

### Fantasy, Science Fiction, Utopias and Dystopias

In launching the unit of study, I chose to introduce it with something that most people are familiar with. Comic books and its heroes are one of the first things that children are introduced to in their adolescent periods. It is something that has become excessively popular over the recent years and is an excellent gateway for young adult readers to engage in other types of fantastical novels. In utilizing comic books for the purpose of engaging a classroom in discussions and creative writing activities I would hope to make a lasting impression as to allow students to take their relationships with heroes and comic books to a more educated level of reading.

Following the relationship that comic books and heroes can have with a young adult class, I would introduce another series of books that most young adult students can either relate to or have some sort of knowledge of. The Twilight Saga written by Stephenie Meyer is a well-known utopia/dystopia that is similar to a world we live in but is also home to mythical creatures such as vampires and werewolves. The heroes of the series happen to be mythical creatures that are meant to be horrifying, are despised in a normal society and is an excellent example that heroes can be found anywhere, even in a romantic fantasy.

In relation to a story of vampires, I would introduce Let Me In by John Ajvide Lindqvist. This book is about a young scrawny twelve year old boy who is always bullied by kids at school only to find later that one of the boys has been emptied of blood. The book later reveals that his new neighbor is a small vampire girl of about his age; however this may be more an adult book as opposed to a young adult book due to its gory content it exemplifies a narrow view of a

fantasy world as opposed to the Twilight series where there are many vampires. This book can offer various ways in perceiving what a hero really is and allows students to examine those as creatively as this book presents it.

As the Twilight Saga and Let Me In takes the reader on a journey through a distorted world, so does The Looking Glass Wars by Frank Beddor. This book also takes a story that is taught to most children as they grow up and turns it into a distorted version of it. This book is about the real story of Alice in Wonderland. Albeit the story of Alice in Wonderland is for children, The Looking Glass Wars is an action packed mystery where Hatter Madigan is a detective in search for Alyss Heart to return her to her Wonderland because she is the rightful heir to the throne and Queen of Hearts. This can be a wonderful example for students to examine as the author takes a story well-known and makes it his own. This can be good way to show young adults that their imagination can make use of other imaginative stories.

Some of the books discussed in class (112b) can also be useful in classroom full of young adults. Harry Potter and The Prisoner of Azkaban is a canonical work that most young adults can relate to as well as some of the other works mentioned. Mortal Engines, by Phillip Reeves, was a book talk presentation this semester that I was really impressed by. The world of vehicular cities at war can exemplify how imaginative a writer can become through their own creations. Another book talk presented during this semester was Seraphina by Rachel Hartman. This book is another imaginative creation that derived from mythical dragons; however this book creatively integrates dragons into human society by characterizing dragons with massive intellect. These dragons can take the form of humans and use their intelligent minds to better human society as opposed to the destructive dragons found in many other fantasies. I also incorporated Eragon, one of my favorite fantasy books, into this unit. The dragons presented in this book differ from

the dragons in Seraphina because Eragon's dragon, Saphira, can only communicate with her rider and whomever she chooses and does not interfere with decisions made by the people of its respected world. I also found a provoking review written by Christopher Paolini, the author of Eragon, stating that these are "Some of the most interesting dragons I've read in fantasy." As this has proven to be a gateway novel for me, I would hope for it to be for young adults as well.

I chose to begin my presentation with comic books because its heroes are well-known and have existed throughout most young adult lives. This relation between inspiring heroes and young adults can then be a gateway for students to engage in other books that hold a similar relation such as the Twilight Saga or the Harry Potter series. Some of the examples I've used have proven to be a gateway for me in reading different material and I have included them in hopes that a young adult, even if there are few, can experience fantasy the way I have throughout my life. The importance of this unit is to expand the creativity that everyone has and to help better understand the limitless variations of an imaginative world.

## Works Cited

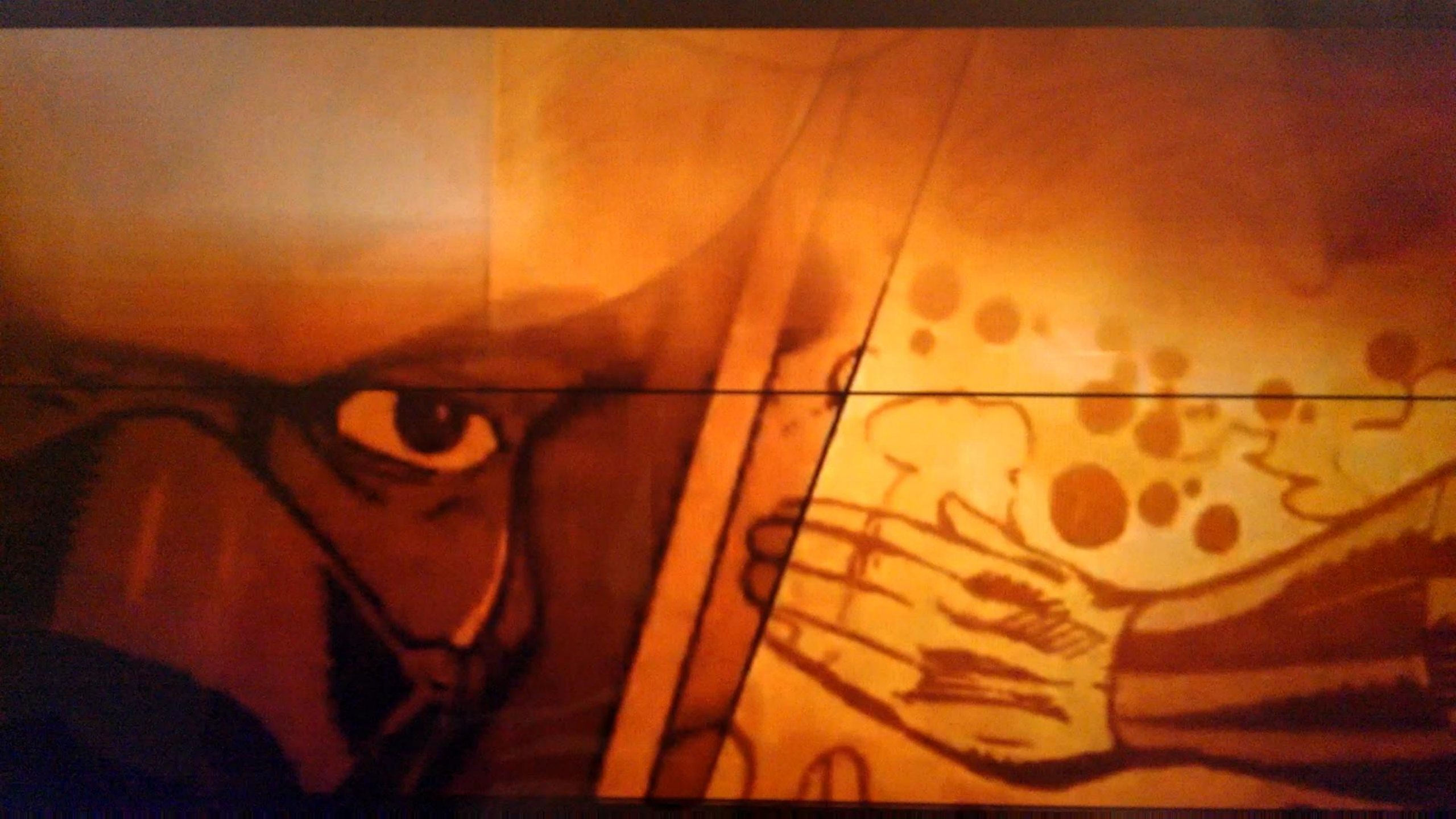
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# Fantasies, Utopias, Science Fiction and Dystopias.

