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Section 1. Introduction

The novel

*Nineteen Eighty-Four* is a novel about a time in the future when Britain has become part of a huge one-party state. The main character struggles to remain separate from the state political apparatus, to have a life that is private and that allows him to love. The story of the novel is how Winston Smith is inexorably brought to believe totally in the doctrines of Big Brother, the embodiment of the absolute power of the Party.

The author and his context

*Nineteen Eighty-Four* was written between 1947 and 1949. It was published in '49, the year before the author died. The author, who was born in 1903, wrote under the name George Orwell although his real name was Eric Blair. He had a classical education at Eton, and then worked as an officer in the Indian Imperial Police in Burma, resigning in 1927. He spent several years trying to establish himself as a writer. He said many years later:

‘I knew that I had a facility with words and a power of facing unpleasant facts’.

(‘Why I write’, 1944. Article for *The Tribune*. See References)

It was this capacity for stating unpleasant facts that formed the basis of his writing. He said about his craft:

> What I have most wanted to do throughout the past ten years is to make political writing into an art. My starting point is always a feeling of partisanship, a sense of injustice. When I sit down to write a book, I do not say to myself, "I am going to produce a work of art." I write it because there is some lie that I want to expose, some fact to which I want to draw attention, and my initial concern is to get a hearing. But I could not do the work of writing a book, or even a long magazine article, if it were not also an aesthetic experience. (‘Why I write’, 1944. As above.)

He had early made up his mind to gain experiences that he could write about, living firstly in Paris and then in London, taking very low paid jobs and mixing with the poor. His reflections on these experiences became his first published book, *Down and Out in Paris and London*. He wrote three novels in the 1930s with moderate success, *Burmese Days*, *Keep the Aspidistra Flying*, and *The Clergyman's Daughter*, but as yet, he had not found himself as a writer. Two subsequent experiences, his exposure to working class life in Wigan, from which came *The Road to Wigan Pier* and his involvement in the Spanish civil war, which caused him to write *Homage to Catalonia*, helped him to see his role as a political writer.

He went to Catalonia as a committed socialist, but his experiences there brought home to him the ruthlessness and utter cruelty of the different combatants, and in particular, their capacity for mishandling the truth. Orwell became aware that the different sides were peddling different versions of events and that no one was particularly committed to recording what really happened. In one of his most frequently-quoted statements, he wrote:

> In no case do you get one answer which is universally accepted because it is true: in each case you get a number of totally incompatible answers, one of
which is finally adopted as the result of a physical struggle. History is written by
the winners. (‘Revising history’, 1944 Article for The Tribune. See References)

The key events that turned Orwell against socialism were the Stalinist purges of 1936-
38.

Not only did he see the gulf between Stalinists and anti-Stalinists opening
suddenly inside embattled Republican Spain. This, the immediate effect of the
purges, was overshadowed by ‘the irrational side of totalitarianism --- human
sacrifice, cruelty as an end in itself, the worship of a Leader,’ and the colour of
sinister slave-civilisations of the ancient world spreading over contemporary
publication, 1974. See References.)

During World War 2 he wrote a column called ‘As I Please’ for the left-wing magazine,
The Tribune and in these columns he first floated many of the ideas that later came to
form the intellectual foundations of Nineteen Eighty-Four. Orwell was a moralist who
saw his role as someone who pointed out unpleasant facts at times when people were
least prepared to listen.

Yet the gigantic evils committed by Stalinist Russia and Nazi Germany were much
more than unpleasant facts. Orwell believed that a totalitarian frame of mind existed
both in Britain as well as Soviet Russia.

Capitalism leads to dole queues, the scramble for markets, and war. Collectivism leads to concentration camps, leader worship, and war. There is
no way out of this unless a planned economy can somehow be combined with
the freedom of the intellect, which can only happen if the concept of right and
wrong is restored to politics. (‘Capitalism and communism: two paths to
slavery, 1944. Article for The Tribune. See References.)

Orwell's creative response to his profound pessimism was to write Nineteen Eighty
Four

The historical events reflected in the novel

George Orwell lived through the following major events:
World War 1; the Communist Revolution in Russia; the Great Depression; the rise of
Nazism in Germany; the Spanish Civil War; the Stalinist show trials and purges of
1936-38; World War 2; Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the emergence of Communist
China.
It is no exaggeration to say that all these events shaped both the writer and the work.

The Russian Revolution

The theories of Karl Marx were more than fifty years old when Lenin and the
Bolsheviks seized power in October 1917. The response of people around the world
was one of hope, that this was the beginning of an International Workers' movement
that would bring Communism into existence. The reality was that Stalin rose to power,
instituted a police state, developed a cult of personality around himself and purged
millions of people whom he thought might stand in his way. His capacity for cruelty
was unprecedented in human history. He controlled all avenues of information,
falsified history, and through the use of five-year plans forced the population to
overwork. He developed a public enemy for the people to hate, in Nazi Germany, but signed a non-aggression pact with Hitler in 1939. Through show trials and purges, he removed almost every member of the Soviet Army down to the rank of captain.

### The Great Depression

Beginning in 1929 with the collapse of the New York Stock Exchange, economies around the world collapsed and millions of people were thrown out of work. The effects of the Depression were felt until 1939 when weapons were needed for World War 2 and manufacturing began to recover. Germany, whose economic recovery after World War I was crippled by the necessity to make war repayments, was particularly damaged by the depression.

### The rise of Nazism in Germany.

Germany’s economy was in ruins after World War 1, when The Treaty of Versailles stipulated that war reparations had to be paid, particularly to France. Germany had been a modern nation for only a little more than forty years, and the German people felt that the strictures of the treaty were designed to humiliate this proud nation. The Nazi Party’s ideology provided a simple explanation for the woes of Germany. They blamed the Communists and the Jewish bankers. Hitler and Goebbels created an ideology around eugenics, a distortion of Darwin and genetics. According to the Nazis, the pure people of Germany were being polluted by people of inferior race, and it was the destiny of Germany to rule the world for a thousand years. This ideology attempted to justify an unspeakable cruelty that rivalled that of Stalin. On becoming Chancellor, Hitler put Germany on a war footing and began a process of military expansion that resulted in World War 2. Hitler was known as a great orator, and his speeches at the Nuremberg rallies inspired and swayed thousands of people.

### Ideas behind Nineteen Eighty Four

**Sigmund Freud**

In two of his books, *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego and Civilisation and its Discontents*, Freud applied his theories of sexuality and aggression to large groups. In the first of these he writes:

> A primary group of this kind is a number of individuals who have put one and the same object in the place of their ego ideal and have consequently identified themselves with one another in their ego. ie. they all admire and want the same thing, so they make themselves the same. In this way the aggression and competition in the group is mitigated (by 'love'), or directed outwards (as racism, religious intolerance, and other forms of group hatred). [http://www.freud.org.uk/religion8.html](http://www.freud.org.uk/religion8.html)

One can see in this short description a ‘template’ for the actions of the Party in *Nineteen Eighty Four*. It is important in such a group arrangement as this, that order be maintained because chaos and collapse of the group is quite possible.

Freud was also aware of the cost of an individual's membership of a group.

> A ‘decisive step’ toward civilization lies in the replacement of the individual's power by that of the community. This substitution henceforth restricts the possibilities of individual satisfaction in the collective interests of law and order.
In times of social breakdown, this replacement of the individual’s power is done by force, rather than the social institutions that evolved for the purpose. In Nineteen Eighty Four, as in Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia, overwhelming and pitiless force produces the response described in the quotation from Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego and in the ‘reforming of Winston Smith.

(For a more detailed discussion of history and the ideas behind the novel check the blog http://orwellsnineteeneightyfour.blogspot.com. This will be a text that will develop during the next few weeks and will include more suggestions for student work. It is intended to be a generative text, and will be open to teachers to comment and to include extra ideas, resources and approaches to the text. It will be introduced at the New Texts evening: Robert Cole, Nov 06)
Section 2. Ways into the text

Before studying the book.

Orwell’s world can appear very remote. The aim of these activities is to create a link between the world of 1984, and the world we live in today.

The importance of memory.

- Ask Students to jot down their most important memories. These will be probably overwhelmingly personal. Within the bounds of propriety, ask them to share these memories and classify them in some way.
- Now ask them if they can remember when they first used a chat room; when they first gained a mobile phone; when they first sent or received an email; when they first saw a computer; when they first saw a CD or DVD or Video. Can they remember how life was like before any of these devices came into their lives? Can they construct an ‘electronic timeline?’
- Now ask them if they can remember any public events in the last ten years: Can they remember the riots in East Timor in 2006? Do they know where they were and what they were doing when the tsunami struck East Asia? On which day did the tsunami strike? Do they remember when the invasion of Iraq began? Can they remember the year when Essendon last won the grand final? How many federal elections can they remember? Can they remember ‘the children overboard’ incident? The Tampa? Can they remember the eleventh of September 2001? Can they remember the Australian troops entering East Timor in 1999? Ask them where they were on those days.
- In groups give students the task of recalling history since they were born. Tell them to imagine that their memories are the only source of information they have access to. Have the class put together a ‘library of historical facts’, political, sporting, advertising, personal, international, music, entertainment, or any other categories they choose. Make a booklet of these facts. Ask them to discuss how important it is to keep this knowledge.
- Ask students to make a list of their treasured possessions: photographs, keepsakes, toys, trophies, gifts. Ask them to write a small creative piece on them with the title, 'My precious things.' Ask them if they can say why these items are precious.
Introducing the text

Predicting the world of the novel:

1. Before reading the novel, photocopy the following sentences and distribute them among small groups of students and ask them to discuss the possible significance of each sentence in creating the world of 1984.

   **It was a bright, cold day in April and the clocks were striking thirteen.**

   The telescreen received and transmitted simultaneously.

   **…every sound you made was overheard, and, except in darkness, every movement scrutinised.**

   **He had set his features into the expression of quiet optimism which it was advisable to wear when facing the telescreen.**

   (Teachers could choose and distribute any other sentences in Chapter 1.)

Reading the novel

Read Chapter 1. Ask students to discuss the following questions:

1. **Opening sentence.** Why are there twenty-four hour clocks in the novel?

2. **Necessity of controlling one's responses.** What is the problem with being looked at all the time? Isn't that what happens on the show *Big Brother*? Ask students to imagine how it feels to be permanently in control of oneself, one's facial expressions, one's gestures.

3. **Moving to the part of the room where the telescreen does not reach.** Ask students how important privacy is in their lives. Do they ever willingly forgo privacy? How private are chat rooms?

4. **Tobacco falling out of the cigarette.** Ask students to make a list of ‘necessary’ items that they take for granted such as: razor blades, deodorant, tissues, toilet paper, tampons, items of make-up, combs, brushes etc. How difficult is life without these items?

5. **Diary entry about the flicks.** Ask students to make a list of films or shows where they thought the violence was excessive. Ask them if they sometimes find television news footage excessively violent. Ask them if
they are ever distressed by the reactions of other people to films which portray violence.

6. The Two Minute Hate. Ask students if they have ever been affected by being in a crowd, such as at a music concert, sporting match, political or religious demonstration. Ask them to write a small piece describing the experience. Were they swayed by the mass emotion of the crowd?

Keeping a diary

- Ask students to keep a diary of their study of Nineteen Eighty-Four. In this diary ask them to record incidental events, like going to the supermarket, the news of the day, important things that happen to them as well as thoughts they may have about how our lives today are similar to or different from the lives of Winston and Julia.

Similarities between Australia in 2006 and the world of 1984.

- Ask students to consider the impact of the mass media on their lives. How important to them is fashion, the Internet, their phones? How are their lives, and especially, their purchases, affected by advertising in the mass media? Ask them to consider if they ever feel their decisions are strongly affected by advertising. How much pressure is there on young people to conform? Where does this pressure come from?

- Students could investigate via the Internet the changes to media laws in Australia. Who owns our major TV stations, magazines, newspapers and pay TV? How can we be sure we are getting the news that is important for us to hear? Might this be an important issue for Australians to consider?

- Students may wish to investigate the Australian anti-terrorism laws at http://www.aph.gov.au/library/intguide/law/terrorism.htm#terrchron. Perhaps a legal studies teacher may be able to guide them through this challenging website.

- An article which discusses the consequences of the anti-terrorism laws by Margo Kingston and entitled ‘Come in Big Brother’ is certainly worth following up. It is from the Sydney Morning Herald, 2002, and it can be accessed through http://www.cdu.edu.au/law/apl/Homepage/terrorism.htm

- Students could reflect on the changes in the terrorism laws. They could discuss the proposition that ‘Australians are surrendering their freedom in exchange for security.’

(A quick internet search produces a wealth of resources - and easily digestible articles on the loss of freedoms in Australia since the eleventh of September 2001.)
Section 3. Running sheet and structure of the text

|---------|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Chapter 1. | Winston comes home from work in the middle of the day to begin writing a diary. The diary is an act of rebellion, an attempt to make meaning from ‘the interminable restless monologue in his head’ and a message to the future. | We learn about:  
- Big Brother  
- The telescreen,  
- The three slogans of the Party  
- Winston’s difficulty in remembering his past,  
- The violent, desensitizing films shown to everyone  
- The Two Minute Hate,  
- Goldstein  
- The Junior Anti-Sex League,  
- Winston’s apparent contact with O’Brien. |
| Chapter 2. | Winston is interrupted by Mrs Parsons. He helps her fix the kitchen sink. The children are unbearably loud and aggressive. Winston is hit on the back of the neck by a stone from a catapult. News of victory. Chocolate ration cut. Winston realises he is a dead man. | • Children turned into savages  
• But adore the Party  
• Betray parents to thought police  
• Winston remembers meeting with O’Brien  
• Winston aware that there is no escape except inside his head  
• Realises that the best way of ‘carrying on the human heritage,’ is to stay sane. |
| Chapter 3. | Winston dreams of his dead mother. Realises that mother and sister died to keep him alive. Dreams of girl with dark hair tearing off her clothes. Forced by telescreen to do physical jerks. Frightened of Party’s capacity to destroy past. Contemplates doublethink. Admonished by telescreen. | • Realises mother’s death was tragic in a way that was no longer possible  
• Realises it is impossible to trace history of war  
• Remembers that the enemy has changed  
• Remembers that once he had documentary evidence of falsification. |
| Chapter 4. | Winston at work. He Changes information in The Times.  
‘Technology’ and the nature of his job explained. Winston’s capacity to create fantasy for the Party. | • The enormity and complexity of ‘rewriting history.’  
• Winston’s awareness that he changes ‘one piece of nonsense for another.’  
• Winston’s ability to interpret newspeak critically |
| Chapter 5 | Lunch in the canteen. Meets Syme who explains purpose of newspeak dictionary, which is to destroy shades of meaning to cripple people’s | • Winston realises Syme too intelligent and eccentric to stay alive.  
• Winston overhears meaningless babble as Syme explains duckspeak  
• Parsons happily, unquestioningly stupid. |
ability to think. Parsons arrives, asks for sub for Hate Week. Girl with black hair looks at him. He is terrified.

**Chapter 6 \(^{(pp66-72)}\)**

Winston writing in diary recalls meeting with prostitute. Remembers his wife Katharine’s frigidity. Is disgusted with himself and outraged by strictures of the Party. Act of recalling it by writing does not relieve him.

- **Winston asks himself why he should feel life is intolerable if he cannot remember a better time to compare it with.**
- **Realises that your worst enemy is your nervous system.**
- **Winston’s desire to break down the ‘wall of virtue.’**
- **‘Desire was thoughtcrime.’**

**Chapter 7 \(^{(pp72-84)}\)**

Winston recalls incident of the frying pans which showed him Proles cannot think about anything apart from basic needs. Copies a passage from a child’s history book into diary. Impossibility of proving or disproving Party claims. Remembers the incident of Jones, Aaronsen and Rutherford. Remembers O’Brien.

- **Proles 85% of population**
- **Winston struggling under the realisation that it is impossible to know what past was really like.**
- **Winston had concrete evidence that the men’s confessions were untrue.**
- **He does not understand why the past is constantly changed.**
- **‘Knows’ O’Brien is on his side.**

**Chapter 8 \(^{(pp85-107)}\)**

Winston misses meeting at community centre to walk in Proles area. Witnesses rocket bomb falling. Kicks severed hand into gutter. Enters pub tries to ask old man about the past, but he can recall only fragments. Finds himself outside junk shop where he bought diary. Admires and buys the glass ornament. Charrington takes Winston upstairs to a bedroom. Charrington discusses picture on the wall. Tries to remember ‘oranges and lemons.’ Sees the girl with black hair again.

- **Proles, like ants, can see small objects but not large ones**
- **Hardly any valuable antiques remain**
- **Charrington vaguely intellectual**
- **Room has no telescreen**
- **Thinks of the ‘treachery of the human body.’**
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Part 2.</th>
<th>Winston and Julia</th>
<th>A relationship in secret</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| Chapter 1 (pp111-123) | Meets the girl in corridor at work. She falls. He helps her. She passes him a note. Believes note to be message from thought police. Stunned at declaration of love. Struggles with the frustration of trying to arrange a meeting. Sees her in canteen number of times before speaking. They meet in crowd at Victory Square. She gives him detailed travel instructions. They hold hands. | • 'It had been as though he had felt the pain in his own body.'  
• Feels 'desire to stay alive' well up in him.  
• They see the faces of the 'war criminals' as they pass in the trucks.  
• He gets to know her hand in a very short time. |
| Chapter 2 (pp123-133) | Walks along, is followed then passed by the girl who takes him to a natural clearing. She approaches him and offers herself. He cannot respond. They talk, she produces chocolate. He begins to relax, to feel human. He is overjoyed when she confesses to enjoying sex. | • In the country, no telescreens but concealed microphones.  
• Winston aware in the beautiful countryside of his London dirtiness.  
• The music of the thrush drives all speculations from Winston's mind.  
• Winston feels desire to corrupt the Party.  
• Realises that love or lust is not pure and that the sex act is a political act. |
| Chapter 3 (pp133-143) | Julia business-like in organising departure. Next meetings furtive and short. Month later meet in belfry of a church. Julia tells her history. Julia understands purpose of Party's sexual puritanism. Winston remembers coming close to murdering Katharine. Winston feels fatalistic but is roused by Julia's firm body to hope again. | • Julia does extra volunteer work, convinces Winston to do same. 'If you kept the small rules you could break the big ones.'  
• Julia's simple view of life 'You wanted a good time, they, the Party wanted to stop you having it, you broke the rules as best you could.  
• 'Sexual privation induced hysteria.'  
• Family an extension of the thought police  
• Julia believes in part of her mind that all she needs is luck, cunning and boldness. |
| Chapter 4 (pp 143-154.) | In the room above Mr. Charrington's shop. Winston's desire has changed: Julia is now a physical necessity for him. He had suggested the shop to Julia who had agreed. Julia arrives with coffee and tea and make-up. They make love. A rat appears. Julia deals with it but | • Listens to the washer woman singing. Woman makes meaningless song sound human.  
• Both know the folly of the decision.  
• Winston wonders if their present experience had once been normal.  
• Winston has a terror of rats which he cannot express or bring to full consciousness.  
• Winston feels as if he is sealed with Julia in the room inside the glass. |
| Chapter 5  
(pp154-163) | Syme vanishes. Hate Week preparations. Parsons in his element. The room a haven. Charrington willing to talk, share fragments of past rhymes. Julia more acute than Winston in some ways, more naïve in others. She thinks rocket bombs dropped by Party, but does not understand the significance of Aaronson and Rutherford. | • Both know things cannot go on.  
• Daydreams of escape, joining the brotherhood.  
• She only questions the teachings of the Party when they affect her life.  
• World view of the Party imposed most successfully on people who least understand it. |
| Chapter 6  
(pp164-167) | O’Brien approaches Winston, engages him in conversation, gives Winston his address. | • Winston realises that what is happening now is the working out of a process that started years ago.  
• Has the sensation of stepping into the dampness of a grave. |
| Chapter 7 | Winston dreams of his mother, of having behaved badly over a piece of chocolate and then losing her forever. Winston claims that only the Proles are human. Winston and Julia base their hope in the future on the belief that the Party could not get inside the ‘inner heart.’ | • His mother had a kind of nobility – her feelings could not be altered from outside.  
• What mattered to people two generations ago were human relationships. |
| Chapter 8 | Winston and Julia go to see O’Brien. They are impressed by the surroundings, and by O’Brien’s manner. They reveal that they wish to join the Brotherhood. O’Brien offers them wine then asks them a series of questions about what they are prepared to do. O’Brien describes the terrible life of a Brotherhood member, and makes arrangements for Winston to receive Goldstein’s book. | • Winston and Julia describe themselves to O’Brien in terms the Party would use – as if they were criminals.  
• Neither O’Brien nor Martin the servant betray any emotion in their dealings with Julia and Winston. |
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<tr>
<th>Chapter 9</th>
<th>The sudden change of the enemy’s name shows just how much control the Party has over the people. Winston reports for duty at eleven o’clock at night, knowing he will be expected. For ninety hours he and others rewrite and alter all kinds of records. He goes to the shop, takes Goldstein’s book and begins to read it. Julia arrives, they make love and he begins to read it to her.</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The mass of the people simply switch the object of their hatred.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• The orator does not even make a mistake in syntax as he changes the names of the enemy he is attacking.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Summary of Goldstein in appendix.</td>
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<td>• Having begun to read the book, Winston knows that he was not mad – being in a minority of one does not mean you are mad.</td>
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<th>Chapter 10</th>
<th>Winston hears the washerwoman singing and reflects that she is beautiful. Winston feels tremendous hope in the Proles and in the future. At the moment he feels most hopeful and most connected to humanity, the terrifying voice issues from the picture. They are surrounded by police, Julia is punched. Mr Charrington turns out to be a member of the thought police.</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The violence is swift and impersonal</td>
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<td>• The voice repeats their words and the repetition turns an idea into a frightening reality.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Part 3</td>
<td>Winston and O’Brien</td>
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</table>
| Chapter 1 | Winston is in a cell waiting. He has not been fed. Earlier, he had been with common criminals. He has seen Ampleforth and Parsons come in. He sees the skull-faced man fight savagely to avoid room 101. He sees the violence used on the man. When O’Brien comes in, Winston does not realise for a moment that O’Brien is not a prisoner. O’Brien tells Winston that he has always known that O’Brien was loyal to the Party. Winston is hit by a truncheon on the elbow. | • Parsons betrayed by his daughter.  
• The skull-faced man is prepared to sacrifice his family to avoid room 101.  
• Winston knows that never could you wish for an increase in physical pain. |
| Chapter 2 | Winston subjected to routine beatings for an indefinite period of time. Beatings stopped to be replaced by merciless questionings designed to break his power to reason. He is placed into situations where he cannot make sense of time or place. He is taken to a strange room. He is attached to a machine. O’Brien claims Winston is mentally deranged. O’Brien explains to Winston that he is a flaw in the system. He lets Winston ask questions, then Winston is drugged into sleep. | • Beatings a preliminary to real torture.  
• Although he had done none of the things he confessed to, in the eyes of the Party the mere act of his thinking made him guilty.  
• Becomes aware of O’Brien’s presence as both torturer and friend. Aware of the voice of absolute power over him.  
• O’Brien is determined to make Winston exercise doublethink.  
• When O’Brien stops the pain, Winston once again has the feeling that O’Brien is someone he can talk to. |
| Chapter 3 | O’Brien explains to Winston that the Party exercises power for its own sake. He asks Winston how people exercise power. Winston’s answer is ‘By making them suffer.’ O’Brien describes a world where terror and power increase and become more subtle. Winston tries to assert the dignity of man. O’Brien humiliates him, by showing him himself in a mirror. | • ‘We make the laws of nature.’  
• ‘Progress in our world will be progress to more pain.’  
• ‘This is what you accepted when you set yourself up against the Party.’  
• ‘Imagine a boot stamping on a human face – forever.’ |
### Chapter 4

Winston is treated better and begins to recover. He has long realised the futility of opposition. The Party had been watching him for seven years. Winston tries to train himself in doublethink. But his feelings for Julia emerge and he realises that he must keep his hatred locked up inside him until just before he is shot. O’Brien comes to ask him if he still hates Big Brother. Winston answers truthfully and is sent to room 101.

- ‘He had capitulated, that was agreed.’
- ‘Anything could be true. The so-called laws of nature were nonsense.’
- ‘He obeyed the Party, but he still hated the Party.’

### Chapter 5

Winston is taken into a room beneath the ground. There he meets O’Brien who has a cage of rats which he will attach to Winston’s face, and they will eat it. O’Brien tells Winston that everyone has a fear that they are unable to control. Winston realises that to escape he must divert the rats to Julia, so he screams to let them eat her instead.

- O’Brien adopts the tone of a teacher as he explains to Winston what exactly will happen when the rats escape and attack his face.
- He ‘scientifically’ explains to Winston that courage or cowardice has nothing to do with it.

### Chapter 6

Winston is released and speaks to Julia, who has only contempt and dislike for him. They have betrayed each other to save themselves, and they are different now. He sits in the Cherry tree café playing chess and drinking gin. The news comes on the telescreen of a great victory. His response is now different, he loves Big Brother.

- ‘Under the spreading chestnut tree, I sold you and you sold me.’
Section 4. Perspective

*Nineteen Eighty-Four* describes a society in the future where every aspect of human life is controlled by the Party in power. Orwell creates a world of inhumanity and despair, a dark world, a world in which personality is extinguished and replaced by slavish, mindless devotion to the State, as personified by Big Brother. According to the ideology of the Party, an individual’s knowledge and perceptions count for nothing. Reality is what is defined by the collective mind of the Party. The logic of the Party’s position is that any perception, belief or opinion that does not reflect the Party’s vision is by definition, incorrect and criminal.

The Party’s ideology is nonsensical, and maintaining belief in it requires that the Party control the population so that people are not able to think rationally, consider and reflect on their experience or share their perceptions with each other. The Party and its institutions force the people into a state of constant and unremitting deprivation; they keep the state at permanent war, so that people live always with the anxiety of being attacked; they keep the people under permanent surveillance, so that the people live with the anxiety that they may betray themselves to the telescreens; they deny them enough food and goods to live comfortably; they alter history, so that no one can remember what really happened in the past and compare it with the present; they destroy family life by training children to disregard their parents and even to spy on them; they organise leisure time so that people are unable to live a private and personal existence with people they love. Through their propaganda, they create an enemy to hate and rituals whereby this hatred can be expressed without creating civil unrest. Finally, they attempt through manipulation of the language, to limit the thoughts and emotions that people can express or even experience.

The effect of all these measures is to frighten people so profoundly that they accede to the Party ideology without being conscious that they are doing so. What the Party requires is immediate and unconscious assent to whatever Authority says about anything.

The speech had been proceeding for perhaps twenty minutes when a messenger hurried onto the platform and a scrap of paper was slipped into the speaker’s hand. He unrolled it and read it without pausing in his speech. Nothing altered in his speech or manner, or in the content of what he was saying, but suddenly the names were different. Without words said, a wave of understanding rippled through the crowd. Oceania was at war with Eastasia!...The hate continued exactly as before, except that the target had been changed.’ (pp.188-189.)

The intention of this Hate Week celebration is clear – to allow the people a vehicle for the mass hysterical outpouring of all the emotions thwarted by Big Brother and the Party: the greater and more intense the outpouring, the more unconscious and more manipulable the people become. The sudden change of enemy seems both an extremely effective means of control and an expression of the most extreme contempt of the people thus dominated.

Winston Smith is ‘the last man in Europe’, the only person who has an awareness of life that is different from that of ideology. Winston seems to experience life far more richly than the Party wants him to. Winston is able to remember and reflect on what he remembers, he can critically evaluate what he sees and hears and he can feel for others.
Everything in Winston’s environment directs him to absorb the propaganda of today, but he does not because he is able to remember that the Party’s version of history is bunk. He can remember a time before Oceania was at war with Eurasia, that it was at war with Eastasia; he can remember Jones, Aaron and Rutherford – the news about them, their disappearance, the article and photograph of them in New York, and seeing them in the Cherry-Tree café; he can remember his mother and her disappearance. These memories are significant. They, like the beautiful piece of glass, are infused with emotion; they suggest ideas he can reflect on and they act as psychological bulwarks when his sense of himself is under strain.

