**Premise**  
In ‘The 201’ people are rated from 1 to 200, with 1 being pure evil and 200 being like an angel. They have a device on their wrist that displays their rating. The ultimate dream of people in this society is to work at the ‘prestigious’ Future! Inc., but they don’t realise that the ranking system is just a ploy by the government to keep people obedient and prevent uprisings. Amberle is a young girl who comes from a long line of 200s. One day, an incident occurs and she faces a dilemma: to fight back and drop in rank or to simply let it happen and later let the police deal with it. Before she can do anything, Des, currently at 176 comes to her rescue, despite it resulting in a ranking drop for him. As Amberle encounters Des (either purposefully or accidentally) in a few more encounters… how will she grow as a character, and how will she feel about the system at the end? The ultimate idea I want to convey from this story is whether what we think is evil is really evil, or is it not as clean-cut as that (spoilers: it’s not). And also the idea that we base too much on what people think of us instead of what we think of ourselves. The story focuses on the day-to-day life of people living in a dystopia that appears to be a utopia, and how they overcome (or not depending on choices) the societal expectations of ‘goodness’ that has been ingrained in them since young and find themselves. This story was inspired by a writing prompt on Reddit and the Black Mirror episode, “Nosedive”.  
  
**Requirements:**

1) To fulfill requirement 1, the dialogue will mainly be between Amberle and Des, with the reader taking control of Amberle. It will mainly revolve around Des sharing his opinion about the system in his own blunt way, and Amberle either rebutting or agreeing. A few may also be actions, where the reader has to decide what to do.

2 & 3) The choices the user makes will affect Amberle’s ranking. The ranking will be tracked through facts. The final ranking will affect the ending. Also, as the world is separated into zones where if a person falls/rises out of the ranking range of his/her current zone, he/she will be forced to move to another zone, the location of events will also change based on Amberle’s feelings for Des. For example, if she has good feelings, then she will seek Des out in whatever zone he is occupying. If she has bad feelings, then they will somehow run into each other when Des sneaks into the 200 zone.  
  
4) For now, I am thinking of using sentence selection, because the ranking system is intended to be very sensitive in-order to instill the feeling of that everyone under the system really has to watch what they do and say or risk being ranked down. So by using sentence selection, the player knows exactly what Amberle is going to say and this also makes the reader feel restricted as he/she is fully responsible for the ranking change. In the choices, I am also thinking about indicating the result of what is said or done, e.g. (+4 points) so the reader knows in advance the consequence of his/her choice and this instills the feeling of being careful of what you say in the world, and this idea of consciously controlling/choosing what is said or done especially in such a dystopian (disguised as a utopian) world.  
  
5) Emotional agency will most likely be used for some choices, such as the first choice where the player decides whether Amberle fights back or not, but this ultimately does not change the outcome as Des saves her. This will instead set the stage for the player in a way to decide whether Amberle is more meek/stuck to societal expectations or more willing to break the rules from the start. Agency as commitment to meaning could be used when Amberle is deciding to visit Des/decides not to think about him anymore as the user has to keep clicking ‘keep walking…’ or ‘stop thinking about him’ repeatedly, which will get the user into the mood of being immersed in the story as Amberle and being conflicted about what to do with Des. Lastly, agency of choice will be used as well as ultimately the different choices the player makes will result in different endings.

**Critique**

1. Are the plot, character and setting appropriate for the proposed

approach to agency?

2. Do the type of dialogue choices proposed match the story and

the type of agency the story is intended to support?

3. Will the proposed facts adequately model the personality and

motivations of the main character?

4. Is the proposed representation for the choices appropriate to the

story, and to the approach to agency?

5. Do you foresee any problems? For example, does it seem like

too much work, or technically too challenging?

6. Is there anything confusing or not clear in the proposal?

Hi Trena,

Firstly, the plot is well-draft and I have a fairly clear idea on how the story goes. Given the unique setting of this story it would be good to spend some time highlighting the key mechanic, the ranking system, in your story when you implement it later. The idea of using sentence selection and showing the player the consequences of their choice is a very good way of depicting and illustrating how the ranking system works and how it relates back to the characters and the people living in this dystopian world. The idea that the player has to balance and weigh the consequences of their choices is very well represented. The same mechanic is also a good indicator for how receptive Amberle is to the introduction of “badness” as time passes and is fairly indicative of her personality (in this dystopian society).

It would be great if you could highlight a few ideas of key events that would occur in this story, but overall, this story looks fun and I’ll look forward to playing it ☺. In terms of the complexity of the story, the general plot gives lots of room for creativity and it would be interesting to see how the character’s journey ties in with the underlying objective. The key objective of this story, as mentioned in your proposal was well-defined and purposeful.

The idea of creating a zonal-space for different rankings would serve as a great tool to bring the player back into the main plotline. In terms of implementing this, you might face certain issues (requirements on anywhere nodes for each zone).

One of the key challenges of implementing this story would be to avoid making the choices too binary and yet invoke in moral agency (or emotional agency) in the dilemmas that depict the grey areas that are not as “clean-cut”.

A humble suggestion to improving the realism of this story would be to include more people elements to the story. One such way would be to include interpersonal relations (Family VS Lover) which would, in part, affect the consequences to certain choices. An example of this could be, Amberle has to steal an item, which is highly confidential, from her father, who’s working as a researcher for Future! Inc. The consequence of stealing it would be her father might get into trouble, resulting in the expulsion of the entire family to the lower zones, If she does not steal it, her tryst with Des and all their past activities would be exposed and she would be exiled, while Des gets executed.

(This is just a suggestion. You really don’t need to do this.)

Overall, this is a very interesting story and I look forward to play it ☺. I hope that my critique isn’t too harsh (oops), and it’ll help you in creating your story!