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English 112b







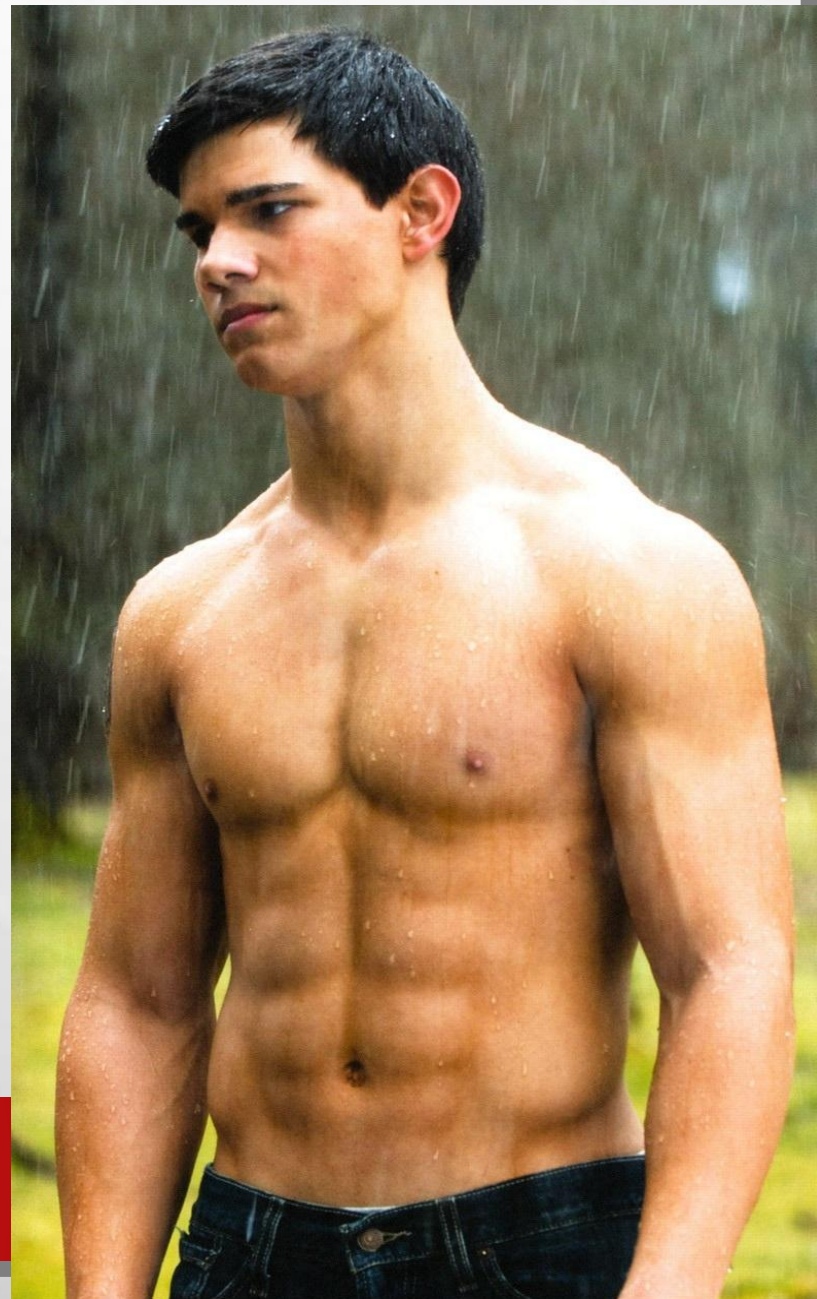
