

## 1. Context

**Author:** Ray Bradbury (1920-2012)

**Nationality:** American

**Short stories:** *The Pedestrian*, *Sound of Thunder*

**Other notable works:** *Fahrenheit 451*, *The Martian Chronicles*, *Something Wicked This Way Comes*.

**Genres:** Dystopian, Science Fiction, Fantasy

**Era:** 20<sup>th</sup> Century

### Author biography

- Born August 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1920 to a Swedish mother and a father with English heritage.
- Inspired in his early years by his aunt who read short stories to him.
- Grew up in Arizona until the age of fourteen when his family moved and settled in L.A.
- Throughout his childhood he was an avid reader and writer. Wrote his first short story during the Great Depression in 1931 at the age of eleven.
- Started to write traditional horror stories at the age of twelve.
- In 1950, published his first major work, *The Martian Chronicles*.
- In 1953, his best-known novel *Fahrenheit 451* was published.
- Published more than 30 books, approximately 600 short stories, and numerous poems, essays, screenplays and plays.
- Defined himself as an American fantasy and horror author. He rejected being labelled as a science fiction author, as his work was based on the fantastical and unreal.
- Won the Pulitzer Prize for Literature in 2004 and received a special citation from the Pulitzer board in 2007.
- Died on June 5th 2012, aged 91, in Los Angeles

### Social, Historical & Literary context

#### Literary Context: Dystopian Fiction

- The word 'dystopia' is well-known as the opposite, or antonym of 'utopia'.
- 'Utopia' was first coined by Sir Thomas More (1478-1535) in his 1516 work *Utopia*.
- *Utopia* comes from the Greek *u-topos* ('no place') and *eu-topos* ('good place').
- Dystopia comes from the Greek *dys* ('bad') and *topia* ('bad place')
- If 'utopia' represents an ideal or dream society, 'dystopia' is the word used to refer to an imagined nightmare world which is usually the world of the future.
- The noun 'dystopia' is defined as 'an imaginary place or condition in which everything is as bad as possible'.
- In a dystopian story, society itself is typically the antagonist as society is actively working against the protagonist's aims and desires.
- The worlds depicted are often controlled by a totalitarian or authoritarian government.
- Dystopian fiction often explores issues such as the loss of civil liberties, living under constant surveillance, laws controlling a woman's reproductive freedom, and denial of the right to an education.
- Dystopias are often thought to be 'cautionary tales' but are also used to explore the ideas of what is to be human.

## 3. Key Vocabulary

	Definition
<b>dystopia</b>	An imagined place or state in which everything is unpleasant or bad, typically a totalitarian or environmentally damaged one.
<b>utopia</b>	An imagined place or state of things in which everything is perfect.
<b>totalitarian</b>	A system of government that is centralised and dictatorial and requires its people to obey the government or state without questions.
<b>fatalistic</b>	Relating to or characteristic of the belief that all events are predetermined and therefore inevitable.
<b>nihilistic</b>	Rejecting all religious and moral principles in the belief that life is meaningless.
<b>repressed</b>	Oppressed or restrained.
<b>tyranny</b>	Cruel, unreasonable and oppressive rule or government.
<b>dehumanise</b>	To deprive some one of positive human qualities.
<b>rebellion</b>	The action or process of resisting authority, control, or convention.
<b>paranoia</b>	Unjustified suspicion or mistrust of people.
<b>propaganda</b>	Using biased or misleading information to promote a political cause or point of view.
<b>ebbing</b>	To gradually decrease.
<b>interminably</b>	Endless or continuing too long.
<b>perfunctory</b>	Carrying out an action without real interest, feeling or effort.
<b>paradox</b>	A person or thing that combines contradictory features or qualities.
<b>stagnating</b>	Existing in a unchanging situation
<b>futuristic</b>	Having or involving very modern technology or design
<b>oppressive</b>	Something or someone that limits freedom of thought or action
<b>bureaucratic</b>	Inflexible rules, procedures and regulations
<b>societal norm</b>	The unwritten rules of behavior that are considered acceptable in a group or society
<b>dictatorship</b>	A government or a social situation where one person / system makes all the rules and decisions without allowing input from anyone else.

## Subject-Specific Vocabulary

1	<b>protagonist</b>	the central character or leading figure in a poem, narrative, novel or any type of story
2	<b>antagonist</b>	the character who opposes the protagonist
3	<b>third person limited narrator</b>	when the narrator's thoughts, feelings and knowledge of situations closely follow one character's perspective
4	<b>third person omniscient narrator</b>	when the story is related by a narrator who knows the thoughts and feelings of all the characters in the story
5	<b>theme</b>	an idea that recurs (comes up again and again) or pervades (spreads through) a work of art or a piece of literature
6	<b>foreshadowing</b>	when the writer gives advance hints of what is to come later in the story
7	<b>tension</b>	a feeling of nervousness or uncertainty leading up to a significant or challenging moment or event
8	<b>mood</b>	a literary method used by writers to evoke certain feelings in readers through words and descriptions
9	<b>pathetic fallacy</b>	when a writer gives human emotions and traits to nature, particularly the weather - often used to make the environment reflect the feelings of a narrator or other characters
10	<b>symbolism</b>	when a writer takes an action, object, place, person, animal or word and gives it a much more metaphorical meaning
11	<b>narrative structure</b>	a traditional linear narrative includes exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, dénouement

