

# Teacher's Film Clip Guide: *The Matrix*

## "The Real World"

### Chapter 12, 0:38:39 to 0:44:22

In this scene, Neo is taken into a computer program where he learns the origins and current state of the dystopian world in which he lives. Morpheus shows Neo pictures of city streets in the late 20th century and explains that this world is really a neural-interactive simulation called the Matrix, a 20th-century computer program designed to keep humans under control so that machines can harvest energy from the human's bodies. Neo is shown pictures of the real world's skies which have been scorched so that no sunlight ever reaches the surface, and pictures of large farms where machines harvest energy from human bodies.

#### Dystopian characteristics

- The setting is an illusion of a perfect utopian society.
- Information, independent thought, and freedom are restricted.
- Citizens live in a "dehumanized" state.
- The natural world is banished and distrusted.

#### Illustration of the characteristic

Individuals are living in an artificial world, the Matrix, created by a computer. While this world appears to be a perfect, normal setting, the people in this world no longer have a human existence. Instead, they are used as slaves to power the artificial world. The true world, with its scorched, sunless skies, is no longer trusted as inhabitable.

## "Morpheus' Proposal" and "Down the Rabbit Hole"

### Chapters 8 & 9, 0:25:10 to 0:29:50

In these scenes, Neo meets Morpheus, who offers him the opportunity to learn the truth about the world in which they live. Morpheus tells Neo, "[You are here because] What you know you can't explain. You felt it your entire life: Something's wrong with the world. You don't know what, but it's there. Like a splinter in your mind driving you mad." Morpheus offers Neo two pills—a blue pill that will continue the illusion of the Matrix, and a red pill that will show Neo the truth behind the artificial world. Neo chooses the red pill and is taken to adjoining room where he is hooked up to a computer that helps free his mind from the artificial world of the Matrix.

#### Dystopian characteristics

- The characters feel trapped and struggle to escape.
- The characters question the existing social and political systems.
- The characters believe something is terribly wrong with the society they live in.

### Illustration of the characteristic

Neo is trapped in the artificial world of the Matrix. As Morpheus tells him, he has questioned the reality of this false world all his life. By choosing the red pill, Neo confirms that he believes something is wrong, as he struggles to escape the false world of the Matrix.

### **“Slimy Rebirth”**

#### **Chapter 10, 0:32:25 to 0:35:23**

In this scene, Neo is freed from the computer cocoon that has been used as a source of energy for the machines that control the world of the Matrix.

### Dystopian characteristics

- Technology is the controlling factor of this society.
- The characters feel trapped and struggle to escape.
- Citizens live in a “dehumanized” state.

### Illustration of the characteristic

The Matrix controls every aspect of Neo’s existence, keeping him in the cocoon and harvesting his energy. The cocoon physically traps his body, representing the overall entrapment of humans in the Matrix’s system. Any sense of a truly human existence is impossible in this world. The only human activities are imagined and false.

### **“The Gatekeepers”**

#### **Chapter 17, 0:56:30 to 0:58:53**

In this scene, Morpheus leads Neo through a 20th-century street created by the Matrix. Neo learns about agents—sentient programs created by the Matrix to monitor and pursue individuals who are a threat to the society.

### Dystopian characteristics

- Information, independent thought, and freedom are restricted.
- Citizens are perceived to be under constant surveillance.
- Technology is the controlling factor of this society.

### Illustration of the characteristic

The citizens of this society are under constant surveillance by the agents, who restrict their lives to include only those activities and thoughts that do not threaten the Matrix. The 20th-century street is only an illusion, maintained by the Matrix. The technology of the Matrix directs everyone, leaving no room for human expression or free choice.