This sense of himself as a person separate from Big Brother is very much alive when he exercises his analytical and critical faculties. These faculties are most obviously visible when he is at work. In order to work effectively, Winston needs to read his work instructions between the lines, to look for clues as to why the news is being changed, and to respond creatively to solve whatever problem he has been set.

‘Winston did not know why Withers had been disgraced. Perhaps it was for corruption and incompetence…Or perhaps what was likeliest of all – the thing had simply happened because purges and vaporizations were a necessary part of government. The only real clue lay in the words ‘refs unpersons’, which indicated that Withers was already dead.’ (p. 48)

In this extract Winston is reading, sifting evidence, interpreting a fiction creatively and responding to it creatively. Winston, as part of his job, holds different realities in his mind: the possible truth of the fate of Withers, the ‘fate’ of Comrade Ogilvy and his own reality. The very skills which earn him his living, enable him to compare the ideology of the Party with his own personal experience and to question what he is being forced to accept.

Winston feels for others. His human sympathy allows him to see himself as connected to other people and the experience of human history. At the beginning of Nineteen Eighty-Four Winston feels the need to write in his diary. His first entry reports, but does not comment on, the image of the Jewess ineffectually covering her child’s face with her arms to stop the bullets. Later he notices Mrs. Parson’s anguish as she berates her child for hitting Winston with the catapult. While he cannot at this time see the significance of this suffering, he later realises that gestures such as those the Jewish woman makes are essential to being truly human, and that what makes humanity is people’s involvement in and loyalty to each other.

Whereas earlier he can say:
‘Tragedy belonged to the ancient time, to a time when there was still privacy love and friendship…’ (p. 32)

His relationship with Julia now allows him to see himself like the people in the past, to draw conclusions about himself, other people and the Party, conclusions now infused with a sense of his own common humanity.

‘The terrible thing the Party had done was to persuade you that mere impulses, mere feelings were of no account, while at the same time robbing you of all power over the material world.’ (p. 172)

‘The people of only two generations ago…were governed by private loyalties which they did not question. What mattered were individual relationships, and a completely helpless gesture, an embrace, a tear, a word spoken to a dying man, could have value in itself.’ (p. 172)
The fact that he can perceive these truths so clearly is testament to the strength of his relationship with Julia. Through the strength of his own intellect and the support of Julia, Winston has remained independent of the Party. He has refused to take part in reality-control or ‘doublethink.’ Sadly, his achievements and their hope that ‘the inner heart, whose workings were mysterious even to yourself, remained impregnable,’ (p. 174) are destroyed by O’Brien in Room 101. As ordinary human beings, Winston and Julia are unable to perceive the magnitude of the Party’s ruthless determination to destroy them.

As representative of the Party, O’Brien’s intention is, through the pain of torture, to utterly destroy Winston’s sense of himself as a human being - in other words, to make it impossible for Winston to see himself as separate from Big Brother. The most horrifying aspect of Winston’s torture is that it is conducted by someone intelligent, by someone who in other circumstances could have been a warm friend, someone who can perceive Winston’s human needs. The shock is that O’Brien is able to imaginatively apprehend Winston’s life and use this knowledge to destroy him. O’Brien is someone who is completely capable of denying the truth that he and Winston share a common humanity. The key victory the Party wants is for Winston to accept the technique of ‘doublethink.’ In overwhelming pain, Winston witnesses both O’Brien’s doublethink and his steadfast denial that he has lied. In the face of this terrifying imperviousness Winston’s critical faculties begin to desert him.

If he could have been certain that O’Brien was lying, it would not have seemed to matter. But it was perfectly possible that O’Brien had really forgotten the photograph. And even so, then he would have already forgotten his denial of remembering it, and forgotten the act of forgetting. How could one be sure that it was simply trickery? Perhaps that lunatic dislocation of the mind could really happen: that was the thought that defeated him. (p. 260)

O’Brien defeats Winston by an act of theatre. In a state of terrible physical weakness brought about by intense and varied torture, Winston no longer has the psychological strength to challenge O’Brien. O’Brien now changes his approach. He defines Winston as sick, as needing a cure. ‘Only the disciplined mind can see reality, Winston.’ Reality is presented as something one has to be worthy to perceive. The logical consequence of this is view is that one must change. Torture is given a justification.

O’Brien moves from being torturer to lecturer, to friend, in each role breaking down further Winston’s opposition to the Party’s view of the world. The torturer has absolute power, and Winston gradually comes to identify with the power that terrifies him.

*Nineteen Eighty-Four* is a satire on the totalitarian tendencies of the modern world. In the modern world tragedy is not possible, because the novel shows us people’s vulnerabilities can be used to force them to relinquish all that they value. Dignity can be destroyed. What starts off as the story of the last man in Europe becomes at the end, a sadder but smaller story. Winston Smith’s degradation becomes only an example designed to illuminate the intricacies of Orwell’s horrifying vision - a vision of utter degradation and despair.

Under the spreading chestnut tree,
I sold you and you sold me.
Section 5. Characters

Winston Smith

Winston Smith is the central figure of the novel, the character whose eyes the reader sees through. He is a member of the Party, but not a member of its inner circle. He is subject to twenty-four hour surveillance, a life of discomfort, fear and boredom. Unlike most of the other characters, he has the capacity and the inclination to question his situation and to long for something more than what the Party offers. He bought the diary to communicate with the future, even though he realises that even the act of purchase will be interpreted by the Party as an act of treason, and that the chances of the diary ever being read by people in the future are zero. So, from the beginning, one part of Winston’s mind is aware that he is doomed.

Winston is not in the best of health. His varicose ulcer gives him trouble, and he struggles to take part in the telescreen exercises. What most disturbs him, however, is the powerlessness he experiences in everyday life. With a life that is regimented to an amazing degree, he suffers most from the necessity to be forever on guard against the possibility of portraying on his face what he really feels. ‘You had to live, - did live, from habit that became instinct - in the assumption that every sound you made was overheard, and, except in darkness, every movement scrutinised.’ (p. 5) Winston is intelligent, and has also developed a capacity to sense danger. He can recognise that Syme is in danger, even though to all intents and purposes, he is an enthusiastic devotee of Newspeak. Winston has the perspicacity to realise that Syme’s enthusiasm is the very quality the Party will be suspicious of.

‘Your worst enemy he reflected, was your own nervous system.’

Winston is outraged by the demands the Party makes on people’s intellects. ‘The Party told you to reject the evidence of your eyes and ears. It was their final, most essential command...he wrote ‘Freedom is the freedom to say two plus two equals four. If that is granted all else follows.’ (p. 84)

He is also outraged by the Party’s attempt to destroy the sexual instinct. Winston remembers Katharine his wife, who only ‘did it’ because it was her duty to the Party. Winston understands that a happy sexual relationship has the potential to breed feelings of indifference to the strictures of the Party. In the midst of his happiness with Julia, he wonders ‘whether in the abolished past it had been a normal experience to lie in bed like this, in the cool of a summer evening, a man and a woman with no clothes on making love when they chose…….Surely there could never have been a time when that seemed ordinary?’ (p. 150)

The relationship with Julia becomes a political act against the Party. They share for a short time moments of happiness and privacy that become more important to them than their own safety. It as if Winston secretly knows what his fate will be, but wants to go to it having lived the life of a fully human being. He says of his mother:

‘..she had possessed a kind of nobility, a kind of purity, simply because the standards she obeyed were private ones. Her feelings were her own and could not be altered from outside. (p. 171)

Winston discovers later to his immense cost that Big Brother can and does alter one’s feelings from the outside.
Questions.

- What are the tensions in Winston's life?
- What is the significance of the piece of glass to him?
- Why does he seek out the old prole in the pub?
- Describe where he lives. What does this description tell you of the way of life under Big Brother?
- What qualities draw him to O'Brien?
- What are the qualities in Julia that he finds attractive and why?
- What memories does Winston rely on to keep himself sane?
- Why does he take the risk of hiring the room above the shop?
- Essentially, what finally breaks Winston's resistance?
- What does O'Brien know about Winston that allows him to break Winston's resistance?

Julia

Julia is younger than Winston and works in the novel writing section of the Ministry of Truth. She is not intellectual in the sense that Winston is but opposes the Party more by instinct. Unlike Winston's wife Katharine, she is not browbeaten by the Party, but instead works, in Party organisations like the Junior Anti-Sex League, to throw possible pursuers off the scent while she breaks rules, has sex, gets hold of make-up, real coffee and tea. How she gets these contraband goods we are never told, but she seems to have a guiltless unconcern with being caught. She is resourceful, can find places to meet, and is spontaneous in sex. 'Almost as swiftly as he had imagined it, she had torn her clothes off, and when she flung them aside it was with the same magnificent gesture by which a whole civilisation seemed to be annihilated.' (p. 131)

Winston is overjoyed to find Julia is 'corrupt to the bones.' In fact she is not corrupt, but guiltless. She and Winston find peace of mind and contentment in the room above Mr. Charrington's shop. She does, however, have only a perfunctory interest in some of Winston's ideas. When she goes to visit O'Brien, it is only really because Winston is going. O'Brien is clearly more interested in Winston than in Julia because her rebellion is essentially for her own purposes, whereas Winston's opposition challenges the basis of the Party's rules. For Julia, being with Winston is more important than fomenting revolution.

Questions.

