



Assignment

Explain What the Sources Say About a Topic #1

Topic: Utopia

Your Assignment:

You just completed reading the novel *The Giver* by Lois Lowry and it left you questioning whether utopian societies truly represent an ideal way of life or if their pursuit comes at too great a cost. You figured there was an interesting idea to discuss. So, you decided to do some research.

As part of your research you have found three sources. After you have reviewed these sources, you will answer some questions about them. Briefly scan the sources and the question that follows. Then, go back and read the sources carefully so you will have the information you will need to answer the question and complete your research. You may use scratch paper to take notes.

In Part 2, you will write an opinion piece using information you have read. (You will not do Part 2 as part of this task because this is just practice.)

Directions for Beginning:

You will now review several sources. You may review the sources as often as you like.

Research Questions:

After reviewing the research sources, use the rest of the time in Part 1 to answer the questions about them. Your answers to the questions will be scored. Also, your answers will help you think about the information you have read, which should help you write your opinion piece.

You may refer back to your scratch paper to review your notes when you think it would be helpful. Answer the questions in the spaces below the items.

Your written notes will be available to you in Part 1 and Part 2 of the performance task. (You will not do Part 2 as part of this task because this is just practice.)

Sources for the Task:

Source #1

You have found an article describing a utopian community:

What Is a Utopian Community?

By Barbara Roberts

Have you ever imagined living in a world where everything is perfect? In *The Giver* by Lois Lowry, the community seems like a perfect place at first. There's no war, no hunger, and no unfairness. Everyone has a role, rules keep things peaceful, and no one ever feels pain. This type of "perfect" world is called a utopian community.

But as Jonas, the main character, discovers, a utopian community isn't always as great as it seems. In his society, people don't have freedom. They can't make their own choices, feel strong emotions, or even see colors. Everything is controlled to keep life smooth and predictable. While this might sound nice, it also takes away the things that make life exciting, like love, joy, and creativity.

The story shows us that trying to make everything perfect can come with big sacrifices. A utopian community might get rid of problems like fighting or unfairness, but it also removes the beauty of being different and making your own choices.

Would you want to live in a place like Jonas's community? *The Giver* helps us think about what's more important: living in a safe but controlled world, or a free world that might be messy but full of life and meaning.

Source #2

You have found an editorial for the *Wall Street Journal* discussing sameness and individuality:

Sameness or Individuality: Which Would You Choose?

By Josue Carrillo

Imagine a world where everyone is the same—no arguments, no unfairness, no tough decisions. At first glance, it might seem like a dream. Life would be peaceful and predictable, with no one feeling left out or judged. But sameness comes with a big cost: the loss of freedom, individuality, and the ability to feel emotions like love and joy.

While sameness can create order and stability, it also takes away the things that make life exciting. Without differences, there's no room for creativity, discovery, or meaningful connections. The beauty of colorful sunsets, the thrill of learning something new, and the love you feel for family and friends are all tied to the diversity and individuality of the world around us.

Individuality, though it brings challenges, is what makes life rich and meaningful. The ability to make your own choices, express your feelings, and experience both the highs and lows of life gives it depth and purpose. Sameness might feel safe, but it also leads to a dull, empty existence.

So, which would you choose: the comfort of sameness or the freedom of individuality? Being different isn't something to fear—it's something to celebrate. It's our differences that make the world vibrant, interesting, and full of possibilities.

Source #3

You have found an article from a professor at the local community college:

The Dangers of a Utopian Society

By Prihya Alqueari

A utopian society might sound like a dream—a place where everyone is equal, there's no conflict, and life is peaceful. However, striving for perfection can often create a world that is far from ideal. Beneath the surface of a utopian society lies the potential for control, conformity, and the loss of individuality.

In such societies, strict rules often replace personal freedom. People may lose the ability to make choices, express emotions, or think for themselves. The pursuit of "sameness" might eliminate differences, but it also erases the beauty of diversity and the joy of authentic experiences. Without individuality, creativity and personal growth are stifled, leaving behind a society that is orderly but lifeless.

Another danger is how problems are handled in a utopian society. Those who don't fit the mold or challenge the system may be excluded, silenced, or even removed entirely. Societies obsessed with perfection can justify harmful or unethical actions in the name of maintaining order and control, turning their utopian vision into something oppressive and inhumane.

While the idea of a perfect world is tempting, it's important to remember that imperfections and challenges are what make life meaningful. A truly thriving society values individuality, freedom, and the ability to learn and grow, even in the face of difficulties. A utopian society may promise perfection, but the cost of achieving it is often far too great.

Answer this Question:

While avoiding plagiarism, explain what Source #1 and Source #3 say about a utopian society by paraphrasing the information. Identify sources by title or number.

Your Response:
