

OLYMPIADS SCHOOL/GRADE 9 ENGLISH/HOMEWORK 7**NAME (FIRST AND LAST):** _____

Read the following review that was published when the movie just came out. Fill in the blanks with words/phrases that match the bracketed words/phrases in meaning, and then answer the two questions that follow.

REVIEW AND TRAILER: THE MAZE RUNNER (12A) IS A TEEN SCI-FI WITH A DIFFERENCE**3 / 5 stars**

BACK in the 80s, the censors were _____ (**fretting over**) the various ways campy “video nasties” could be perverting my young, impressionable mind.

By [Andy Lea](#) / Published 5th October 2014



CLOSING TIME: The lads await the return of the runners [20th Century Fox]

Perhaps it's time someone started worrying about the impact _____

(bleak) sci-fi is having on young film buffs today.

Over the past couple of years, teenagers have watched themselves butcher each other for TV audiences in The Hunger Games, be _____ (**co-opted into**) a fascistic regime in Ender's Game and turned into killer drones in Divergent.

In this adaptation of the first book of James Dashner's young adult trilogy, grown-ups are wiping their minds and tossing them into a vast maze filled with killer beasts. No wonder so many of them have trouble getting out of bed in the morning.

Of course, it's not all doom and gloom. There's always a photogenic young rebel who is ready to step up to the plate.

"You're not like the rest," someone says to Thomas (Dylan O'Brien, TV's Teen Wolf) within minutes of his arrival in this _____ (**nightmarish**) world.

I'm pretty sure this is a record. Before we get to the obligatory Messiah Moment we've usually sat through a good half hour of the early stirrings of an adolescent love triangle. And it's the _____ (**breakneck**) pacing that makes this latest offering so refreshing.

Cleverly, we enter this world with the hero as he emerges from a clunky lift. As the gang of teenage boys quickly explain, he's the latest "greenie" to turn up in "the Glade" alongside boxes of farming equipment.

Teenage lads have been arriving like this every month for the past three years. And as they've had their memories wiped, nobody knows who is operating the lift. What they do know comes out in intriguing _____ (**fits and starts**).

The Glade is a large field surrounded by huge concrete walls. There's one doorway, which opens every morning and slams shut every evening. Beyond it is a vast maze which rearranges itself every night.

Under the leadership of Alby (Aml Ameen), the boys have set up a system to best exploit the lads' various abilities. Farmers grow crops; builders construct tree houses.

The most glamorous job goes to the sporty types, the "Maze Runners" who are tasked with _____ **(charting)** the movements of the corridors during daylight hours. If they don't make it back by sundown they're done for – at night, spider-like beasts called "grievors" stalk the corridors ready to sink their poisonous teeth into adolescent flesh.

"It's briskly-paced, well acted and action packed. And as this is mostly a boys-only affair, we don't get _____ **(bogged down)** by a _____ **(tiresome)** romance."

Nobody has ever survived a night in the maze. Then again, no inmate has ever had Thomas' killer combination of pluck, cunning and dashing looks.

This may be a very familiar recipe but a light sprinkling of William Golding's *Lord of The Flies* gives it a slightly different flavour. As we get to grips with the workings of the Glade, divisions between the boys begin to surface.

The statesman-like Alby just wants to keep the lads from each other's throats, tubby Chuck (Blake Cooper) is missing his mum, while _____ **(petulant)** Gally (an excellent Will Poulter) has grown to love his prison walls.

When finally joined by Teresa (Kaya Scodelario), the boys have a lot more to worry about than their hormones.

Sadly, the ending is a _____ **(letdown)**. Like the TV series *Lost*, this asks lots of questions but defers most of the answers to a future instalment.

I suppose that's par for the course with wannabe franchises. Hopefully, director Wes Ball still has a few tricks up his sleeve for part two.

- 1) Being a young adult yourself, do you find the reviewer's word choices—especially in his representation of teenagers in general—mildly offensive? Briefly explain your response.**

- 2) Based on the parts of the movie you have viewed so far, do you agree with the reviewer's appraisal? Explain your response.**

Read the following selections from James Dashner's *The Maze Runner* and answer the questions from 10 to 11.

SELECTION ONE, Chapter 33

"Never been able to catch one." Minho finished up his meal and put his lunch box away. "And we don't know what that word means—probably just something to scare us. But they have to be spies. For *them*. Only thing we can reckon."

"Who is *them*, anyway?" Thomas asked, ready for more answers. He hated the people behind the Maze. "Anybody have a clue?"