- What aspect of Julia's clothes does Winston dislike, and why?
- When they go to the country, apart from sex, what other experience do they share?
- Why is this experience important?
- To what degree do you think Julia understands the political significance of their act of love?
- In which ways is she more politically acute than Winston?
- Julia does not care whether the Party invented aeroplanes or not. What does this say about her, and how might you use this fact to explain the ease with which the Party retains control?
O’Brien

We first meet O’Brien during the Two Minutes Hate. Winston is struck by the contrast between O’Brien’s burly physique and his elegant manners. Winston has seen O’Brien a dozen times in as many years. Something in O’Brien’s manner draws Winston to him. Winston believes that O’Brien is someone whom you could trust if it were possible to get him alone. Winston believes that he and O’Brien shared a moment of unspoken intimacy. Winston has a memory of O’Brien saying to him ‘We shall meet in the place where there is no darkness.’

After Syme disappears, O’Brien approaches Winston and gives him a private invitation to attend his living quarters. When Winston and Julia are shown in to his quarters, they are surprised to see that O’Brien can turn off the telescreen. In the three meetings we see between O’Brien and Winston, O’Brien never changes from the attitude of cool reserve noted at the beginning. When O’Brien comes to Winston’s cell his manner is still the same. All of Winston’s hopes about O’Brien now seem to be no more than projections of his longing for a kindly father.

As Winston’s torture progresses, O’Brien adopts different personas: kind and understanding; stern; bullying and contemptuous, tearing out one of Winston’s teeth. Winston cannot find the ‘real’ O’Brien. The nightmare for Winston and perhaps for us is that O’Brien is a perfect specimen of the Party – that he has perfected doublethink to such a degree that his own personality no longer exists. His obvious intelligence allows him to understand how a mind like Winston’s develops, how Winston’s opposition may go in one direction and then another. He is able to impress the tortured Winston with a sense that he, O’Brien, is omnipotent. This speech, with its cruelty and arrogance, captures O’Brien’s utter remoteness from common humanity.

‘All competing pleasures will be destroyed. But always – do not forget this Winston – always there will be the intoxication of power, constantly increasing and constantly growing subtler. Always, at every moment, there will be the thrill of victory, the sensation of trampling on an enemy who is helpless. If you want a picture of the future, imagine a boot stamping on a human face, forever.’ (p. 280)

Questions.

• Why is O’Brien so different from others?
• Why are the members of the Inner Party allowed to turn off the telescreen?
• Why does O’Brien change his persona during the torture?
• What reasons can you think of for Winston’s admiration of O’Brien before and during the torture?
• O’Brien calls Winston a lunatic? What is the purpose of such an approach to Winston?
• If Winston is to be killed after he is tortured, why is O’Brien trying to convert him?
• 
Parsons

Parsons lives in Victory Mansions, in a flat close to Winston’s with his wife and two children. He is not intelligent and swallows completely the Party line. ‘In a way the world-view of the Party imposed itself most successfully on people incapable of understanding it.’ (p. 163)

He is in charge of Hate Week celebrations in Victory Mansions. This allows him to expend much energy in what is essentially an utterly empty activity, and removes from him the responsibility for thinking about his life. His children are members of the Spies and although young are already uncontrollable. Parsons relates his daughter’s exploits, capturing someone for the patrols because she had never seen shoes like the ones the person was wearing. Parsons, bursting with pride as he tells the story, does not realise the likelihood that his daughter has sent an innocent person to his death. Parsons does not have to involve himself in doublethink: he simply swallows the changed news about the chocolate ration ‘with the stupidity of an animal.’ (p. 62)

Parsons joins Winston in jail because his zealous daughter has betrayed him to the thought police. So complete is his unconscious identification with the Party that he intends to thank the thought police for capturing him. Parsons lacks completely any ability to reflect on his own experience even when his life could be in danger.

Questions.
• Why is Parsons and his family part of the novel? What function do they serve for Orwell?
• What purpose is served by turning members of a family against each other?
• How is Parsons different from Winston?

Syme.

Syme is another example of an unthinking member of the Party. Where Parsons is ignorant, Syme is intelligent. He is an expert on Newspeak, and is compiling the latest dictionary. Syme seems to totally accept the ideology of the Party, and is ‘venemously orthodox.’ (p. 52) Syme lacks any compassion for the sufferings of the enemy during hangings, and gloats about the pain the enemies of the Party may suffer. Syme’s intelligence is utterly divorced from his emotions, but he can become intellectually excited about Newspeak and speak intelligently about it. ‘One of these days, thought Winston with sudden deep conviction, Syme will be vaporized. He sees too clearly and speaks too plainly. The Party does not like such people.’ (p. 56)

Questions.
• What does ‘Orthodoxy is unconsciousness’ mean?
• What does Winston say Syme lacks? (p. 58)
• What disturbs Winston about the way the man on the next table is speaking?
• What is the purpose in Newspeak of reducing the number of words?
• What is a ‘doubleplusgoodduckspeaker’?
• Why does the Party not like people like Syme?
Charrington

Mr. Charrington is the antique dealer who sells Winston the diary and piece of glass, and allows Winston and Julia the use of his room for their meetings. He talks to Winston about the rhyme ‘oranges and lemons.’ Winston is fascinated by the rhyme and by other fragments of the past. The day they are caught Winston discovers that he is a member of the thought police and the shop nothing more than a trap.

Questions

• Why is Winston fascinated by the piece of glass, and the rhyme?
• Find the complete rhyme and locate the London churches
• Why do Julia and Winston regard the old Prole washerwoman as beautiful?
Section 6. Issues and themes

The attack on privacy.
The destruction of history
The attack on sex.
The value of memory
The appreciation of the past
The fallibility of the human mind.

The attack on privacy.

In the world of Nineteen Eighty Four privacy is no longer possible. The population is constantly watched by the omnipresent telescreens which observe as well as broadcast. People are unable to relax, even for a moment. The constant observation exerts a terrible pressure: it stifles conversation, eliminates frank and honest interchange, and makes people fear lest they accidentally incriminate themselves.

- In which scenes of the novel is the presence of the telescreen an issue?

People's privacy is attacked in other ways also. The policy of turning children into spies means that even members of a person's own family may report them if, in a moment of weakness, they say something the authorities might not approve of. This second attack on privacy completely removes a pillar of support from the ordinary person, that of his or her family. This terrible loss heightens each individual's feelings of anxiety, and makes them feel alone and insecure in the presence of other people.

- Try to explain the look of anguish on Mrs Parson's face after Winston has been stung by her child's catapult.
- What is the consequence for the Parson children of having reported their father?

The attack on privacy extends to gestures, facial expressions and even thoughts. The Thought Police look for thoughtcrime, which is the refusal to exert 'reality control.' The assumption behind thoughtcrime is that the Party's view of the world is correct, so anybody not adjusting their sense of reality is committing a crime. The logic is right, but the assumption is wrong.

- What is another name for 'reality control?'
- Think of an example where Parsons exercises this control.

The attack on sex.

The attack on the freely expressed enjoyment of sexual pleasure is designed to destroy the motivation for independent action. The feeling of peace and normality that Winston experiences after sex one afternoon with Julia makes him realise that happy people are far less susceptible to propaganda than unhappy, frustrated people. The aim of the Party is to keep people constantly frustrated, then through acceptable rituals like Hate Week and the Two Minute Hate to allow them momentary relief in a group orgiastic expression where no rational thought is possible.

Another consequence of the attack on sex is that sexual and family bonds cannot be forged, and so the Party and Big Brother become the centre of people's lives.
Winston said of his mother’s time: ‘...they were governed by private loyalties which they did not question.’ Such a way of living is no longer possible in this new world.

O’Brien tells Winston that the Party is working on abolishing the orgasm: ‘There will be no loyalty, except loyalty towards the Party. There will be no love, except the love of Big Brother. There will be no laughter, except the laughter of triumph over a defeated enemy.’ Destroying enjoyment of sex means that no one has any need to care for anyone else. Tenderness disappears.

Questions

• Why is the relationship of Winston and Julia a political act?
• What was Julia referring to when she said she was ‘corrupt to the bones?’
• How could laughter suggest thoughtcrime?
• Why have a ‘Junior Anti-Sex League?’ Why are their activities strenuous?
• How much is Julia’s sexual drive a part of her personality?

The destruction of history.

The Party is the only political organisation in the state. The aim of the Party is to ever increase its control over the population, and to achieve this aim, The Party removes anyone who questions Big Brother’s authority. But it is not enough merely to kill them or to have them disappear. It is vital that records are changed so there can be no evidence that the dissidents ever existed. The Party’s motto is: ‘Who controls the present controls the past. Who controls the past controls the future.’

No information is allowed to survive that could in any way trigger the memories of the people because memory could become the basis of independent thought.

The destruction of history is vital for the creation and maintenance of doublethink. In Nineteen Eighty-Four there is always change. It is up to the people to adjust their memories so that a new ‘fact’ does not clash with any memories they may have of another ‘fact’. The Party aims to control the thought processes of the people: by the use of group pressure and constant propaganda, people are unconsciously persuaded simply to remove the inconsistent fact from their memories. The total effectiveness of the Party’s control is demonstrated in Hate Week when the orator suddenly changes the name of the enemy and people respond, tearing down signs and continuing the expressions of hate as if nothing has happened. So entranced are they that they cannot exercise any rational thought or stand back and reflect on their experiences.

When Winston tells Julia that the Party did not invent aeroplanes, she does not care if they did or not. Julia does not grasp the issue that children are being told lies. It is as if, unconsciously, she has learned not to care about the truth.

