

Dystopian Novel Persuasive Paper

Now that you've finished your dystopian novel, you're going to write a paper on this question:

Your dystopian novel is based on a future in which something bad has destroyed society as we know it. How likely is that bad thing to occur in real life?

Thesis statement:

_____ is likely/unlikely to happen.
(bad thing)

Rewrite your thesis statement in your own words:

What are three solid reasons that back up your thesis statement?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Those are the leading sentences of your next three paragraphs. Add lots of concrete supporting details.

What is the opposite view? If you said it **IS** a problem, say why people aren't worried or paying attention to it now. If you said it **ISN'T** a problem, why do people worry about it?

Conclude by reiterating your thesis and three main points.

Paragraph 1: Describe bad thing, make thesis statement.

Paragraph 2: First reason it is/isn't a problem.

Paragraph 3: Second reason it is/isn't a problem.

Paragraph 4: Third reason it is/isn't a problem.

Paragraph 5: Why people have an opposite view

Paragraph 6: Conclusion

Example paper:

The Zombie Non-pocalypse

Zombie stories have enjoyed a renaissance lately. TV shows such as *The Walking Dead*, movies such as *World War Z*, and video games such as *Resident Evil* all have proved wildly popular; even the publishing world is jumping on the bandwagon with such spoofs as *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies*. But how likely is a zombie apocalypse in real life? I maintain that of all the dystopian scenarios that permeate our popular culture, a large-scale zombie apocalypse is among the least of our worries.

The first and most obvious impediment to a zombie takeover of the United States is the sheer scale of our military machinery. Most of the big military bases in our country, from Camp Pendleton in San Diego to the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., are already heavily fortified and locked down such that the odds of a zombie breakthrough are virtually nil. With our military bases secure, it would only be a matter of time before the wrath of the entire U.S. military was scrambled to destroy all zombies. Perhaps a large chunk of the population would die/become undead in the first wave of attacks, but eventually an intact military would prevail.

It is also vital to consider that we live in an incredibly wired, networked world that is dependent on satellites orbiting the Earth in space, where presumably zombies can't go. Assuming our communication infrastructure remains functional, the news of zombies will spread like wildfire via social media: Kim Wagner checked in at Hawthorne Bridge with The Zombie Horde. Knowing where the zombies are will make it easy for people to avoid them until the military can take care of business. Ironically, it will be people's slavish devotion to their cellphones that will save them from zombie brain death.

Perhaps the most convincing reason that the zombie apocalypse is not nigh is that humans are deeply resourceful when it comes to their own survival. Many people are armed to the teeth and know how to defend themselves. Most people have some access to fast personal transportation and are decent enough drivers to head for the hills. Especially in the

American West, there are vast expanses of empty space where the odds of encountering a zombie will be very low; essentially, if a person has a car and a baseball bat and keeps their head about them, they should survive the zombie apocalypse just fine.

So why does pop culture worry so much about zombies? I believe that every generation invents monsters and dystopias to express their fears about what the world is becoming. Zombies really didn't enter the mainstream consciousness until 1968, with *Night of the Living Dead*. This was right in the middle of the age of television, and right at the beginning of America's long descent into drug addiction. People were worried that we were becoming brainless, consuming hordes. With the advent of the internet and smartphones, it's no wonder that fear has had a resurgence.

We are right to worry about our ability to remain critical thinkers and individuals amid the onslaught from mass media and recreational drugs. A literal zombie apocalypse is not a major threat to humanity; our military, communications networks, and human instinct for survival will prevail over a bunch of slow, brainless, half-dead things (fast zombies need another paper). But we may be at risk from a metaphorical zombie uprising, the attack of people who have voluntarily stopped using their brains. The only way to combat this is to keep learning, questioning, and thinking; only your brain can prevent zombies.