"We don't know jack about the stupid Creators." Minho's face reddened as he squeezed his hands together like he was choking someone. "Can't wait to rip their—"

But before the Keeper could finish, Thomas was on his feet and across the corridor. "What's that?" he interrupted, heading for a dull glimmer of gray he'd just noticed behind the ivy on the wall, about head high.

"Oh, yeah, that," Minho said, his voice completely indifferent.

Thomas reached in and pulled apart the curtains of ivy, then stared blankly at a square of metal riveted to the stone with words stamped across it in big capital letters. He put his hand out to run his fingers across them, as if he didn't believe his eyes.

WORLD IN CATASTROPHE: KILLZONE EXPERIMENT DEPARTMENT

He read the words aloud, then looked back at Minho. "What's this?" It gave him a chill—it had to have something to do with the Creators.

"I don't know, shank. They're all over the place, like freaking labels for the nice pretty Maze they built. I quit bothering to look at 'em a long time ago."

Thomas turned back to stare at the sign, trying to suppress the feeling of doom that had risen inside him. "Not much here that sounds very good. Catastrophe. Killzone. *Experiment*. Real nice."

SELECTION TWO (pages 6 and 7)**CHAPTER 34**

Thomas awoke to a weak, lifeless light. His first thought was that he must've gotten up earlier than usual, that dawn was still an hour away. But then he heard the shouts. And then he looked up, through the leafy canopy of branches.

The sky was a dull slab of gray—not the natural pale light of morning.

He jumped to his feet, put his hand on the wall to steady himself as he craned his neck to gawk toward the heavens. There was no blue, no black, no stars, no purplish fan of a creeping dawn. The sky, every last inch of it, was slate gray. Colorless and dead.

He looked down at his watch—it was a full hour past his mandatory waking time. The brilliance of the sun should've awakened him—had done so easily since he'd arrived at the Glade. But not today.

He glanced upward again, half expecting it to have changed back to normal. But it was all gray. Not cloudy, not twilight, not the early minutes of dawn. Just gray.

The sun had disappeared.

Thomas found most of the Gladers standing near the entrance to the Box, pointing at the dead sky, everyone talking at once. Based on the time, breakfast should've already been served, people should be working. But there was something about the largest object in the solar system vanishing that tended to disrupt normal schedules.

In truth, as Thomas silently watched the commotion, he didn't feel nearly

as panicked or frightened as his instincts told him he ought to be. And it surprised him that so many of the others looked like lost chicks thrown from the coop. It was, in fact, ridiculous.

The sun obviously had *not* disappeared—that wasn't possible.

Though that was what it seemed like—signs of the ball of furious fire nowhere to be seen, the slanting shadows of morning absent. But he and all the Gladers were far too rational and intelligent to conclude such a thing. No, there had to be a scientifically acceptable reason for what they were witnessing. And whatever it was, to Thomas it meant one thing: the fact they could no longer see the sun probably meant they'd never been able to in the first place. A sun couldn't just disappear. Their sky had to have been—and still was—fabricated. Artificial.

In other words, the sun that had shone down on these people for two years, providing heat and life to everything, was not the sun at all. Somehow, it had been fake. Everything about this place was fake.

Thomas didn't know what that meant, didn't know how it was possible. But he knew it to be true—it was the only explanation his rational mind could accept. And it was obvious from the other Gladers' reactions that none of them had figured this out until now.

Chuck found him, and the look of fear on the boy's face pinched Thomas's heart.

"What do you think happened?" Chuck said, a pitiful tremor in his voice, his eyes glued to the sky. Thomas thought his neck must hurt something awful. "Looks like a big gray ceiling—close enough you could almost touch it."

Thomas followed Chuck's gaze and looked up. "Yeah, makes you wonder about this place." For the second time in twenty-four hours, Chuck had nailed it. The sky *did* look like a ceiling. Like the ceiling of a massive room.

SELECTION THREE, Chapter 38

It was strange to know that the night grew later, that darkness should've swallowed the world around them, but to see only the pale gray light outside. It made Thomas feel off-kilter, as if the urge to sleep that grew steadily with every passing minute were somehow unnatural. Time slowed to an agonizing crawl; he felt as if the next day might never come.

The other Gladers settled themselves, turning in with their pillows and blankets for the impossible task of sleeping. No one said much, the mood somber and grim. All you could hear were quiet shuffles and whispers.

Thomas tried hard to force himself to sleep, knowing it would make the time pass faster, but after two hours he'd still had no luck. He lay on the floor in one of the upper rooms, on top of a thick blanket, several other Gladers crammed in there with him, almost body to body. The bed had gone to Newt.

