

## Film Review: ‘The Maze Runner’ a Cut Above Teenage Dystopia Genre

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on September 19, 2014 - 9:42am

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CHICAGO – Yes, the future world of teenage bleakness, so popular in “The Hunger Games” and “Divergent,” now has its own genre. “The Maze Runner” is an excellent entry, and gets over its stilted dialogue and scary monsters by adding in surprises and atmospheric mystery.



Rating: **4.0/5.0**

The ending of the film – even though it screams sequel – has a heart-pounding twist rooted in what-is-happening-here audacity, which started as a weird story of kids stuck in a wooded field in the middle of a gigantic mechanical maze. This is enough to fulfill the dark environment of yet another view into society’s lost future, which is apparently not influenced by anyone over 30 years of age (shades of the 1960s! Groovy!). Notable are the lead young actors creating the situation, especially Dylan O’Brien (MTV’s “Teen Wolf”) and the always-welcome Will Poulter (“We’re the Millers”).

Thomas (Dylan O’Brien) arrives via elevator to a campground area, filled with teenage and slightly younger boys who have organized themselves into a “Lord of the Flies”-type society. The overwhelming presence in their lives is the giant maze that surrounds them. Some of the boys there are designated as “maze runners,” mapping out the route inside the labyrinth in hopes of escape.

Thomas is at odds with some of the members of the society, including the hot-headed Gally (Will Poulter). But other campers, including Chuck (Blake Cooper) and Newt (Thomas Brodie-Sangster) are on his side, and runners Minho (Ki Hong Lee) and Alby (Ami Ameen) train Thomas to navigate the maze. Conditions begin to change, as Teresa (Kaya Scodelario) becomes the only girl sent to the crew, and new discoveries within the maze get them closer to whatever they will call freedom.

*“The Maze Runner” opens everywhere on September 19th. Featuring Dylan O’Brien, Will Poulter, Kaya Scodelario, Thomas Brodie-Sangster and Patricia Clarkson. Screenplay adapted by Noah Oppenheim, Grant Pierce Meyers and T.S. Nowlin, from the novel by James Dashner. Directed by Wes Ball. Rated “PG-13”*



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Thomas (Dylan O'Brien) is Confronted in ‘The Maze Runner’  
Photo credit: 20th Century Fox

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