Questions

• See Orwell’s journalism for examples from real life.
• Why are records destroyed in Nineteen Eighty-Four?
• What records of the past did Winston remember seeing?
• Why was that memory important to him?
• What did O’Brien do in front of Winston?
• Is doublethink possible in real life?
The value of memory and an appreciation of the past.

Winston looks to the future through his diary. He is aware that the past was once different but he cannot remember very much about it. In particular, he cannot remember the Revolution. His visit to the pub to talk to the old prole is an attempt to test what the Party has told him. He is distressed to realise that the old man can recall only fragments and cannot recreate any memory from these fragments.

In attempting to discover the past of Ingsoc, Winston is also trying to recover a part of himself. When he remembers his mother, he realises he is recalling someone who was different from anyone alive now. He suspects some act of sacrifice was made to save him but he cannot remember. His dream about his mother helps him to realise something very important about her, namely that she made decisions in her life from her own standards, not those of anyone else. He can now look back and gain some meaning from his past. In a creative act Winston is able to associate his mother, hugging his sister after he had eaten her chocolate, with the image of the refugee woman in the film shielding her child from the bullets with her arm. Winston exhibits both the ability to remember and the ability to make connections between what he sees now and what he remembers from the past. He can then reflect on the actions of the Party and reject what they say. Gestures of affection now seem valuable in a way he had not realised.

Questions

- Why is Winston drawn to the piece of glass?
- Why is he interested in antiques?
- Why would the Party disapprove of antiques?
- When Winston looks at the picture of St Clement's he hears another fragment of the rhyme from Julia. Why does he want to piece these fragments together?
- Why would the thought police choose an antique shop to be a front to trap disloyal Party members?

The fallibility of the human mind

Throughout the novel we see Winston struggling with his mind. At first he simply cannot remember his past. He grasps at fragments of memory, but strains to make meaning out of them. He is, however, confronted with outrages and lies on an almost daily basis, and his rational mind registers the incongruities of his experience. He is unable to forget Oceania was once at war with Eastasia, although no one else remembers the change in announcements and documents. Because he works in the Ministry of Truth, he knowingly takes part in the creation of false news and the replacement of one false news story by another.

‘But actually, he thought as he readjusted the Ministry of Plenty’s figures, it was not even forgery. It was merely the substitution of one piece of nonsense for another. Most of the material that you were dealing with had no connection with anything in the real world, not even the kind of connection that is contained in a direct lie.’

Winston is involved in creating fantasies as surely as the writers in Pornosec. Unlike any of the other workers, however, he has a clear sense of the difference between Comrade Ogilvy and Julius Caesar. It is this awareness of difference that O’Brien demands Winston lose. For Winston, this capacity to think, to say that two and two
make four, is the basis of his whole sense of the world. He sees contradictions in the world and he refuses to deny them, because his understanding of his world is the essential part of his innermost self.

When Winston is tortured he is told that he has not exercised doublethink – he has persisted with a stubborn insistence that his view of the world is more accurate than that of the Party. O’Brien meets his objections with pain and a remorseless logic in which Winston, in his weakened state, can see no flaw.

‘Does the past exist concretely in space? Is there somewhere or other a place, a world of solid objects, where the past is still happening?’
‘No.’
‘Then where does the past exist, if at all?’
‘In records. It is written down.’
‘In records and – ’
‘In the mind. In human memories.’
‘In memory. Very well then. We, the Party, control all records, and we control all memories. Then we control the past, do we not?’

O’Brien’s final statement is false logic. He seems to be speaking literally, but really he is speaking metaphorically. He cannot change events that have already occurred. He can only deny the existence of past events, or seek to change the effects of those events on the present, by lying or fabricating stories. But so effective is Party control, that no opposing evidence exists to register the incongruities as Winston has done. The Party constructs a world consistent with its teaching, then, God-like, calls it reality. This world in fact becomes reality for the mass of people. O’Brien is an actor, whose statements about reality are backed up by the administering of unbearable pain. One cannot argue or retain objectivity when in pain. As Winston says:

‘Nothing in the world was so bad as physical pain. In the face of pain there are no heroes….’

So helpless is Winston to stop the relentless physical pain, that he develops a kind of affection and respect for his tormentor. The human mind distorted by the experience of torture seeks, like the people in the ‘Hate Week’ rally, to accommodate to a new reality that is being thrust at it. All subtleties, all nice points are swept away by the mind as it seeks to survive. The only absolute certainty is that of more pain, and it is on this that the fallible mind bases its new sense of reality.

- Discuss the following exchange between Winston and O’Brien.

‘No other object can occupy the same point simultaneously. In that sense, does Big Brother exist?’
‘It is of no importance. He exists.’
‘Will Big brother ever die?’
‘Of course not. How could he die?’

- Are Winston and O’Brien using words in the same way?
- When O’Brien says to Winston ‘you do not exist’ what does he mean
- What does O’Brien mean when he says ‘It is of no importance?’

O’Brien chooses to move from literal to metaphorical expression, without indicating he is doing so. He deals with Winston’s objections by bullying him.
Section 7. Language and style

*Nineteen Eighty-Four* is a novel but it is also a satire on trends in international politics at the end of World War 2. Orwell’s intention is to draw attention to the possibilities of oppression and cruelty as he saw them in Nazi Germany, Soviet Russia and even in the behaviour of western countries. Many critics call it a dystopia, the opposite of a utopia which is a story of an ideal society.

**Style**

Although this is a novel, one cannot help but notice just how much authorial commentary there is. Orwell is concerned to create a landscape in which Winston Smith walks, so there is necessarily much description as the world is delineated. One of Orwell’s challenges is to convince the reader of the permanence of this world. He takes the risk of including the long dissertation of Goldstein and the appendix on Newspeak, even though they are not pieces of dramatic writing like Part 3 for example. Orwell risks charges of being turgid in order to strengthen what could be called the architecture of the novel – the unchangeable constants of Orwell’s world. Orwell reports the thoughts of Winston for pages at a time, but since Winston cannot even speak about most of what he thinks and feels to Julia, the very structure of the story requires that he does this reporting.

**Structure**

Almost from the opening page Winston believes himself to be doomed, and the tone and pace of the narration does not encourage us to think otherwise. In essence, Winston Smith is the vehicle through which we explore the world of Ingsoc. His responses to each outrage allow Orwell to draw out the human significance of each injustice, of each cruelty. We witness Winston growing as a human being with each risk he takes and with each decision he makes that satisfies his human needs. Orwell creates a character for whom life in the present is intolerable. Yet he is doomed, so the interest in the plot is not in whether he will be caught, but when and how. This means there is little suspense and that the pace of the first two parts of the book seldom varies. Winston’s reflections emerge as the novel progresses and each insight is seen as precious.

In Part 3 we see all of Winston’s hard won wisdom desert him in the face of torture. In saying earlier that that tragedy was no longer possible in Ingsoc, Orwell is preparing us for Winston’s moral demise. We see O’Brien attack Winston’s sense of the rational using pain as the evidence. We watch a procedure of torture that has been clearly perfected over the years. This procedure, like the Two Minute Hate and the morning exercises is an integral part of Ingsoc. It is just another institution.

The reader is left with a feeling of bleakness. We are forced to realise that human resilience can be destroyed and that some people exist who have no sense of fellow feeling to anyone, who are dedicated to destroying all of human achievement. Orwell is a realist – he wants us to know the extent of human evil and that such evil is present today.
Section 8. A guided approach to selected passages

The aim of these questions is to enable students to become aware of the ways the language of the text is creating and directing their responses to it. The discussion questions aim to help students to use their detailed understandings to inform a broader discussion.

Passage 1. Pages 36-37

‘Since about that time, war had been literally continuous…reality control they called it: in Newspeak, ‘doublethink.’

This passage shows Winston trying to grasp the absurdity of knowing something but having to forget it.

- Why is it difficult to trace out the history of the period Winston is living through?
- How is Winston's memory a problem to him?
- What idea frightens Winston?
- Can you see any difficulties with the statement ‘then the lie passed into history and became truth?’ Is this literally true? What is meant by ‘and became truth?’
- What is ‘doublethink’?

Discussion Question.

- In practice, is 'doublethink' possible? Can you think of any situation where you may be encouraged to use it?

Passage 2. Pages 46-50

‘Winston's greatest pleasure in life was in his work…’ ‘He would exist just as authentically, and upon the same evidence, as Charlemagne and Julius Caesar.’

This passage is an example of Big Brother's statement: 'He who controls the present controls the past, and who controls the past controls the future.'

In this passage we see Winston at work changing historical records and, in essence, recreating the past.

- Why is this work Winston's greatest pleasure in life?
- Winston believes that more than one writer is working on the same project. What is the process by which the news is changed?
- Winston is clearly able to interpret Newspeak. Why does he think it necessary to change the whole subject of Big Brother’s speech?
- What evidence is there that Winston is able to question critically what he reads?
- What is Big Brother’s style of speech? What do you notice about the life of Comrade Ogilvy? What aspects of his life suggest him as an ideal?
- Is there any difference between Comrade Ogilvy and Julius Caesar?
Discussion Questions.

- Why is it important to the Party that the records of the past are systematically changed?
- What does the Party gain by it?


‘As Winston wandered towards the table his eye was caught by a round smooth thing that gleamed softly in the lamplight...‘Winston realised he would have accepted three or even two.’

In this passage we see Winston wanting to possess something from another age.