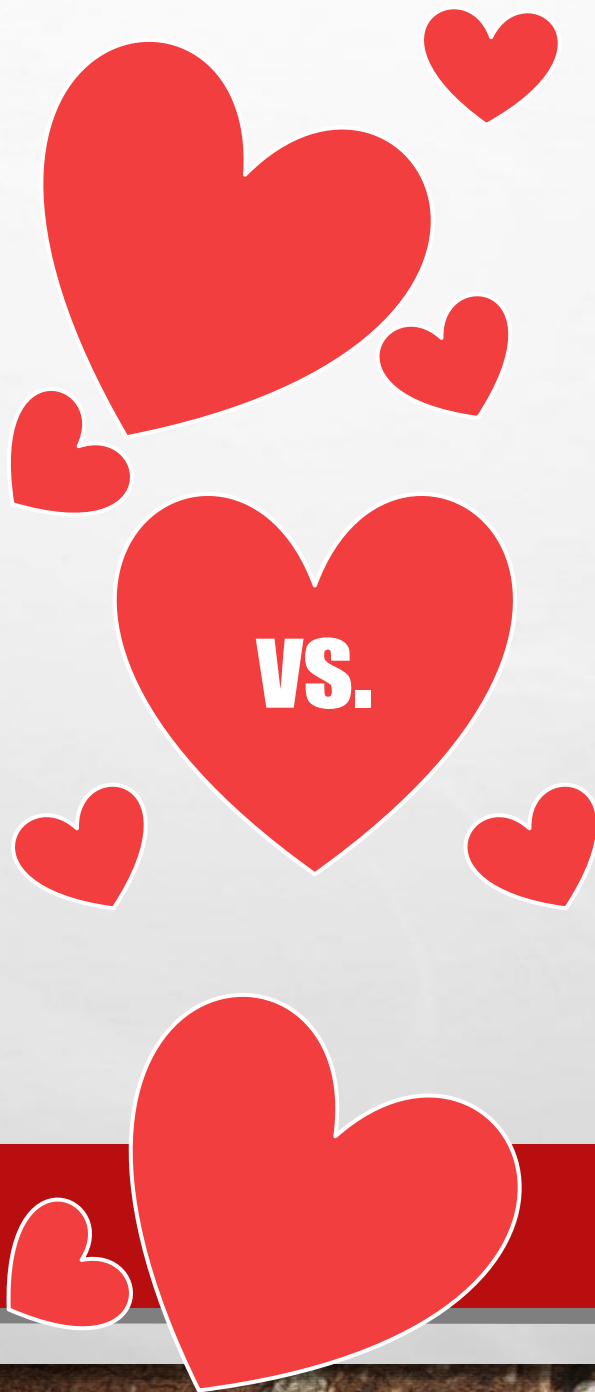
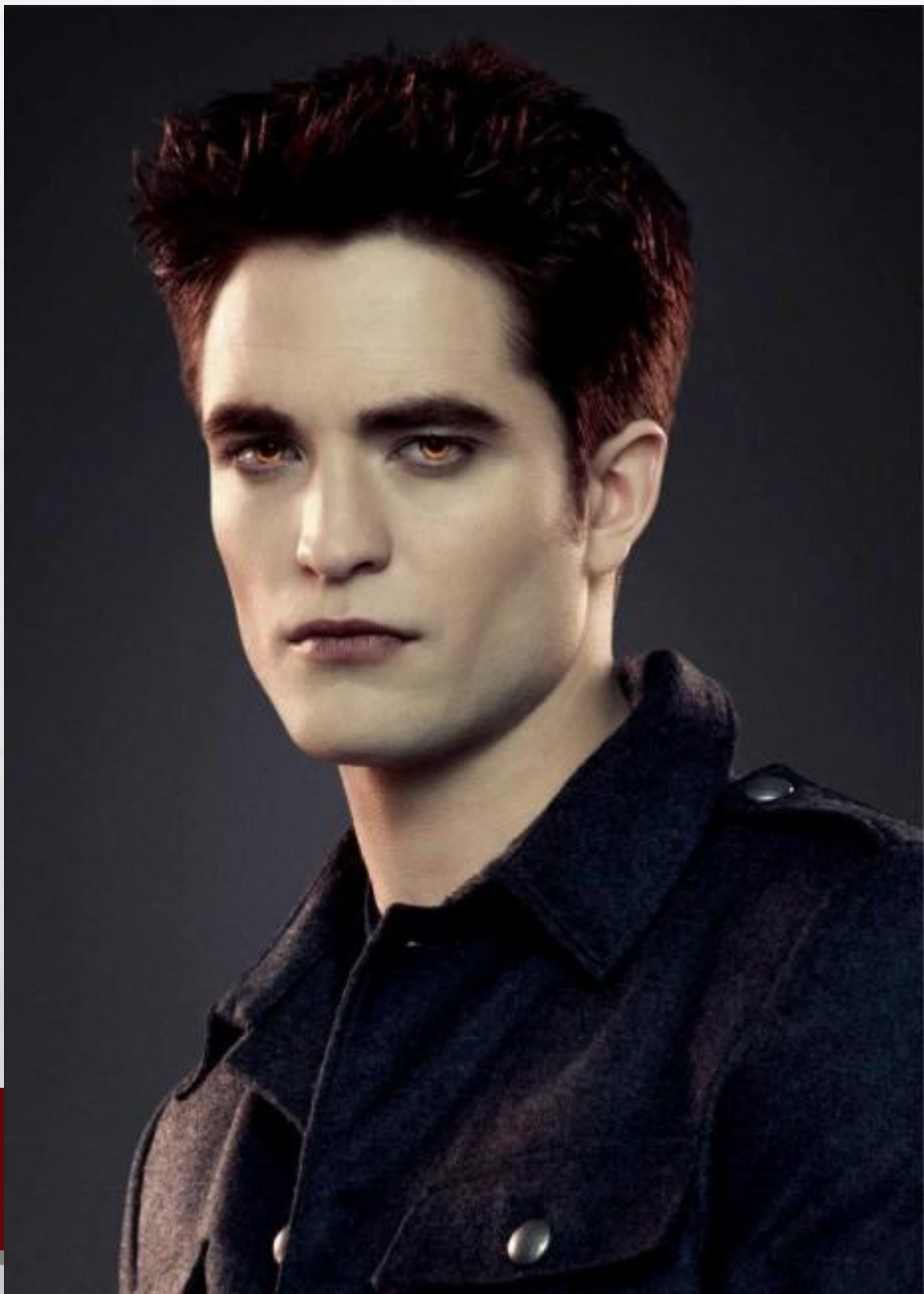
# Launching the Unit: Science Fiction/ Fantasy/ Utopias/ Dystopias

