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Advanced Placement in English Literature and Composition

Teaching Unit
Individual Learning Packet

1984

by George Orwell

Written by Pete Boysen

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1984

Objectives

By the end of this Unit, the student will be able to:

1. identify the elements of dystopian literature.

2. explain how Orwell's background emerges in the themes of *1984*.

3. explain the purpose of the Two Minutes' Hate.

4. explain the various forms of control that the Ingsoc government exercises over its citizens.

5. describe the ways in which the Ingsoc government uses technology to monitor and influence its citizens.

6. explain the historical context behind the three forms of totalitarianism that appear in *1984*.

7. explain the major ideas found in Goldstein's book about oligarchical hierarchism, and compare and contrast those ideas with the ideas espoused by our own government.

8. contrast the rulers of Oceania (the Inner Party) with rulers in historical totalitarian states.

9. analyze the ways in which tone and diction undermine one another in the story.

10. analyze the ways in which syntax lends itself to tone construction.

11. explain the various forms of paradox that appear throughout the story, including Newspeak, doublethink, and crimestop.

12. respond to multiple choice questions similar to those that will appear on the Advanced Placement in English Literature and Composition exam.

13. respond to writing prompts similar to those that will appear on the Advanced Placement in English Literature and Composition exam.

14. offer a close reading of *1984* and support all assertions and interpretations with direct evidence from the text, from authoritative critical knowledge of the genre, or from authoritative criticism of the novel.

BACKGROUND LECTURE

Style, Setting and Themes:

1984 is set in the city of London, some forty years after the end of the Second World War. The city is not identified as London, but as Airstrip One, the capital of Oceania, an empire that appears to consist of North and South America, the British Isles, and part of Africa. The protagonist is Winston Smith, a social malcontent employed in the Ministry of Truth at the unending task of making sure that the archives of the media never show that Big Brother has made a mistake of any kind.

Four particular places in Airstrip One are important to the consideration of setting: Winston's apartment, Winston's workplace, the apartment that Winston rents for his trysts with Julia, and the depths of the Ministry of Love, where Winston is rehabilitated. The descriptions of each of these places, in addition to the descriptions of the dishevelment of the city as a whole, are a crucial part of the establishment of mood in the novel. A dystopian novel such as this seeks to create a future in which everything is NOT perfect—instead, everything is awful, and the power structure seems bent on keeping everything as awful as possible. Note the crumbling ruins everywhere in the city; the dreary disrepair of Winston's apartment building; the filth in the secret apartment, whose scant comforts would disgust many of us, but which are priceless to Winston's aesthetic; the mind-numbing conditions in which Winston works. The imagery used to create each of these different settings within the novel is one source of this novel's immense power.

The dystopian style is found throughout modern literature. Other examples of this include Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451*, and Vonnegut's short story "Harrison Bergeron." A key to this style is the use of language that shows that, at least officially, conditions in society are not only good; they are wonderful, and they are as great as they have ever been in human history. However, this grandiloquent style is undermined by the actual conditions in which the society exists.

In *1984* this appears in large and small scale. Take, for example, the ubiquitous branding of Victory on products that are designed to drug the user, such as Victory Gin, and Victory Tobacco. If life in Oceania is so wonderful, why do its citizens need to drink and smoke so much? Why wouldn't Victory Gin be a wonderful drink? Why wouldn't cigarettes made with Victory Tobacco be the best cigarettes? Instead, Victory Gin is almost impossible to drink, and the cigarettes fall apart just as fast as Winston can light them. Note, also, the grand music and announcements of victory that erupt from the telescreen, cloaking the real news, which usually entails the reduction of some sort of ration for public consumption. Note the odd oaths that Winston and Julia must take to join the Brotherhood in O'Brien's apartment, including a promise to throw sulfuric acid in the face of a child if that is what is required—such noble ideals, supported by such horrible deeds. It is this idea that the grandest human sentiments are just window dressing for the dark instincts of the human heart that drives the dystopian writer, and these ideas abound in *1984*.

The dominant theme in *1984* is control. The Ingsoc government controls every aspect of its subjects' lives: physical, mental, and emotional. There are tight restrictions on travel; every Party member is under virtually constant surveillance via telescreens, hidden microphones, spies wandering the streets for the Thought Police. This telescreen is not only used for surveillance, however; it is the primary tool for the inculcation of whatever idea the Party desires into the minds of the Party members. Using auditory and visual images, the Party drives a neverending stream of input into its members' minds. The telescreens are aided by posters of Big Brother, and of the hated enemy soldiers of Eurasia (or Eastasia, as the case may be), and the constant slogan: BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU.

Even one's own family is used as a source of psychological control. Marriage is permitted only for the purpose of procreation, and then, from an early age, children are encouraged to turn in their parents for thoughtcrime. Sex is discouraged when it is an act of joy or intimacy, and is encouraged only for couples desiring to add to the human race.

Physical control appears in a number of ways. There are mandatory exercises; Party members work long, tiring days; the government rations food and provides alcohol and cigarettes designed to leave the user in a tranquilized daze. The result is a Party too tired to mount a real resistance against the authority of the Inner Party, left only with the opportunities to vent against Emanuel Goldstein as a channel to release emotional frustration.

Control extends even to the dissemination of information. This is the job of the Ministry of Truth, where Winston works. Novels, films,—even the daily news—are written and re-written, with an eye towards making Big Brother appear infallible and Ingsoc as the ideal way of life. The Ministry of Truth is at work, constantly re-writing history, and constantly finding ways to make the English language less ambiguous by removing synonyms, reducing language to a grunting of syllables that, in the final analysis, appear to be far less intelligible than the language had been before. The ostensible aim of the Party, though, is not to increase understanding, but to reduce ambiguity. In truth, the reduction of language facilitates a reduction in thought; the human mind cannot long entertain a thought it cannot frame into words.