- What are some of the qualities of this object?
- What is Winston’s response to it?
- Why was the object doubly attractive?
- Why might being in possession of this object be considered dangerous?
- Why could the Party be threatened by this object?

Discussion Questions.

- What did the society which created this object seem to value?
- To answer this question, consider the following: the colour, the shape, the structure – What do these aspects tell us about the maker of this object?


‘From her breathing it was evident she was going off to sleep again...‘but the inner heart, whose workings were mysterious even to yourself, remained impregnable.’

In this passage, Winston is contemplating the effect of the Party on one’s inner self.

- What did Winston’s mother’s nobility consist of?
- What connection does Winston make between his mother and the refugee woman in the film?
- What terrible thing had the Party done?
- How are people in Winston’s day different from those of two generations ago?
- What mattered to these people?
- What is the real betrayal?
- What is Winston’s belief about the inner heart?

Discussion Questions

- Why might simple gestures of love or defiance, matter?

Passage 5. Pages 258-262.

‘I am taking trouble with you...‘Four! five! four! Anything you like.’

In this passage, O’Brien challenges Winston’s sense of reality.

- How would you describe O’Brien’s approach to Winston? (see p257)
• Find two examples where O'Brien is restrained.
• How does O'Brien describe Winston's persistence in claiming as true what he knows to be true?
• What is Winston describing when he refers to ‘the lunatic dislocation in the mind’?
• What is O'Brien's definition of reality?
• According to O'Brien, where does reality exist?
• How does O'Brien seek to change Winston’s perception of the number of fingers O'Brien is showing?
• In O'Brien's terms, what does 'sane' mean?

Discussion Questions.
• Why do you think O'Brien does not simply threaten Winston?
• How easy or difficult might it be to engage in ‘doublethink’?

Passage 6. Pages 284-287

‘He had stopped because he was frightened…In the end we shall shoot you.’

In this passage, Winston is allowed to experience his physical deterioration by seeing his reflection.
• What is O'Brien's intention in allowing Winston to see his reflection?
• What do you imagine is the effect on Winston of having his tooth pulled out?
• Why does O'Brien lay a hand on his shoulder?
• How does O'Brien's use of affectionate gestures compare with that of the refugee woman in the film?
• Why does O'Brien want to break Winston’s pride in himself?
• Try to explain Winston’s respect for O'Brien?

Discussion Questions
• Why is O'Brien’s mixture of kindness and cruelty so effective?
• What qualities do we see in Winston that we admire?
Section 9. Further Activities

Themes in the text

Some themes explored in the novel and outlined in Section 6 of this guide, ‘Issues and themes’, are listed again below:

The attack on privacy.
The control of language
The destruction of history
The attack on sex.
The value of memory
The appreciation of the past
The fallibility of the human mind.

Draw up a table as follows, and add your observations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Incidents which develop the theme</th>
<th>Key characters</th>
<th>Quotes</th>
<th>Connections with other themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Writing tasks

- Write an extract from the diary Mrs Parsons begins after Mr. Parsons is betrayed by his children.
- Write a number of extracts in Winston’s diary: after receiving Julia’s note, after their first date, after the dream about his mother, after going to O'Brien’s house, after reading Goldstein’s diary.
- Write a letter from Julia to Winston the night before they are captured.

Research topics

Internet research on historical issues related to the novel

- To understand the power exerted over people at rallies go to www.freud.org.uk/religion8.html and read what Freud has to say about religion and crowds.
- Then go to the wikipedia main page and type in ‘Nuremberg rallies’ to read about how Hitler worked on his crowds. Read chapter 9 of part 2. Perhaps deliver a talk on how the websites illuminate the Hate Week rally.
- Torture. To place O'Brien’s treatment of Winston in context, go to the following http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/brainwashing
- The Spies. To place the Parsons’ children in context go to the following website http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/GERYouth.htm to get a basic introduction to the Hitler Youth League. This website has eye-witness accounts of what happened to the children.
- To investigate the origin and conditions of life in a one Party state go to the following website http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Single-Party_state when there follow the links on Marxism-Leninism and Communism
As the blog grows, I will be able to provide other research ideas for students.

Discussion questions.

1. Would it be possible today for such a society to exist and survive?
2. What similarities, if any, can you see between the society of Nineteen Eighty-Four and modern Australia?
3. How much of your family history do you know? How important is it to you?
4. What does Winston mean when he says that tragedy is no longer possible?
5. Is the above statement true of life in Australia, now?
6. How easy is it to keep a population frightened?
7. Check the anti-terrorism websites. Do Australia’s anti-terror laws disturb you or make you feel secure?
8. Do you think it is possible to destroy a language, by removing words and expressions? Does the destruction of language mean, as a consequence, the destruction of the ability to think?
9. Read the article As I please http://www.resort.com/~prime8/Orwell/. Discuss Orwell’s idea of history. How relevant is it to Nineteen Eighty-Four?
10. Have a debate on the topic ‘Are we headed towards Nineteen Eighty-Four?’

Propaganda.

Go to http://www.calvin.edu/academic/cas/gpa/goeb23.htm read Goebbel’s speech.
   1. How does he represent the Nazi Party?
   2. How does he represent his enemies?
   3. What techniques of persuasion does he use?
   4. Are there any expressions of contempt in the speech?
Section 10. Key Quotes

1. You had to live - did live, from habit that became instinct – in the assumption that every sound you made was overheard, and, except in darkness, every movement scrutinized. (Chapter 1, page 5)
   *The writer is referring to the basic conditions of life in 1984.*

2. He had committed - would still have committed – the essential crime that contained all others in itself. Thoughtcrime they called it. (Chapter 1, page 21)
   *Having just written ‘Down with Big Brother’ in his diary, Winston knows he is doomed.*

3. …..what most struck Wilson was the look of helpless fright on the woman's greyish face. (Chapter 2, page 26)
   *Winston has just left Parson’s flat, where he was fixing the drain in the sink. He has just been struck on the back of the neck by a stone from the catapult of Parson’s son, who, due to the influences he is exposed to, is ungovernable.*

4. The thing that now suddenly struck Winston was that his mother's death, nearly thirty years ago, had been tragic and sorrowful in a way that was no longer possible. Tragedy, he perceived, belonged to the ancient time, to a time when there was still privacy, love and friendship, and when the members of a family stood by one another without needing to know the reason. (Chapter 3, page 32)
   *Winston is reflecting on a dream about his mother.*

5. Whatever was true now was true from everlasting to everlasting. It was quite simple. All that was needed was an unending series of victories over his own memory. ‘Reality control’ they called it: in Newspeak, ‘doublethink.’ (Chapter 3 page 37)
   *Winston is doing his daily physical jerks following the orders barked out from the telescreen. He is reflecting on the Party’s power to control reality.*

6. Comrade Ogilvy, who had never existed in the present, now existed in the past, and when once the act of forgery was forgotten, he would exist just as authentically, and on the same evidence, as Charlemagne or Julius Caesar. (Chapter 4, page 50)
   *Winston has created a fictional character and inserted his story into the records of The Times as if he were a real person.*

7. The whole climate of thought will be different. In fact, there will be no thought, as we understand it now. Orthodoxy means not thinking – not needing to think. Orthodoxy is unconsciousness. (Chapter 5, Page 56)
   *Syme, the expert in Newspeak, is talking to Winston about the development of Newspeak dictionary and its impact on society.*

8. Freedom is the freedom to say that two plus two make four. If that is granted then all else follows. (Chapter 7, Page 84).
   *Winston is battling in his own mind to hang on to his own personal sense of how the world is.*
9. He thought with a kind of astonishment of the biological uselessness of pain and fear, the treachery of the human body which always freezes into inertia at exactly the moment when a special effort is needed. (Chapter 8, page 106)

_Winston returns home after seeing the black haired girl near the antique shop in the Prole area. He is frightened and is reflecting on how the human body is of no help in a crisis._

10. But with another part of her mind she believed it was possible to construct a secret world in which you could live as you chose. All you needed was luck and cunning and boldness.

(Part 2 Chapter 4, Page 142)

_Julia’s fantasy of freedom which keeps her energetic and able to take risks._

11. To hang on from day to day and from week to week, spinning out a present that had no future, seemed an unconquerable instinct, just as one’s lungs will always draw the next breath as long as there is air available.

(Part 2 Chapter 6, Page 159)

_In their secret room, Winston and Julia are rejecting the possibility of suicide._

12. What you do or say doesn’t matter: only feelings matter. If they could make me stop loving you – that would be the real betrayal. (Part 2 Chapter 7, page 173)

_Winston and Julia are debating what could happen to them after they are caught._

13. Of pain you could wish only one thing: that it should stop. Nothing in this world was so bad as physical pain. In the face of pain there are no heroes, no heroes, he thought over and over as he writhed on the floor, clutching uselessly at his disabled left arm. (Part 3 Chapter 1 Page 251)

_Winston has just been hit on the elbow by a truncheon, just after he realises that O'Brien is a member of the Thought Police._

14. The fallacy was obvious. It presupposed that somewhere or other, outside oneself, there was a ‘real’ world where ‘real’ things happened. But how could there be such a world? What knowledge have we of anything, save through our own minds? (Part 3 Chapter 4, page 291)

_Under the pressure of torture Winston begins to ‘remake his mind’ to accord with the teachings of the Party._

15. You think there’s no other way of saving yourself, and you’re quite ready to save yourself that way. You want it to happen to the other person. You don’t give a damn what they suffer. All you care about is your self.

(Part 3 Chapter 4, Page 305)

_Julia is talking to Winston about the effects of the torture she experienced. Winston goes on to agree with her._
Section 11. Essay topics

Part 1.

