

Never Let Me Go Reading Journal

As you read, fill out this chart. It is imperative that you do a good job on this. In April/May, you will be using this chart to help study for Paper 2. For each observation you make on your chart, you must include a quote. Be on the lookout for literary devices---you'll need them for Paper 2 as well. Try to find evidence for each theme, but you'll quickly find that each work we study is dominant in some areas and light in others.

Never Let Me Go			
Central Dystopian Themes: ¹	Part One (PDF pages 1-88)	Part Two (PDF pages 89-158)	Part Three (PDF pages 158-222)
<p>Government Control:</p> <p>Government plays a big role in dystopian literature. Generally, there is either no government or an oppressive ruling body</p>	<p>“One thing that occurs to me now is that when the guardians first started giving us proper lectures about sex, they tended to run them together with talk about the donations....we were all pretty worried and excited about sex” (81). As some schools are usually required to educate the students on sex education by the government, Hailsham also teaches their students about sex education, but mainly talks about it to connect the knowledge to the donations that the students will be required to do.</p>	<p>“In special circumstances, had managed to get a deferral. That this was something you could do if you were a Hailsham student. You could ask for your donations to be put back by three, even four years. It wasn't easy, but just sometimes they'd let you do it. So long as you could convince them. So long as you qualified.” (117). Symbolism is shown as the deferral is a way for the students in Hailsham to delay their requirements of having to donate their organs. As it would be dreadful for the students only live their life for the purpose of donating their organs, they would preferably choose to delay it in order to make the most out of their lives.</p>	<p>“You Hailsham students, even after you've been out in the world like this, you still don't know the half of it. All around the country, at this very moment, there are students being reared in deplorable conditions, conditions you Hailsham students could hardly imagine.” (201). Euphemism is shown in this quote as Miss Emily does not explain what the “deplorable conditions” are, but only describes the poor conditions of other students using those two words. This allows Kathy and Tommy to understand how other students around the world are treated, but not in specific details.</p>
<p>Environmental Destruction:</p> <p>Dystopian novels are often set in places that are inhabitable, have been destroyed, or are preparing for destruction.</p>	<p>“any place beyond Hailsham was like a fantasy land; we had only the haziest notions of the world outside and about what was and wasn't possible there.” (54). As the students in Hailsham are restricted from leaving Hailsham and going to other places, it constricts their ideas of the possibilities of what can be different from the world outside compared to Hailsham.</p>	<p>“The basic idea behind the possibles theory was simple, and didn't provoke much dispute. It went something like this. Since each of us was copied at some point from a normal person, there must be, for each of us, somewhere out there, a model getting on with his or her life.” (106). Juxtaposition is shown in this quote as the models have their own lives and are possibly doing something completely opposite from the students in Hailsham, where the students in Hailsham are restricted to staying in a certain area and doing certain activities, the models are able to freely do anything they would want to do. This shows a contrast in both lives, how one has unlimited freedom, while the other is limited.</p>	<p>“I hope you can appreciate how much we were able to secure for you. Look at you both now! You've had good lives, you're educated and cultured. I'm sorry we couldn't secure more for you than we did, but you must realise how much worse things once were.” (201). Irony is used in his quote as the students in Hailsham were restricted from having access to the outside world, as well as their own freedom; however, Miss Emily told them that they should be appreciative of how well taken care of they were in Hailsham.</p>
<p>Technological Control:</p> <p>Advanced science and technology in dystopian works go beyond tools for improving everyday life—technology is often depicted as a controlling, omnipresent force and is often used as a fear-mongering tactic.</p>	<p>“Carers aren't machines. You try and do your best for every donor, but in the end, it wears you down. You don't have unlimited patience and energy.” (6) Technology is not seen very often in <i>Never Let Me Go</i>, but it shows that the characters have knowledge on what machines are, and how it is able to work.</p>	<p>“There were some who thought it stupid to be concerned about possibles at all. Our models were an irrelevance, a technical necessity for bringing us into the world, nothing more than that.” (107). Metaphor is used in this quote as the models were referred to as irrelevance and nothing more than bringing them into the world.</p>	<p>“Suddenly there were all these new possibilities laid before us, all these ways to cure so many previously incurable conditions. This was what the world noticed the most, wanted the most.” (202). Hyperbole is shown in this quote as Miss Emily explains the advancement in science through technology is what everyone wants, but there could still be possibly some people who do not think the same. The advancement of technology could be a disadvantage for clones as although they develop as normal human beings, they are only developed to donate their organs.</p>
<p>Survival:</p> <p>The oppressive powers and destruction in dystopian worlds often leave the inhabitants to fend for themselves.</p>	<p>“Don't you know? If it's right on the elbow like that, it can unzip. All you have to do is bend your arm quickly. Not just that actual bit, the whole elbow, it can all unzip like a</p>	<p>“But this was one thing we'd been told over and over: that after Hailsham there'd be no more guardians, so we'd have to look after each other.” (90).</p>	<p>“Now I took one glance at her in that hospital bed under the dull light and recognised the look on her face, which I'd seen on donors often enough before. It was like she</p>