Taken together, all these themes combine to show the perils of living in a totalitarian state. Orwell had been familiar with the harsh way in which the Spanish monarchy and the Soviet government under Stalin would crush dissidence in an attempt to maintain power. His own British government was not exempt from his criticism, however. In his early life, he had seen how brutally the British Empire could treat its subjects in India, in order to hold sway over the natives. Whether totalitarianism is dressed up in the cruel methods of Hitler and Stalin, or the benevolent promises of socialism, it is still absolute control over the individual, and it is this absolute control that takes the Winstons and Julias of any society and drains them of their humanity, in Orwell's thinking.

The Dystopian Novel:

- **Plot** lines follow one of two directions: terrible things happen to the characters, but the characters either (a) escape their fate, or (b) the "establishment" wins.

- **Structurally**, dystopian novels are usually divided into three acts:

  Act I is largely exposition, establishing the parameters of the society and introducing the characters. Usually some precipitous event occurs toward the end of Act I that introduces the conflict and begins the rising action.

  Act II contains most of the rising action as it follows the attempts of the main character to either escape or change the society. The climax—the point at which the character's attempts to fulfill his/her desire and the society's attempts to thwart him/her reach the point at which one side or the other *must* win—usually occurs either at the end of Act II or the beginning of Act III

  Act III contains the falling action, the aftermath of the action in Act II. The theme is derived from the resolution of the plot: if the attempt to escape is successful, or the dystopian society is changed, the novel has a positive theme. If, however, the attempts at escape or change fail, the novel has a negative theme.

- Common **characters** in the dystopian novel include:

  - Representative(s) of the powerful, those in control.

  - Representative(s) of the "typical" citizen, perfectly happy with the society or blissfully unaware of the society's flaws.

    - Sometimes these characters are staunchly patriotic and cannot comprehend anyone's dissatisfaction with the society.

    - Sometimes these characters naively take for granted that the way things are is simply the way things are.

    - Sometimes these characters are passive/philosophical: they are aware of the flaws in the society (though not necessarily troubled by them), but they accept the flaws. They believe either there is no need to change or no point in trying to change.

- At least one character disenfranchised by the society, who desires either to escape or to change.

    - Sometimes these characters begin the novel loving the society (and holding a high rank within the society), but events in the novel cause a change in belief.

    - Sometimes these characters begin the novel already disliking the society. Often, at the beginning of the novel, they desire change but feel powerless to effect any change. Their attitude toward society may be based on events that occurred prior to the beginning of the novel, or due to some personal quirk or defect that makes the character aware of the flaws in the society.

- The **narrative point of view** of a dystopian novel is almost always from the inside— either a member of the society itself or someone who enters and is adopted by the society. Rarely will an outsider offer a convincing evaluation of the dystopian nature of the society of the novel.

Common philosophical or thematic traits of the dystopian novel include:

- The individual is worth nothing more in a dystopian novel than his or her value as part of the governmental machine.

- Power can reside either in a single dictator or in a larger governmental organization.

- Major forms of control in many dystopian novels include the means of communication, education, mass media, and popular culture.

- Military control can be a factor in the dystopian novel, but to a lesser extent than other, more subtle forms of social control.

- The controlling body (person or party) often uses pop culture to distract its members and thus control them (e.g., allowing, even encouraging, drug and alcohol use, sexual promiscuity, rampant consumerism).

- The controlling body finds and uses a scapegoat to deflect the blame for the suffering of the people (e.g., a foreign enemy, a disenfranchised group within the society, etc.)

George Orwell (pseudonym for Eric Blair), 1903-1950:

- Born in Motihari, Bengal, part of the British colony of India.
- His father, Richard, worked for the Opium Department of the civil service.
- Returned in 1904 to England with his mother and did not see his father again until 1907. After a three-month stay in England, his father returned to India and did not return until 1912.
- Older sister: Marjorie; Younger sister: Avril.
- Attended Eton from 1917—1921, where he formed friendships with many of the next generation of British intellectuals.
- Joined the Indian Imperial Police in Burma after graduation in 1921.
- Returned to England in 1928, disenchanted with imperialism (the experience is related in *Burmese Days* and the essays, "A Hanging" and "Shooting an Elephant."
- Took his pseudonym in 1933. St. George is England's patron saint, and the River Orwell (found in Suffolk) was one of Blair's favorite places to visit.
- Spent the next several years in poverty, even enduring periods of homelessness (as related in *Down and Out in Paris and London*).
- Volunteered to fight for the republicans in the Spanish Civil War against General Franco's Nationalists.
- Was shot in the neck on May 20, 1937, and left Spain in June to avoid arrest by the victorious communists in June of that year.
- Served in the BBC Eastern Service during World War II, developing propaganda to gain support in India and East Asia for the British war effort. A strong opponent of using language to deceive and manipulate, he wrote that his work made him feel like "an orange that's been trodden on by a very dirty boot."
- Published *Animal Farm* in 1945—an allegory decrying the excesses of Stalin's brutality.

- Published *1984* in 1949.
- Married to Eileen O'Shaughnessy from 1936 until her death in 1945. Together, they adopted a son, Richard.
- Married to Sonia Brownell from 1949 until his death.
- Died on January 21, 1950, of tuberculosis.
- During his life, Orwell was known primarily as a journalist, because of his newspaper writing and his nonfiction work about his experiences in the Spanish Civil War and his struggles as a poor writer in Paris and London. He was also esteemed as a superior essayist.
- Contemporary readers are introduced to Orwell for his novels, rather than those essays.

Questions for Essay and Discussion

1. Big Brother is one of the most well-known allusions to *1984*. What role does he actually play in the novel? How does he affect Winston? How is this effect similar to or different from the effect that O'Brien has on him?