1. When O’Brien says ‘You have failed in humility and self discipline,’ he is correct. Winston Smith causes his own suffering. Do you agree?

2. ‘All you needed was luck cunning and boldness.’ Why were these qualities inadequate in the world of Nineteen Eighty-Four?

3. ‘Winston is finally defeated by his capacity to suffer.’ Discuss

4. ‘Winston’s capacities for reflection and critical thought are what we most admire in him.’ Do you agree?

5. ‘Winston’s awareness of what society has lost sets him apart from everyone else, even Julia.’ Discuss.

Part 2.

1. ‘The world of Nineteen Eighty-Four shows how cruel social institutions can be for individuals.’ Discuss.

2. ‘Nineteen Eighty-Four shows that human integrity can easily be undermined.’ Do you agree?

3. ‘Nineteen Eighty-Four demonstrates that dictatorships can only exist by destroying people’s capacity to think.’ Discuss.

4. ‘Nineteen Eighty-Four shows that the most important human faculty is reflection.’ Is this true?

5. ‘Nineteen Eighty-Four portrays a society which succeeds because its citizens are prepared to accept or ignore lies.’ Is this how you see the novel?
Section 12. Two Guided Essay Responses


‘Winston’s awareness of what society has lost sets him apart from everyone else, even Julia.’ Discuss.

Brainstorm.

Key words
What society? Airstrip 1 England in 1984
What has it lost? Many things
• Privacy
• Relaxed enjoyment of sex.
• A sense of peace and security
• The family
• Ability to have a personal life
• Culture language and literature
• Friendship
• Awareness of the past, appreciation of the way other people may live,
• Loyalty

Is Winston apart? Yes apart from Syme, Parsons proles.

But apart from Julia?
No in the sense that they have bravely asserted their humanity by taking the risks they have
No, in the sense that they are both love the other

But
Yes in that Julia does not understand the importance of remembering the past
Yes in that Julia is only really interested in her own private happiness
Yes in that Julia has less interest in trying to understand the past.
Winston has a curiosity about the past, about how the lived, about what they valued.

Because he can remember his mother he can make judgments about the present by comparing it to the past. He can feel compassion for his mother and by extension for people today. He can also use this understanding to criticise what he sees in society now.
Because he thinks and feels so differently from others, he is dangerous to the Party. He is an individual who values personal independence above Big Brother.
He commits thoughtcrime and cannot be allowed to exist.

Essay Plan:

Introduction
Last man in Europe. Knows people define themselves in terms of past and future.
Seeks to connect with past and future glass and diary. Has sense that people have lost what it means to be human. Although he finds happiness with Julia, he knows she cannot perceive importance of history and falsification. His awareness sets him apart
Paragraph 1
Winston suffers because of his awareness of appalling life he leads. Different from Parsons and Syme both successfully shut out the truth of what society has lost - memory, history, pleasure of sexuality, privacy etc (as above) Awareness a survival problem for Winston.

Paragraph 2.
Relationship with Julia helps him to create a new sense of who he is. Importance of sex. What they have in common. What they both gain from relationship. Julia’s good personal qualities. Her healthy sense of pleasure in all matters of life

Paragraph 3.

Paragraph 4.
Act of finding personal significance is thoughtcrime. A sense of one’s own value makes it difficult for the Party to assert superiority of the collective mind. Winston’s defiance a challenge to O’Brien, who knows that the organisation of society works to stamp out all that Winston stands for. One thing Winston does not grasp – the limitlessness of the opposition to him.

Conclusion.
Winston and Julia courageous because they know they will be caught. Winston suffers more because he has greater understanding of the monstrousness of the evil they face, and a determination to assert human values that Party opposes. Winston last man in Europe but a hero.

Part 2 Essay
A part 2 essay should analyse social and cultural values embodied in texts as revealed in the drama the characters take part in. Students need in their essays to step back a little from the details to gain a sense of the debate about ideas taking place in texts. Nineteen Eighty-Four is a novel influenced heavily by dominating ideas of the first half of the twentieth century, including Fascism, Communism, Psychoanalysis, notions of Imperialism and Democracy. While students are not expected to have more than a basic knowledge of these ideas, they need to have an awareness that Nineteen Eighty Four is a satire which tries to evaluate notions of political organisation and finds them seriously wanting.

Essay Topic 1.
‘Nineteen Eighty Four shows how cruel Society can be to individuals.’
Brainstorm

**Society.** What is meant by society? Social institutions, Thought Police, sources of information, the Two Minutes Hate and Hate Week, telescreen, the existence of the enemy, the Junior Anti-Sex League, Rallies, Work in the Ministry of Truth, Newspeak. **Cruelty.** Deprivation, poor food, poor cigarettes, constant surveillance, denial of sexual instinct, falsification of history to confuse, necessity of conforming, desensitising of population. **Individuals.** Need for privacy, life of peace and security, being loyal to family, Need for recreation and leisure, need to be able think clearly, trust one’s own mind.

**Introduction**

Society exists to care for the individuals that make it up. The institutions of society are there to make people secure, provide them with the necessities for existence and opportunities for fulfilment in personal and social life. *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is about a different world, a world where the individual counts for nothing. In this society the people serve the institutions. Society is seen as an absolute value, and the private realm of experience no longer exists. The Party regulates everyone’s behaviour all the time, to such a degree that control exercised is no longer visible to the people. Instead of being free to pursue their own lives, they live in an environment of constant disturbance, their sleep disturbed, their feelings manipulated, their memories shut down. In the face of such pressure, only a few individuals try to assert themselves.

**Paragraph 1.**

*Opening sentence.*

People are easier to control if authorities know what they are doing and if they feel they are being watched

Discuss surveillance.

- telescreens. Part of surveillance which includes whole poplation. Importance of controlling responses, even expressions. No place to do or think anything private. Winston accustomed to adjusting his face. His memory of a man with a facial tic. People disappear, because of any quality by which they stand out. Winston can predict Syme’s disappearance. Winston often makes constant effort to adjust his face, eg when talking to Syme. Makes special effort in exercise.

**Paragraph 2.**

*Opening sentence.*

Individuals are self assertive by nature and often quarrel with authority.

Program to destroy individuality. Destruction of family by corruption of children. Case of Parsons. A perfect Party hack who is destroyed anyway. The spies make children uncontrollable. The catapult incident and the look on Mrs Parson’s face. Destruction of sexuality. Party scientists doing away with orgasm, junior anti-sex league Winston’s experience with Katharine. Julia’s anti-sex league sash makes Winston wary she may be a spy. Winston’s experience with Julia makes him realise
that Sexual release and constant ‘Hate’ are incompatible. Hate only possible if people
denied fulfilment.

Paragraph 3.

Opening sentence.
People are easier to control if their capacity to think and make judgments is impaired.

Program to destroy people’s ability to think. Falsification of history. Winston’s use of
intelligence in creating comrade Ogilvy. The necessity of constant purges creates
need for destruction of historical facts. Winston has unique view – takes part in it, but
can also remember Jones, Aaron and Rutherford. Can also remember Mother, and
can realise how society has changed. Such awareness can only be seen by Party as
thoughtcrime.

Paragraph 4.

Opening sentence.
The manipulation of people’s minds can render them completely harmless to a society
bent on cruel social engineering.

Thoughtcrime is the determination not to conform one’s mind to the Party’s view of
reality. People know the Party’s views on all matters, so from Party’s viewpoint a
refusal to exert ‘reality control’ is a crime. ‘Reality control’ is called ‘doublethink.’
Winston has long been aware that the Party seeks to control one’s thoughts, so he
comes to the conclusion that ‘Freedom is the freedom to say two plus two equals
four,’ that one’s trust in one’s own perceptions is the absolute value. It is this
conclusion that O’Brien attacks in the Ministry of Love. His aim is to break Winston’s
mind so that the thoughts which challenge the Party no longer exist. Winston is broken
by measures that would break anybody, but the brutality behind the doctrines of Big
brother are apparent for the reader to see.

Conclusion.
Brutality at the basis of the society of Big Brother. Desensitising of population,
Winston and Julia’s heroism in assertion of what it means to be human
Section 13. References and Resources

Books.


Internet resources.

I have created a blog [http://orwellsnineteeneightyfour.blogspot.com](http://orwellsnineteeneightyfour.blogspot.com).

This blog will have more than fifty separate links which will allow you to explore the many different aspects of Orwell and *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

The most immediately useful site I found was ‘The political writings of George Orwell [http://www.resort.com/prime~8/com/Orwell/](http://www.resort.com/prime~8/com/Orwell/) This site contains some of his most famous journalism including ‘Why I write’ as well as the other articles he wrote for *The Tribune* during war-time and which are referred to in Section 1, Introduction
Section 14. Supplementary texts.

1. The satire *Animal Farm* is short, but necessary reading. A satire on the Russian Revolution and its aftermath, it is particularly useful not only for the historical aspects, but in that the rhetoric of the pigs’ propaganda is easy to analyse and can easily be related to *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

2. The political writings of George Orwell, including *Why I write*, *Totalitarianism*, contain explicit expressions of his values. Readers will find many echoes of 1984 in these writings.

3. The novel *We* by Yevgeny Zamyatin, which seems to be the inspiration for 1984. It is set further in the future, 2600, but Orwell borrowed much of his plot from this book. Orwell wrote a review which is available at

4. The Crick biography of George Orwell. Very comprehensive, and with a wonderful sense of the intellectual scene, pre and post-war Britain.