed up a toothbrush pill, punched her pillows, and shoved² an old portable heater -- one that produced about as much warmth as a sleeping, Tally-size human being -- under the covers. Then she crawled out the window. Outside, with the night finally turning coal black above her head, Tally instantly felt better. Maybe this was a stupid plan, but anything was better than another night awake in bed feeling sorry for herself.

What "stupid plan" is Tally thinking about?

What **futuristic elements** can you find in the text?

3.

On the familiar leafy path down to the water's edge, it was easy to imagine Peris stealing silently behind her, stifling laughter³, ready for a night of spying on the new pretties. Together. She and Peris had figured out how to trick the house minder⁴ back when they were twelve, when the three-month difference in their ages seemed like it would never matter. "Best friends for life," Tally muttered, fingering the tiny scar on her right palm. (...) Of course, Peris could sleep as late as he wanted now. Just one of the advantages of being pretty. (...) Of course, Tally was nothing here. Worse, she was ugly. But she hoped Peris wouldn't see it that way. Wouldn't see her that way. Tally had no idea what would happen if she got caught. But she and Peris had always been very careful about not getting caught on these expeditions. Crossing the river was serious business. (...) It was too late to worry now, though. What could they do to her, anyway? In three months she'd be a pretty herself.

What is Tally doing?

Do you think she will become pretty or not?

➤ Find elements referred to the themes in the three excerpts:

- **Identity**
- **Beauty**

²Shoved = infilò

³Stifling laughter = risata soffocante

⁴House minder = supervisore della casa