2. In what ways is technology used to control the citizens in the novel?

3. What is the most frightening element of Room 101 before Winston actually enters it?

4. What event ultimately breaks Winston's spirit and makes him ready to accept all of O'Brien's truths?

5. In what ways is Winston's fatalism self-fulfilling?

6. How is Julia's attitude toward the party different from Winston's?

7. What factors in Julia's personality make her attitude different?

8. How is the role of sex in Oceania similar to, and different from, its role in our own time?

9. How are the objects that Winston finds in the antique store symbols?

10. What is the rhetorical effect of Winston's reminiscences of his mother and sister?

11. How is the novel's first sentence jarring?

12. In what ways that the government in Oceania distracts its citizens from their own problems similar to the ways that our own government distracts us?

13. Why are Julia and Winston so distant from one another when they meet after their rehabilitation?

14. There are no laws in Oceania. Why, then, is it such a terrifying place to live?

15. How long do you think the Thought Police knew about Winston and Julia's affair before they were actually caught?

Multiple Choice Questions

PRACTICE MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS 1-7

Carefully read the passage that begins on page 153 with, "In some ways she was far more acute than Winston" and ends at the bottom of page 156 and then select the best answer to the following questions:

1. Julia's belief that the government of Oceania is firing missiles at its own people to keep them frightened is an example of:
   A) hyperbole
   B) anaphora
   C) irony
   D) foreshadowing
   E) metaphor

2. Which of the following best describes the fundamental difference between how Julia's and Winston's attitudes evolved?
   A) Julia pretends to be obedient to cover her rebellion.
   B) Julia does not care about the difference between truth and lies.
   C) Julia believes that the government would kill its own citizens.
   D) Winston remembers airplanes before the advent of the Party.
   E) Julia cannot remember Oceania ever having a different enemy.

3. Oxymoron is used in the paragraph that begins "Sometimes he talked to her…" on page 154 to
   A) show the crucial nature of the evidence Winston had held.
   B) inject sarcasm into the passage.
   C) demonstrate how important truth is to Winston.
   D) emphasize their helplessness against the Party.
   E) express how much more intellectual Winston is than Julia.

4. Which rhetorical device appears in the sentence that begins "Every record has been destroyed…" on page 155?
   A) onomatopoeia
   B) hyperbole
   C) asyndeton
   D) anaphora
   E) assonance

5. Which sentence best states the difference between Winston's and Julia's motives for rebelling against the Party?
   A) Winston is rebelling to achieve personal satisfaction, while Julia is aiming for more abstract goals.
   B) Winston refuses to use existing organizations to further his rebellion, while Julia is happy to use the Junior Anti-Sex League.
   C) Julia wants to gain personal revenge against the Party, while Winston is persisting for the memory of his mother.
   D) Winston would like to enter the Inner Party, while Julia is happy where she is in the Party system.
   E) Julia is happy to achieve sensual satisfaction, while Winston desires a more intellectual level of dissidence.

6. The effect of the simile that closes this passage is that it
   A) shows how vacuous the minds of most Party members have to be.
   B) expresses how willing Party members are to adopt Party policies.
   C) demonstrates the universal nature of the Party's distortion of reality.
   D) highlights the boredom that Party members feel for current events.
   E) emphasizes the level of deception that is practiced by the Party.

7. Based on this passage, which of the following best summarizes the role of the Thought Police?
   A) To keep Party members in line with official doctrine
   B) To intimidate Party members who might feel like rebelling in private
   C) To determine the veracity of each member's appearance of orthodoxy
   D) To rob Party members of any sense of privacy
   E) To watch every minute of every Party member's existence

PRACTICE MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS 8-13

Carefully read the passage that begins on page 188 with, "The primary aim of modern warfare…" and ends on the top of page 193, with, "…with Oceania the undisputed master of the entire world." Then select the best answer to the following questions:

8. Which of the following words BEST describes the tone of this passage?
   A) ironic
   B) clinical
   C) depressed
   D) outraged
   E) resigned

9. According to this passage, the great irony of the machine age is that machines
   A) made it easier for people to destroy one another.
   B) developed more quickly than people could learn how to use them correctly.
   C) could have made people too equal to remain under the power of the governments that financed those machines.
   D) would eventually develop an intelligence that would soon begin to threaten governmental stability.
   E) ended up making people work even harder than they had during the agrarian age.

10. What is the effect of the "wheels of industry" metaphor at the bottom of page 190?
   A) To show how important the automobile has been to Oceania's success
   B) To express the sense of constant motion that abounds in Airstrip One
   C) To suggest that industry represents constant progress
   D) To show that an economy requires careful planning
   E) To assert how transportation generates real wealth

11. According to this passage, the function of wealth is to
   A) create an underclass that remains "stupefied by poverty."
   B) permit its owners to have time for leisure.
   C) keep power in the "hands of a small privileged caste."
   D) create jealousy, envy, and chaos.
   E) give its owners the opportunity to demand a share in power.

12. According to this passage, which of the following BEST summarizes the reason that Oceania is constantly at war?
    A) A nation at war is more likely to be willing to sacrifice material comforts.
    B) War creates the schizophrenic balance of diligence and fanaticism.
    C) Party members are more likely to be competent with victory on the line.
    D) The news will seem less frightening if it begins with good news from the war front.
    E) People who are not at war will be more willing to perform menial labor for their government.

13. The idea of *doublethink* best fits the definition of which literary device?
    A) aphorism
    B) hyperbole
    C) anachronism
    D) paradox
    E) metonymy

PRACTICE MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS 14-20

Carefully read the passage that begins, "A Party member is expected…," on page 211, and ends with "…to arrest the course of history" on page 214. Then select the best answer to the questions below.

14. In the first paragraph of this passage, what two literary devices could be said to be working against one another?
    A) irony and simile
    B) syntax and diction
    C) diction and tone
    D) metaphor and simile
    E) anaphora and diction

15. Which device best describes the idea of the Two Minutes Hate?
    A) paradox
    B) metaphor
    C) personification
    D) sarcasm
    E) euphemism

16. C*rimestop* can best be described as the
    A) ability to resist temptation.
    B) instinctive ability to keep thoughts a secret.
    C) power to pretend that one is thinking what one is not.
    D) intrinsic shutting down of the brain before committing heresy.
    E) constant vigilance about the activities of others.