## Discussion

- Who is your favorite comic book hero?
- Which super hero would you be?
- Which evil villain do you despise most?

## Activity

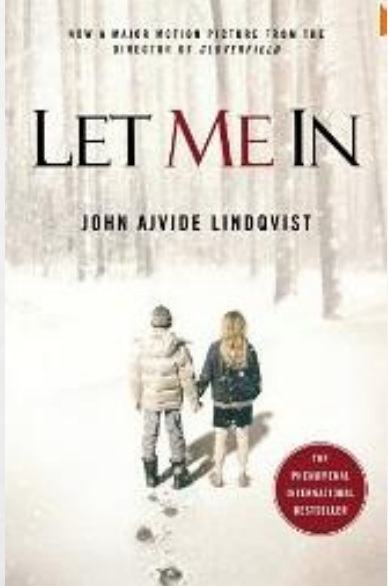
- SSW about which super hero is your favorite and why.





# twilight

*The Twilight Saga is written by Stephenie Meyer and is a fantasy world where vampires and werewolves walk among the human race. Strangely, the heroes turn out to be the mythical creatures which were meant to be evil and despised.*



*Let Me In is the terrifying yet moving tale of two lonely adolescents who stand together against the world. It begins with the horrific discovery of the body of a teenage boy, emptied of blood. Our twelve year-old hero is personally hoping that revenge has come at long last—revenge for all the bad things the bullies at school do to him, day after day. While he is fascinated by the murder, it is not the most important thing in his life. A new girl has moved in next door— a girl who has never seen a Rubik's Cube before, but who can solve it at once. They become friends. Then something more. But there is something wrong with her, something odd. And she only comes out at night....*