¹ Themes and descriptions come from <https://www.masterclass.com/articles/what-is-dystopian-fiction-learn-about-the-5-characteristics-of-dystopian-fiction-with-examples#characteristics-of-dystopian-fiction-survival>

	<p>bag opening up. Thought you'd know that." (68). As the students in Hailsham learn about their purpose and what is going to happen to them in the future, they have decided to make a joke out of it. This is a coping mechanism used by the students, where "dark humor" is used among the student to cope with their tragic future. This allows for the students to lighten the mood when they are still young and are still in Hailsham, in order for them to not constantly worry about how they are going to be organ donors.</p>	<p>Repetition is shown in this quote as the phrase, "over and over", is repeated to create an emphasis on how many times the students in Hailsham had been informed that there would not be any supervision from guardians anymore after leaving Hailsham.</p>	<p>was willing her eyes to see right inside herself, so she could patrol and marshal all the better the separate areas of pain in her body—the way, maybe, an anxious carer might rush between three or four ailing donors in different parts of the country." (181). Imagery is used in this quote as Kathy describes the atmosphere and what Ruth looked like when she was on the hospital bed after her donation. This part shows how the students of Hailsham actually only serve one purpose of living to donate their vital organs, as Ruth was seen to be weak after her donations.</p>
<p>Loss of Individualism: How should the needs of society as a whole compare to individual needs? Many dystopian futures depict the dangers of conformity.</p>	<p>"None of you will go to America, none of you will be film stars. And none of you will be working in supermarkets as I heard some of you planning the other day. Your lives are set out for you. You'll become adults, then before you're old, before you're even middle-aged, you'll start to donate your vital organs. That's what each of you was created to do. You're not like the actors you watch on your videos, you're not even like me." (65). The theme of loss of individualism is found in this quote as it explains that the students' aspirations and goals in life will not be accomplished when they attend Hailsham, as they all only have one purpose that they share in common.</p>	<p>"I didn't want to say when you first told me about this. But look, it was never on. They don't ever, ever, use people like that woman. Think about it. Why would she want to? We all know it, so why don't we all face it. We're not modelled from that sort..." (127). Euphemism is shown in this quote as the students of Hailsham have always sugarcoated and avoided the topic of where they originated from. Ruth made a clear idea that they all believe they were cloned from "trash", instead of people that were seen as a higher class and more professional. This quote shows how everyone understands what Ruth is going to say, but they prefer to avoid the topic to not create unnecessary tension or be uncomfortable.</p>	<p>"I almost did tell you a few times," she went on. "But I didn't. Even then, at the time, I realised you'd look back one day and realise and blame me for it. But I still didn't say anything to you. There's no reason you should ever forgive me for that, but I want to ask now because..." (178). Soliloquy is shown in this quote as Ruth confessed how she personally felt when living in the cottage, expressing her thoughts as if Tommy is not around to hear about her, and being completely transparent about her thoughts. As Ruth confessed how she had strong sexual desires with multiple people in the cottage, she also explains how she does not want Kathy to blame her for anything.</p>