17. What do the two definitions of *blackwhite* have in common?
    A) They both require insolence.
    B) They both refer to factual disputes.
    C) They both are used to jeopardize enemies.
    D) They both require the ability of *crimestop*.
    E) They both are lies.

18. According to the passage, how does the elimination of the past also eliminate dissidence?
    A) Eliminating the past makes the Party member more hopeful for the future.
    B) Maintaining a constant enemy gives the Party more focus.
    C) The Party has managed to banish memory from its members' minds.
    D) If the Party were ever wrong, that would be a fatal sign of weakness.
    E) Longing for the past would keep the focus from production.

19. Which of the following could be said to be the closest similarity between the principles of *doublethink* and those of our own modern media?
    A) celebrities endorsing products they do not actually use
    B) political leaders making campaign promises they do not intend to keep
    C) news reports showing juxtaposing footage of soldiers in combat with their families at home
    D) advertisements showing fit and healthy people consuming unhealthy products
    E) magazines selling advertising space in the same issue to political opponents

20. What best describes the meaning of *arrest* as it appears near the bottom of page 214?
    A) to stop
    B) to end
    C) to control
    D) to imprison
    E) to condemn

Multiple Choice Answer Key with Explanations

1. Julia's statement could be foreshadowing (D) if it indicated a hypothetical bombing, but it does not. Instead, it mentions an ongoing practice. Anaphora (B) is a syntactical device not found in this part. Hyperbole (A) involves an exaggeration, which could be possible if Airstrip One were not actually being bombed. Metaphor (E) abounds in this story, but there is nothing in this part that is not literal. Therefore, the unexpected action of bombing oneself is a clear example of irony. The answer is **C**.

2. All of these statements are true. The key to this question is not in describing the attitude, but discerning the underlying root. Choices B, D, and E are the only ones that refer to the acquisition or retention of knowledge. However, choices D and E focus on memories, while choice B describes a construct around which a belief could evolve. Therefore, the best answer is **B.**

3. Oxymoron appears in the phrases "impudent forgeries" and "momentous slip [of paper]." The adjectives do not appear to fit with nouns, especially the idea of a mere slip being momentous. The tone of this paragraph is no more sarcastic than any other part of the novel, which casts doubt on B. Choices C, D, and E are all true based on evidence from the novel, but none of them deal in oxymoron. The novel spends much of the time using adjectives to undermine strong nouns, but here the pattern is reversed: a strong adjective followed by a weak noun. Something that would change the syntactical pattern must be significant, as is the paper that Winston threw away. The choice is **A**.

4. Onomatopoeia (A) refers to sounds that are written out, like "boom." None of those appear in this sentence. Hyperbole (B) refers to extreme exaggeration, which is also absent from the sentence. Asyndeton (C) is the intentional omission of conjunctions, but conjunctions appear as they should grammatically in this sentence. Assonance (E) refers to the repetition of internal vowel sounds and is not present. Anaphora (D) refers to the repetition of opening words or phrases in sentences or clauses, and that is clearly present. The answer is **D**.

5. The clear nuance in this passage is that Julia does not operate at a complicated mental level and focuses primarily on her own physical needs. Winston, on the other hand, finds intellectual reasons to rail against the Party. The answer that best fits that difference is **E**.

6. The simile of the corn expresses how many Party members hear the propaganda and move on unaffected. The words and ideas go through their sense-based processing but do not leave any residual effect behind. There is no volition on the part of the members either to accept or to reject what they hear. This lack of volition eliminates choices B and D. This passage does not comment on the truth present in the Party's message, which eliminates C and E. *Vacuous* refers to a mind that is empty, even blank, which reflects the untouched digestive system of the bird. The answer, then, is **A**.

7. Page 156 mentions how easy it is to "present an appearance of orthodoxy." However, dissidence is often well masked. While all 5 answers contain an element of truth, the fact that this passage bothers to point out the ease of verisimilitude points in the direction of answer **C**.

8. This passage is found in Chapter Three of Emmanuel Goldstein's book *The Theory and Practice of Oligarchical Collectivism*, which describes the purposes of war in modern times. There is much irony in this passage, given the fact that the public is taught to associate war with glory, and here one sees that there is no glory to be found. However, the presence of irony does not mean that the mood is ironic, and there is no sarcasm in this passage, eliminating choice A. There is no emotional energy at all in this passage, which eliminates choices C or D. Resignation implies that one has accepted one's surroundings even though one might like to live otherwise, and there is nothing to suggest hesitation in the author's mood. Instead, the author is simply explaining, in a factual way, what motivates war. This factual air suggests a sense of detachment, which is a key element of a clinical mood. The answer is **B**.

9. Choice A is true, but not necessarily ironic in this case, because there are machines that are designed to destroy. Choice B does not appear in the text. Choice D is perhaps the second-best answer, because it was the freedom to think that began to threaten hierarchical government. If people had no reason to fear, then they would no longer cower under totalitarianism. If the machine age brought enough prosperity to banish fear from the public consciousness, then the public would no longer accept cruel government. Again, however, this is not an ironic statement – intellectual power could be expected to foment dissent against totalitarianism. Choice E is not supported by the explanation of how machines work – in contrast, the machines do give people a life of less "drudgery." Choice C contains the ironic fact that the governments that invested in technology now found themselves threatened by the fruits of that very technology, and the unexpected nature of that threat makes **C** the best choice.

10. The automobile does not appear in *1984* – perhaps it would give too much personal freedom and so was abolished. And so Choice A is eliminated. While there is a sense of constant motion, that is not reflected in this discussion of industry, thus eliminating B. Choice C is a tempting, but does not address the "problem" of keeping the economy going while not permitting the economy to move forward. This problem includes keeping real wealth from being increased, so E is eliminated. Choice D includes the idea of C but also shows the centralized planning that must occur, which fits with this passage's message. The answer is **D**.