### *The Myth*

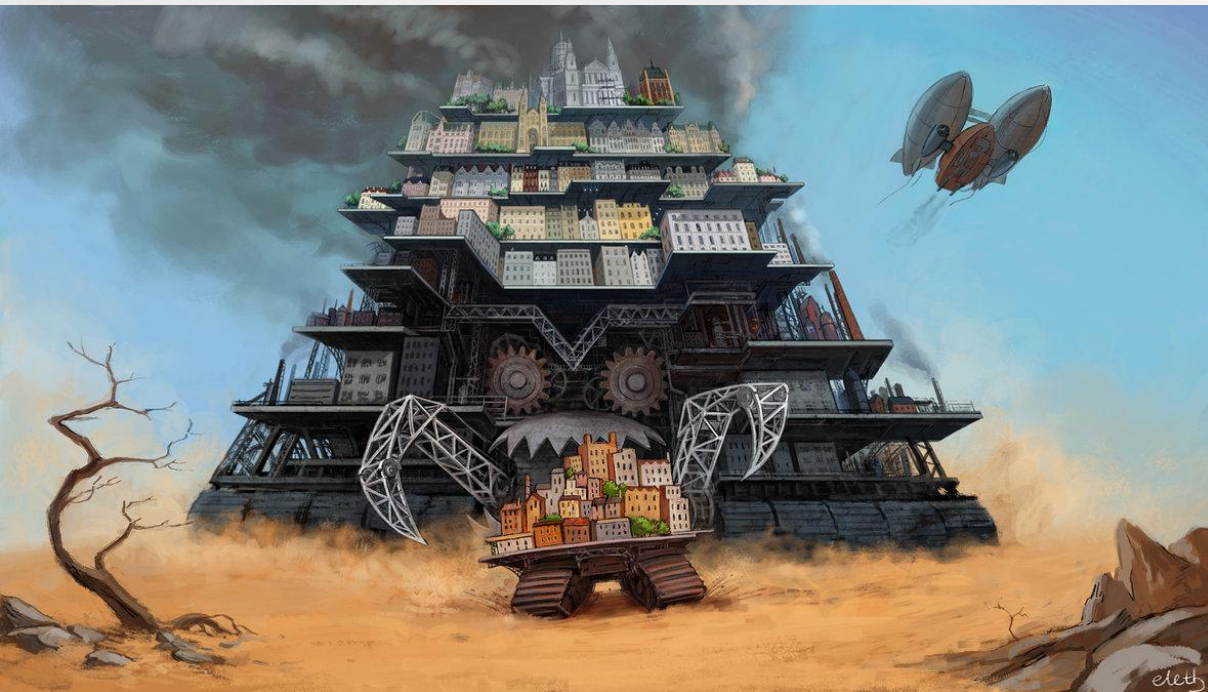
*Alice Liddel was an ordinary girl who stepped through the looking glass and entered a fairy-tale world invented by Lewis Carroll in his famous storybook.*

### *The Truth*

*Wonderland is real. Alyss Heart is the heir to the throne, until her murderous aunt Redd steals the crown and kills Alyss's parents. To escape Redd, Alyss and her body guard, Hatter Madigan, must flee to our world through the Pool of Tears. But in the pool Alyss and Hatter are separated. Lost and alone in Victorian London, Alyss is befriended by an aspiring author, to whom she tells the violent, heart-breaking story of her young life. Yet he gets the story all wrong. Hatter Madigan knows the truth only too well, and he is searching every corner of our world to find the lost princess and return her to Wonderland so she may battle Redd for her rightful place as the Queen of Hearts.*

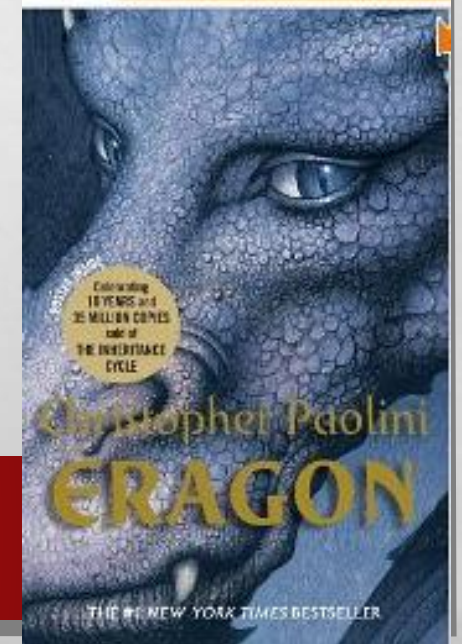
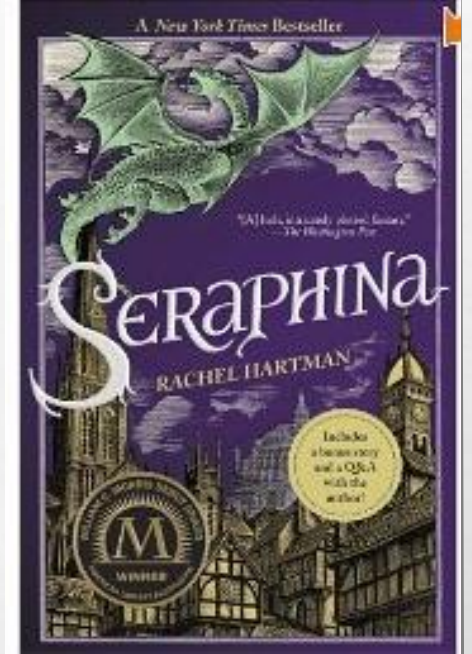


