

First Name Last Name

Mrs.Hampton

Advanced English 6

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FCA #1- Point-by-Point or Block Method (10 pts)

FCA #2- I.C.E Evidence (15 pts)

FCA #3- Third Person Only (10/-2 pts)

### America: A Dystopia?

Modern American society has often been compared to a dystopian society, but looking closer, it might not be. In the dystopian novel *Uglies* by Scott Westerfeld, two 16 year old girls, named Tally and Shay, embark on a journey to discover what getting a surgery to turn pretty really means. In the process, they discover many things about the government they didn't know. When a closer look is taken, modern America and the Uglies Dystopian society are very different from each other because, dystopian societies have more advanced technology, American citizens have inalienable rights that the Constitution gave them, and modern America seems closer to an ancient society called the Rusties, because of their needs and way of life.

Throughout the book *Uglies*, the author, Scott Westerfeld, describes the advanced technology that is in Uglyville and all of the Pretty Towns. Early in the story, the advanced technology starts to play an important, and slightly terrifying, role. Tally is learning to ride a hoverboard. A hoverboard defies gravity by using magnets. It uses a belly sensor and crash bracelets to keep from knocking the rider off. "The board was smart enough to gradually learn how her body moved." (Westerfeld 33). That has to have an amazing "mind to body"

connection. It takes extremely advanced technology to accomplish that. They also have a amazing water purifier; it will purify anything from bog water to pee into clean, drinkable water. Tally uses this on her trip to the Smoke, a free civilization. "The purifier pinged. Tally opened the top and looked inside. It was noodles with a red sauce and small kernels of soy meat, and it smelled delicious." (Westerfeld 146). One key element that all dystopian worlds have is the futuristic vibe, because it takes place in the future. (Another key element.) The advanced technology is a key part. Since the modern American society doesn't have that advanced technology, it is impossible for modern American to be more alike than different from a dystopian world. Even though things similar to the purifier and hoverboard has been created, it is still not as advanced. There is no doubt that dystopias will always be more advanced.

Another key part of a dystopian world is that the citizens have little to no rights. They have no say or even knowledge of what the government is doing. In *Uglies*, the author mentions numerous times, that at age 16, everyone must get a surgery to make them look pretty. But what they don't know, is that the surgeons are putting lesions or cancers in their brains. The lesions can't kill a person, they just put a spell on the *victim* to make them obedient. Maddy and Az, two scientists in the story were the first to discover them. "Basically it's a bunch of cells that don't look right," Az said. "Like a wound, or a cancer, or something that just doesn't belong there." (Westerfeld 250). Only the people who got the surgery have them. They are definitely scientifically planted in their brains for a reason the government clearly doesn't want the people to know about. No one is allowed to stand up

against that, or even know about it. In modern American society, there is freedom of speech, press, and religion. People can stand up for what they believe in and not get sent away like they would in a dystopian story, similar to *Uglies*. Dystopian worlds don't have those rights, while modern American citizens do. Therefore, America couldn't be a dystopia. They have too many major differences.

Lastly, throughout the story, Scott Westerfeld describes an ancient society called the Rusties whose needs and wants are similar to America's. From pages 51-64 Shay and Tally go visit the "Rustie Ruins" and they describe them as huge run down buildings with strong, and thick metal frames. "Who ever built this city loved to waste metal." (Westerfeld 60). In Uglyville, everything can be recycled and turned into something new. Later, they talk about how they rely on gas to help them survive, and how crazy they think that it is. Modern American society *runs* on gas, they build their buildings with metal frames. They do all of these actions, and have these ways of life that the Uglyville citizens think is insane and inhumane. There is no way that America could be like a dystopian society because America is too similar too the people who the characters in the dystopian novel *Uglies* are calling crazy.

The *Uglies* dystopian society and modern American society have their similarities and their differences, but when push comes to shove, they are more different than alike. Even though America is on their way up in technology, the dystopians will always be better at technology because it takes place in the future. Americans have, and hopefully always will have, personal inalienable rights, and America has much more in common to an old civilization that was dependent on oil. For those who think that America is doomed like a dystopia, don't worry, there are lots of young innovators out there to keep America a

democratic society. The combination of the younger generation and the ability to operate under the free will of the democratic republic gives the modern society an advantage of hope. With hope, there is still a choice to not be doomed for eternity.