11. While the goal of a hierarchy is the creation of a class of tranquilized poor, that is not part of wealth's function here, so A is eliminated. B is true, but this is only part of the function hinted at in the passage. Wealth can perform the function in C, but the passage discusses even distribution of wealth, which would also distribute power, thus eliminating C. While D may be true, it is not mentioned in the passage here, because of the even distribution, so D is eliminated. Choice E is bolstered by the statement that, once the newly wealthy had begun to think independently, they would realize that the "privileged minority had no function." In other words, they would want power as well. The answer is **E**.

12. Choices A, C, and D all make logical sense. All of them are part of the argument being made in the passage, but none summarizes the argument as a whole. Choice E is not logical, because one would expect a person to be more willing to accept menial roles when sacrifice is needed, not in times of peace. Choice B, however, encapsulates the mental transformation needed to be a solid Party member, what Goldstein refers to as the "splitting of the intelligence." The correct choice is **B**.

13. An aphorism (A) is a saying, not a word. Hyperbole (B) is exaggeration, which does not appear here. An anachronism (C) is something appearing out of its own time in a story. Metonymy (E) involves the use of a partial image to represent a whole (a flag to represent the United States of America, for example). A paradox (D) involves a contradiction that happens to be true; as Smith learns, 2+2 can be 5. The correct choice is **D**.

14. There is certainly irony in this passage, not least from the idea that one can be expected to have both clinical detachment and frenzied enthusiasm. However, simile does not appear in the passage, thus eliminating A. Metaphor does appear in the paragraph, but, again, there is no simile thus eliminating D. Anaphora refers to the repeated beginnings of sentences or phrases, and that does not appear in this passage, so E is eliminated. The syntax of this passage tends to be long and laborious, which could be said to stand in opposition to such word choices as "frenzy" and "hate," thus making choice B tempting. The energetic diction, however, in the use of words like "frenzy" and "hate" clashes with the overall tone of the paragraph, which is dry and clinical. The best answer, then, is **C**.

15. This phrase does not take an object and compare it to something else, so B is eliminated. Neither is an inanimate object given life, thus eliminating C. There is irony here, but not the intentional type that goes with sarcasm, eliminating D. This is not an attempt to make something sound better, eliminating E. However, the contradiction of not only being able, but being expected to do something as intense as hating for such a specific, proscribed amount of time and then "turn it off," as it were, has the sort of irony that fits the idea of paradox. The answer is **A**.

16. Choices A—C all come close to meeting the definition. Winston excels at all three of these, up to a point. Temptation troubles him, especially once he buys the diary and has a tryst with Julia. He can keep his thoughts a secret and pretend, at least ostensibly, to be thinking Party thoughts. Ultimately, though, this is not what the Party wants. The Party does want constant vigilance, but that is not part of crimestop, so E is eliminated as well. The passage calls *crimestop* the "faculty of stopping short…at the threshold of any dangerous thought" (p. 211). This power to actually suspend thought before committing a violation is best captured by choice **D**.

17. Choices A and C are true for the first definition, but not the second. Choice B could be true for both, but the Party scenario requires the member to be untruthful, so B is eliminated. Crimestop has more to do with the suspension of thought, rather than the willful change of thought, thus eliminating D. Whether you are calling black white to hurt someone or help someone, though, you are lying either way. The answer is **E**.

18. Choice A may be tempting at first, but is ultimately not reflected in the part about how the Party member tolerates the present because he cannot remember the past. Choice B may be true, but does not have to do with the past. Choice C is not supported by the passage. Choice E may also be true, but does not appear in this discussion. Goldstein writes, "to change one's mind, or even one's policy, is a confession of weakness." (p. 213) The answer is **D**.

19. Choices A and B are quite similar, giving instances of calculated lies. However, both cases involve someone *pretending* to hold one view, while actually holding another. *Doublethink* requires the holding of two contradictory thoughts simultaneously, and authentically. While Choice C shows two different images, the idea (sympathy for a soldier) is one and the same. Choice E involves two different units of thought (the two advertisements) instead of one unit. Choice D shows people who appear to be healthy despite their actions; instead of a lie, this actually shows two contradictory things to be true, requiring the viewer to believe a paradox. The answer is **D**.

20. All of these are possible synonyms for the word *arrest*, except for Choice E. Choices A and B are really too similar to be distinguishable for a correct answer, so both are eliminated. Choices C and D are also similar, but the idea of taking power over something is what the author has in mind, and the idea of imprisoning a chronology is something of a mixed metaphor. The correct answer is **C**.

Free Response (Essay) Items

PRACTICE FREE RESPONSE QUESTION 1

Read the passage that begins, "The essential act of war…" on page 191 and ends with "the natural, unavoidable condition of survival," on page 192 and then write a well-organized essay in which you analyze the rhetorical argument of this passage. Include in your analysis a consideration of how the author utilized syntax and other literary devices to express this argument.

PRACTICE FREE RESPONSE QUESTION 2

Read the passage that begins at the start of section II on page 239 and ends, "the thought and the deed" at the bottom of page 242. Then, in a well-organized essay, examine how Orwell uses syntax and diction to make Winston the victim of a faceless assailant. Consider how the grammar of the passage makes this vicious series of abuses seem like a clinical experiment.

PRACTICE FREE RESPONSE QUESTION 3

Read the passage that begins, "If you are a man, Winston…" on page 270 and ends, "Now put on your clothes again," on page 272. In a well-organized essay, explain the rhetorical argument behind O'Brien's assertion, "You are the last man." Consider how the imagery in the passage supports this argument.

PRACTICE FREE RESPONSE QUESTION 4

Orwell once wrote that "in a time of universal deceit, telling the truth is a revolutionary act." In a well-written essay, analyze how Orwell's use of characterization and plot in 1984 helps to establish this theme.