Chuck had ended up in another room, and for some reason Thomas pictured him huddled in a dark corner, crying, squeezing his blankets to his chest like a teddy bear. The image saddened Thomas so deeply he tried to replace it, but to no avail.

Almost every person had a flashlight by their side in case of emergency. Otherwise, Newt had ordered all lights extinguished despite the pale, deathly glow of their new sky—no sense attracting any more attention than necessary. Anything that *could* be done on such short notice to prepare for a Griever attack had been done: windows boarded up, furniture moved in front of doors, knives handed out as weapons ...

But none of that made Thomas feel safe.

The anticipation of what might happen was overpowering, a suffocating blanket of misery and fear that began to take on a life of its own. He almost wished the suckers would just come and get it over with. The waiting was unbearable.

SELECTION FOUR

Post-Apocalyptic Science Fiction

by [John Joseph Adams](#)

Famine. Death. War. Pestilence. These are said to be the harbingers of the biblical apocalypse—Armageddon, The End of The World. In science fiction, the end of the world is usually triggered by other (or at least more specific) means: nuclear warfare (or disaster), biological warfare (or disaster), ecological/geological disaster, or cosmological disaster. But in the wake of any great cataclysm, there are survivors—and post-apocalyptic SF speculates what life would be like for them.

The first significant post-apocalyptic work is [Mary Shelley's](#) *The Last Man* (1826), which concerns the survivors of a plague that is wiping out the human race. The sub-genre rose to prominence during the 1950s and reached the height of its popularity during Cold War, when the threat of nuclear annihilation was very real. Though the enemies have changed since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, life today holds as many threats and so post-apocalyptic tales remain timely and potent.

Refer back to the selections in the previous pages to help you answer the questions below. Feel free to use evidence/examples from other parts of the novel. Try to fill up all the lines provided. Try to sound as coherent and analytical as you can. Structure your responses whenever possible, beginning with a point (topic sentence), followed by a discussion of evidence/examples/details that support your point, and then ending with a clincher sentence.

Selection 1

- a) Based on what you have read so far, what do you think the Creators are trying to accomplish? If you have finished reading the novel, describe the Creators' agenda.

Selection 2

- a) Thomas and his fellow Gladers hypothesize that the sun is fake. In your opinion, what role would an artificial sun play in a science fiction narrative? Be imaginative in your response – why would a science fiction writer associate a life-giving force in nature with artifice or deception?

Selection 3

The next two questions are related. If you can, try to formulate different, and yet logically consistent, responses to them.

- a) Why do you think Thomas is deeply saddened by the image of Chuck squeezing his blankets to his chest like a teddy bear?

- b) What role does Chuck's character serve in James Dashner's novel? In other words, what would be lost if the novel does not have Chuck as one of its characters?

Selection 4

In your opinion, what makes apocalyptic fiction or post-apocalyptic fiction appealing to its readers? Explain with evidence from *The Maze Runner* or from some other science fiction novel that belongs to the subgenre.

GRAMMAR

INDEPENDENT AND SUBORDINATE CLAUSES

- A clause is a group of words that contains a subject and a predicate. There are two kinds of clauses: **independent clauses** and **subordinate clauses**.
- An independent clause can stand alone as a sentence because it expresses a complete thought.

Example: **She found the wallet** that she had lost.

A. Underline the independent clause in each sentence below.

1. We arrived early because we took a taxi.
2. The concert started after we had found our seats.
3. We heard the songs that had been featured on the CD.
4. When I was a little girl, my grandmother used to tell us stories about all the stars.
5. After we left the auditorium, we tried to catch a bus to the station.
6. Although the wait was long, we finally managed to find transportation.
7. While we were on the bus, I saw two people from my class at school.
8. Since you left, Uri has been lonely.
9. I saw the actor who had starred in that film.

- A subordinate clauses has a subject and predicate, but cannot stand alone as a sentence because it does not express a complete thought.
- A subordinate clause must be combined with an independent clause to make a sentence.

Example: We got out of bed **when the alarm clock woke us.**

B. Underline the subordinate clause in each sentence below.

1. Canada is a country where many cultures live together.
2. While we were at the fair, I saw lots of people eating cotton candy.
3. When rules are unfair, everyone suffers the consequences.
4. The rat is an animal that many people fear.
5. Kim is the one who should get credit for the project.
6. If you want to succeed in business, you will have to work hard.
7. We walked along the road until we came to a snack bar.
8. Andrea found a present that was perfect for her best friend's birthday.
9. This bat, which catches harmful insects, should not be feared.

THE END