*Harry Potter and The Prisoner of Azkaban is yet another story that takes place in a fantasy world where the forces of good are in the never ending battle against the forces of evil. Throughout the Harry Potter series we follow Harry into his young adult years and observe as he is riddled by hardships that a young adult wouldn't normally face.*



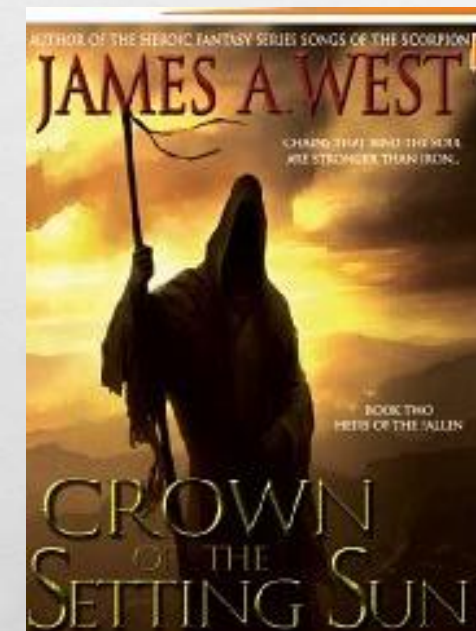
*London is hunting again. Emerging from its hiding place in the hills, the great Traction City is chasing a terrified little town across the wastelands. Soon, London will feed. In the attack, Tom Natsworthy is flung from the speeding city with a murderous scar-faced girl. They must run for their lives through the wreckage--and face a terrifying new weapon that threatens the future of the world. Beloved storyteller Philip Reeve creates a brilliant new world in the Mortal Engines series, called "phenomenal...violent and romantic, action-packed and contemplative, funny and frightening" by the Sunday Times . (Amazon Review)*

*Four decades of peace have done little to ease the mistrust between humans and dragons in the kingdom of Goredd. Folding themselves into human shape, dragons attend court as ambassadors, and lend their rational, mathematical minds to universities as scholars and teachers. As the treaty's anniversary draws near, however, tensions are high. Seraphina Dombegh has reason to fear both sides. An unusually gifted musician, she joins the court just as a member of the royal family is murdered—in suspiciously draconian fashion. Seraphina is drawn into the investigation, partnering with the captain of the Queen's Guard, the dangerously perceptive Prince Lucian Kiggs. While they begin to uncover hints of a sinister plot to destroy the peace, Seraphina struggles to protect her own secret, the secret behind her musical gift, one so terrible that its discovery could mean her very life. (Amazon Review)*



*Love survives everything... Even death. Unfortunately, so does hate.*

*When Mark wants to see his dead mother again... He gets his chance. But, like everything else in life... It comes at a hefty price. While normal sixteen-year-old boys are out chasing girls, Mark is floating outside his own body being chased by a nefarious demon. Death itself can't keep him from trying to see his dead mother again, but when he disturbs Phasma-the Guardian of Threshold, he may have gone too far. Forced into Threshold--the mystical world of the dead--to rescue his clumsy best friend; Mark will not only have to defeat Phasma and his army of Night Dwellers, but his own demons if he's going to save his friend, find his mother and survive the night. (Amazon review)*



*Chains that bind the soul are stronger than iron...In the two centuries since the Upheaval, the Faceless One's rule has encompassed the world. He is revered, worshipped, merciless, and he stands unopposed.... Sixteen-year-old Leitos crushes stone by day, and by night shivers in a cramped cell. A slave's life is brutal and short, but absolute obedience ensures the gifts of peace and bread. All that changes when his grandfather rises against their inhuman slavemasters, forcing upon Leitos a freedom that he never sought. Now, hounded by the Faceless One's demon-born Hunters, Leitos struggles to heed his grandfather's last words: "Seek the Brothers of the Crimson Shield." Those words are his only hope to discover the truth of his people's enslavement, his only guide to find a secret order of heroes ... and they are the words of a madman. (Amazon Review)*