PRACTICE FREE RESPONSE QUESTION 5

One theme common of the dystopian novel is that government's intentions are not benevolent, but self-serving. In a well-written essay using *1984* as your example, defend the accuracy of this statement of theme.

PRACTICE FREE RESPONSE QUESTION 6

Humanistic philosopher Erich Fromm wrote that *1984*, in its dystopian tendencies, expressed "the powerlessness and hopelessness of modern man just as the early utopias expressed the mood of self-confidence." In a well-organized essay, analyze how the literary devices of irony, paradox, and tone contribute to express this sense of hopelessness in the novel?

1984

Advanced Placement in English Literature and Composition Teaching Unit

Study Guide
Teacher's Copy

ONE

I

1. What is the effect of the juxtaposition at the beginning of this section?

   Note how the official version of life clashes with the actual version. Winston lives in Victory Mansions, which sounds grand, but is actually surrounded by gritty dust and vile wind, and smells like "boiled cabbage and old rag mats" (p. 1). There is a huge poster of Big Brother, glorious leader of Oceania, opposite a lift that does not work. Winston's bright blue overalls cover a meager body. There appears "to be no color in anything except the posters that were plastered everywhere" (p. 2). The total effect is to show how different real life in Oceania is from the official accounts that come from the media.

2. What is the effect of the anaphora in this sentence? "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**" (p. 3).

   Anaphora involves the repetition of the first word, or phrase, in successive phrases or clauses. The repetition of the word ***every*** *indicates how pervasive the surveillance was that spied on the members of the Party.*

3. How is paradox involved with the descriptions of the government ministries?

   Paradox involves two contradictory ideas, both of which turn out to be true. The names of these departments attempt to put a better face on the job of each department—for example, the Ministry of Love is in charge of keeping order, which includes incarceration and torture.

4. How is paradox found in the description of Victory Gin?

   There is a good bit of humor, too, given how often Winston drinks something that tastes "like nitric acid" and made the drinker feel as if he had been "hit on the back of the head with a rubber club" (p. 5). A few seconds later, though, "the world [begins] to look more cheerful" (p. 5). Winston knows how bad the gin will taste, and yet he continues to drink it.

5. What is ironic about the statement that "nothing was illegal, since there were no longer any laws" (p. 6)?

   The absence of laws does not lead to complete freedom; instead, it leads to complete terror, since there is no way to object when the Thought Police says that one has committed thoughtcrime, as there are no standards to use when protesting.

6. What is the effect of the syntax in Winston's journal entry for April 4th, 1984? (pp. 8-9)

   The sentences get longer, with shorter, faster words, as the entry progresses. This mirrors the growing violence of the movie, as well as the audience's visceral responses, and the eventual arrival of the police to turn out the woman who objects to the movie. As the mood gets more chaotic, so does the grammar used to describe it.

7. How is the Junior Anti-Sex League sash an example of paradox?

   The sash emphasizes Julia's figure and makes her look more attractive to Winston, but the message of the sash is to quash lust.

8. What contradictions appear in O'Brien's physical description?

   He is "a large, burly man" and yet has a "curiously disarming" air about him (p. 10). Despite his imposing physique, Winston feels as if this is someone he could talk to. The ambiguity is the closest Winston gets to an opportunity; it is this ambiguity that captures Winston later on.

9. Why does Goldstein's influence never seem to decline? Why doesn't the government ever capture him?

   It is clear that the government needs an enemy on which to focus its patriots' vitriol.

10. What are some techniques used on the telescreen to encourage the Party members' hatred of Goldstein?

    The presentation starts with a "hideous, grinding screech, as of some monstrous machine running without oil" and shows Goldstein's face, which then turns into a sheep's face. Goldstein's voice is made to sound like a sheep's voice as well. Later, the Eurasian armies march in the picture behind the sheep's head. Goldstein's voice becomes an actual bleating sheep, and his face becomes an actual sheep, then a Eurasian soldier. Finally, the soldier turns into Big Brother, giving the audience a mutual shudder of pleasure.

11. What is the source of the power behind the hatred that the viewers feel?

The narrator calls the rage "an abstract, undirected emotion which could be switched from one subject to another like the flame of a blowlamp" (p. 14). This shows why the Thought Police are so necessary: Goldstein is the current focus of the pent-up energies of the Party, and it would not take much to change that focus to the Party itself, or to Big Brother. The source is all of the unsatisfied desires, conscious and unconscious, that the Party members feel.

12. Explain the allusion on page 15.

Winston wants to "shoot [Julia] full of arrows like Saint Sebastian." Saint Sebastian was a Christian martyr who is often depicted in paintings in an ecstasy of pain as he is sacrificing his life for his Lord. Winston's sexual desire for Julia is sublimated into anger, because he believes that her membership in the Junior Anti-Sex League will keep her from giving herself to him. The allusion to Saint Sebastian emphasizes the juxtaposition of pleasure and pain, ecstasy and torture, desire and hatred.

13. How does syntax reflect Winston's sexual frustration with Julia on page 15?

Note the sentence that begins "He hated her because she was young…" and ends "aggressive symbol of chastity." The brisk pace of the clauses, unbroken by the end of a sentence, mirrors the fevered pace of his inner ravings.

14. Why does the "B-B" chant fill Winston with horror?

The narrator refers to this chant as a "deliberate drowning of consciousness by means of rhythmic noise." (p. 16) Of course, many of Winston's activities seem an attempt to drown consciousness, so it is not clear why this one stands out.

15. What is the rhetorical effect of the word *voluptuously* on page 18?

While Winston sits, remembering the day, including his sexual fantasies about Julia and his wish that O'Brien might help him carry out his rebellious wishes, his pen is writing "DOWN WITH BIG BROTHER" over and over again in his diary. The use of the word ***voluptuously*** *here suggests the degree of pleasure Winston takes with this release of his pent-up emotion.*

II

1. What is the rhetorical effect of the physical description of Mrs. Parsons?

She is "colorless" and "crushed-looking," as though "there was dust in the creases of her face" (p. 20). She looks just as worn-down as the building in which she lives. The effect is to show how corrosive and tiring life under Big Brother actually is.