## Character and Tone Vocabulary

12	<b>high-spirited</b>	describes someone who is lively and easily excited
13	<b>impetuous</b>	acting or doing something quickly without thought or care
14	<b>menacing</b>	threatening or intimidating
15	<b>cautious</b>	describes when someone acts carefully to avoid possible danger or harm
16	<b>considerate</b>	describes someone who pays attention to the needs, wishes or feelings of other people
17	<b>resourceful</b>	describes someone who is good at finding ways of solving problems
18	<b>self-reliant</b>	describes someone who can do things and make decisions by themselves, without needing help
19	<b>deception</b>	to trick someone by concealing (hiding) or misrepresenting the truth (lying)
20	<b>indomitable</b>	describes someone who never gives up or admits defeat

## Thematic Vocabulary – Power and Conflict

21	<b>tyrant</b>	a figure of authority who rules in a cruel and oppressive way
22	<b>dehumanisation</b>	to deprive someone of their human rights such as kindness, individuality and creativity
23	<b>triumph</b>	to gain success or victory after a difficult struggle
24	<b>class</b>	a system of ordering society where people are divided into sets based on perceived social or economic status
25	<b>corruption</b>	dishonest and illegal behaviour by people in positions of authority or power



## Subject-Specific Vocabulary

1	<b>exclamation</b>	a type of sentence that conveys strong feelings
2	<b>rhetorical question</b>	a question that is used to make a point, rather than get an answer
3	<b>tone</b>	the attitude or feelings a writer expresses towards a subject
4	<b>mood</b>	a literary method used by writers to evoke certain feelings in readers, through descriptions
5	<b>personification</b>	giving human feelings or actions to an inanimate object
6	<b>metaphor</b>	a comparison in which a person, object or action is used to represent or symbolise another person, object or action
7	<b>synonym</b>	a word which has the same or nearly the same meaning as another word
8	<b>speaker</b>	in poetry, the narrative voice or the person speaking in the poem
9	<b>stanza</b>	a group of lines that form a smaller unit within a poem
10	<b>rhyme scheme</b>	the pattern according to which rhyming words located at the end of lines are repeated in works of poetry
11	<b>anaphora</b>	the repetition of the same words at the start of successive sentences or clauses or lines of poetry
12	<b>metre</b>	the rhythmical structure of a line of poetry: the pattern of syllables (or beats) in the line.
13	<b>enjambement</b>	the continuation of a sentence or clause across a line break in poetry
14	<b>caesura</b>	a pause that occurs within a line of poetry, usually marked by some form of punctuation
15	<b>pronoun</b>	a word that you use to refer to someone or something, in place of a noun
16	<b>repetition</b>	when a single word, or a group of words, is repeated
17	<b>extended metaphor</b>	a metaphor that unfolds across multiple lines or even paragraphs of a text
18	<b>symbolism</b>	when a writer takes an action, object, place, person, animal or word and gives it a more metaphorical meaning

## 2. Key Terminology

<b>Dystopian fiction</b>	Refers to a genre of writing which explores the loss of civil liberties, living under constant surveillance, laws controlling a woman's reproductive freedom, and denial of the right to education.
<b>literary Conventions</b>	Defining features of particular literary genres, such as novel, short story, ballad, sonnet, and play.
<b>antagonist</b>	A person who actively opposes or is hostile to someone or something; an adversary.
<b>setting</b>	The time and place in which the story takes place in a piece of literature. Setting can establish the mood or atmosphere of a scene or story.
<b>mood</b>	The feelings or atmosphere perceived by a reader in a piece of literature.
<b>motif</b>	A dominant or recurring idea.
<b>symbolism</b>	The use of symbols to express ideas or qualities.
<b>foreshadowing</b>	A literary device in which a writer gives an advance hint of what is to come later in the story.
<b>characterisation</b>	A literary device in which an author builds up a character in a narrative.
<b>exposition</b>	Refers to part of the story used to introduce background information about events, settings, characters etc. to the reader.
<b>rising action</b>	A related series of incidents in a literary plot that build toward the point of greatest excitement/interest.
<b>climax</b>	The point of highest tension in a narrative.
<b>falling action</b>	Occurs immediately after the climax, when the main problem of the story has been resolved.



# Year 8

## Subject-Specific Vocabulary – Literary Methods

15	<b>metaphor</b>	a comparison in which a person, object or action is used to represent or symbolise another person, object or action
16	<b>imagery</b>	a literary method used to create a particular image to convey the key ideas, messages or themes in a text
17	<b>setting</b>	the time and place of the story, including the physical location, weather and cultural surroundings
18	<b>magic realism</b>	a literary genre where magic elements are a natural part in an otherwise ordinary, realistic environment
19	<b>comedy</b>	a play characterised by its humorous tone and amusing people or incidents, in which the characters ultimately triumph over adversity
20	<b>hyperbole</b>	deliberate exaggeration used for effect
21	<b>tone</b>	the attitude or feelings that a character expresses through their words and the way the actor says those words
22	<b>simile</b>	a literary method where a writer describes a person or thing as being similar to someone or something else
23	<b>theme</b>	an idea that recurs (comes up again and again) or pervades (spreads through) a work of art or a piece of literature

## Subject-Specific Vocabulary – Grammar

10	<b>pronoun</b>	a word that you use to refer to someone or something, in place of a noun
11	<b>modal verbs</b>	verbs that indicate likelihood, ability, permission or obligation
12	<b>imperative</b>	a sentence that begins with a verb. a command
13	<b>relative clause</b>	a clause which gives information about a person or thing; it comes after a noun or pronoun and begins with a relative pronoun such as who, which, where, when, whose, or that.
14	<b>appositive phrase</b>	an additional phrase that adds more information to a noun or noun phrase