2. Explain the meaning behind the statement "We shall meet in the place where there is no darkness" (p. 25).

   This is ambiguous, just like the rest of O'Brien. When it does come true, it does so in a way beyond any of Winston's worst-case scenarios.

3. How can the reader tell that Winston has become desensitized to the war?

   When the telescreen starts the announcement of a victory, Winston braces for the bad news to follow, which turns out to be a chocolate reduction. Also, when a rocket bomb explodes nearby, the narrator dourly points out that "twenty or thirty of them a week were falling on London at present" (p. 26).

4. How does Winston's descent into thoughtcrime give his life more urgency?

   "Now that [Winston recognizes] himself as a dead man, it [becomes] important to stay alive as long as possible" (p. 28). In an ironic way, becoming a dissident gives Winston a reason to live that he had not had before.

III

1. Explain the significance of Winston's dream in the saloon of a ship.

   The fact that Winston is "out in the light and air while [his mother and sister are] sucked down to death," and that he survives because of their death, indicates a degree of guilt at his own survival (p. 29).

2. Explain the effect of the allusion to Shakespeare on page 31.

   This allusion comes at the end of Winston's daydream about Julia. However, this fantasy did not begin with sex, but with a wistful longing for deep and complex sorrows. It is these deep emotions that make Shakespeare's drama so powerful, and it is these deep emotions that have been purged from life in Winston's own time.

3. What is the most powerful element of Julia's careless nudity on page 31?

   It is not the physical appearance of her body—it is the way in which she has managed to throw aside the fear of giving herself that has become instinct under the Party.

4. Why does the Party never acknowledge when it changes from fighting Eurasia to Eastasia?

   "The enemy of the moment always [represents] absolute evil, and it [follows] that any past or future agreement with him [is] impossible" (p. 34). Changing one's mind or policy, as Goldstein will explain later in his book, is an admission of weakness, and the Party cannot afford ever to admit any sort of weakness.

5. What is the effect of the anaphora on page 35, in Winston's explanation of doublethink?

   In the paragraph that starts "Winston sank his arms…," note the long sentence that begins "To know and not to know…" Every successive clause begins with an infinitive. The effect of the repetition is to show how pervasively the notion of doublethink has been driven into the mind of every Party member.

IV

1. What is the metaphoric meaning of the memory holes?

   These holes are where Ministry of Truth workers are supposed to throw evidence of mistakes, to protect Big Brother from exposure. The idea that one throws one's very memory away by using these holes is part of the doublethink associated with working for the Ministry of Truth.

2. What is the effect of the tone in the paragraph that begins with "Winston dialed back numbers" on page 38?

   The pedantic tone makes Winston's work seem very ordinary, as though nothing is out of the ordinary. The subject matter—changing the past so that the government will seem infallible—might seem horrific to the modern reader; the fact that this task is so ordinary in Winston's time increases the horror.

3. What is the effect of the oxymoron "armies of reference clerks" on page 42?

   An oxymoron is an apparent contradiction in terms that is actually true. These clerks are among the true soldiers of Oceania, carrying out an intellectual war that is just as persistent as the ones against Eurasia, or Eastasia, or whoever it is today.

4. Why are people allowed to leave the Ministry of Love for a year or two before being executed for thoughtcrimes?

   This is an obvious sign of the Party's complete power over its subjects. Either people emerge from the Ministry of Love so broken that they are no longer a danger, or the Party's control over travel is such that no convict would be able to escape anyway. It also shows that there is little difference between prison and freedom in Oceania.

   There is also the sense that, should dissidents "disappear," thoughts about them and their dissidence could linger and fester. Dissidents, however, are "reformed" and returned to society long enough—one or two years—for any memory of their dissidence to be eradicated. Then, when they "disappear," there is nothing to linger after them.

5. What is the effect of Winston's inner debate over how to honor Comrade Ogilvy?

   Comrade Ogilvy is Winston's fictitious hero for a tricky news "repair." He decides not to give the comrade the Order of Conspicuous Merit because of the cross-referencing work that would be needed. It is simply too much trouble for Winston to create too much evidence of a person who has no objective existence. The irony increases at the end of this section, which tells the reader that Comrade Ogilvy now exists "just as authentically, and upon the same evidence, as Charlemagne or Julius Caesar" (p. 48).

V

1. In our own time, what might Syme have used to start his conversation with Winston?

   Instead of referencing the hanging, Syme might have started with a question about a movie, or a football game. This shows how morbid the entertainment is in Oceania.

2. What is perhaps the most grotesque sign of the desensitization that has taken place in Oceania with regard to violence, in Syme and Winston's conversation?

   Syme takes issue with the aesthetics of the hanging—he prefers hangings live rather than recorded; he does not like the victims to have their feet tied together because the kicking shows the visceral nature of the struggle; he seems to enjoy the sight of a "quite bright blue" tongue at the end to show the proof of asphyxiation. This gruesome fascination with detail shows how far from his mind the value of human life is.

3. Is "ungood" clearer in meaning than "bad"? Why or why not?

   Regardless of a student's specific answer, it is important to note the vagueness behind the word "good" and the necessary vagueness behind ***any*** *opposite of that word.*

4. What is Newspeak a metaphor of on page 52?

   Possible answers could include freedom of thought or expression; creativity; imagination.

5. How is Winston's prophecy of Syme's imminent disappearance ironic?

On at least two levels: Syme is a devotee of the Party's obsession about eliminating words, and Winston ends up "disappearing" for a while himself.

6. What is the effect of comparing the man from the Fiction Department to a duck on page 54?

Goldstein's heresy is directly compared to the bleating of a sheep in the Two Minutes Hate. Here, the Party line is compared to the quacking of a duck. In Winston's mind, orthodoxy sounds no different from the heresy of Goldstein.

7. What is the effect of the repetition in this sentence from page 59?

> As compared with last year there was more food, more clothes, more houses, more furniture, more cooking-pots, more fuel, more ships, more helicopters, more books, more babies—more of everything except disease, crime, and insanity.

On a literal level, it seems to show the material prosperity and quality of life in Oceania. Given what we have read so far, though, it seems to show the lies that the Party dispenses.

8. Why is this plenty not sufficient for Winston?

Despite the ostensible plenty, Winston dislikes the "physical texture of life" (p. 59). This includes the way food tastes; the squalor of his surroundings; the poor quality of utensils, among other things. This is why the creamy paper of the journal was so intriguing to him.

9. Why is it ironic that the Party puts forth the Aryan look (blond hair, blue eyes) as an ideal?

The Party members, by and large, are "small, dark, and ill-favored …beetlelike …dumpy" (p. 60). The idealizing of the Aryan look is another way to keep non-Aryans from trying to overreach the limits of power given to them by the Inner Party. No one who believes himself to be "inferior" or "unworthy" will rebel against one he truly believes to be superior.

10. What is ironic about Parsons' praise for the Ministry of Plenty on page 61?

In his next sentence, he asks Winston if he can borrow some razor blades—which are generally too scarce to find, and so Winston hoards them whenever he can. In this world of paradox, Parson praises plenty while simultaneously admitting to scarcity.

11. How is humor used at the end of this section?

Despite Winston's painstaking efforts to keep his cigarette together, it falls apart at the end of the lunch break.

VI

1. Why is the memory of the prostitute so frustrating for Winston?

   It is fairly clear that the fact that Winston has not been able to find sexual release in the three years since that episode makes the memory so painful to him.

2. According to the Party, what is the most harmful part of the sex act?

   The narrator explains that, to the party, "eroticism" was the enemy. (p. 64) For the partners in the couple to love or desire one another would entice them to form a loyalty to one another that could compete with their individual loyalties to the Party.

3. What has Winston come to want most about sex? What is the significance of this?

   Winston no longer seems to want the intimacy—instead, he wants to "break down that wall of virtue" with another Party member. In other words, sex has become not a mutual act, but an individual act of selfishness. The Party has succeeded in curing its members of the desire for interpersonal relationships. Even Winston's coupling with Julia will be, at least at first, self-centered.

VII

1. Why is it ironic that the proles get so outraged by a shortage of cooking pots?

   From Winston's perspective, the Inner Party has made so many other, more important, areas of life unpleasant that cooking pots seem a trifle. The proles are not sufficiently educated to see this, though.

2. What is ironic about the Party's claims that, before the Revolution, children had been sold into factories at age six?

   Six is the age at which the Party begins to institutionalize its children.

3. Why are the Party's statistics meaningless?

   As Winston well knows, given his job, the Party has no outside source verifying its information. Daily, this information changes to meet current political needs.

4. Identify the foreshadowing on page 80.

   Winston thinks that "[i]n the end the Party would announce that two and two made five, and you would have to believe it." Before the end of his rehabilitation with O'Brien, Winston does accept this as truth.

VIII

1. What is the effect of the whiff of genuine coffee at the beginning of this section?

   This is one of many clues throughout the book, culminating in the glass of wine in O'Brien's apartment, that there is a secret part of society that still has an enjoyable quality of life.

2. How is the Party interaction at the Community Center compared to a machine?

   This ironic comparison of human intercourse to a mechanized process appears as "creaking camaraderie oiled by gin" (p. 82). Without the gin, it seems, even these desultory evenings would fall apart.

3. What, to the proles, is a "serious piece of news" (p. 85)?

   The lotto results. The Party has devised sufficient distractions to keep the proles from realizing their own captivity. By giving them a pastime with the lotto, the Party has enriched its own tax revenues while keeping the proles from thinking about their own wretched condition. To add to the irony, Winston knows that the lotto prizes are generally fictitious.

4. What is the effect of the old man's complaints about the change from pints to half-liters of beer?

   The effect is highly ironic. If one considers the drastic changes that have taken in place in England during this man's life, the fact that the size of his beer glass has changed slightly, and that this is his main outrage, shows how vastly inferior, intellectually, the vast majority of society is, in Winston's perspective.

5. Why does Winston purchase the piece of coral?

   The chief attraction appears to be "the air it seemed to possess of belonging to an age quite different from the present one" (p. 96). This shows the level of dissatisfaction that Winston has with his current state of existence.

6. Why is it ironic that Winston chooses not to buy the picture on the wall on pages 98 and 99?

   Behind this picture is the telescreen that records his trysts with Julia.

TWO

I

1. What is ironic (and even funny) about Winston's thoughts when Julia hands him a note?

   He sees only two possibilities—one, that she is a Thought Police agent seeking to trap him; and two, that she is part of an underground insurgency. It never occurs to him that she might feel something for him. This is how effectively the Party destroys its members' minds and souls.

2. What is the effect that Julia's note has on Winston?

   Suddenly, Winston becomes more orthodox. He attends his evening at the Community Center faithfully, because "[a]t the sight of the words ***I love you*** *the desire to stay alive had welled up in him" (p. 109). The anger that poured forth into Winston's diary was no longer his sole release.*

3. What is significant about the statue of Oliver Cromwell on page 114?

   Oliver Cromwell was the leader of the Puritan revolution that overthrew the British monarchy during the 1600's. This part of history has been permitted to remain, one gathers, because the idea of a revolutionary would square with the Party's ideology.

4. Explain the effect of the juxtaposition at the end of this section.

   While Winston holds Julia's hand, he sees the eyes of an old prisoner. This foreshadows the future in the book, when Winston sees Julia after they have both been rehabilitated in the Ministry of Love, and their own love has gone. It also foreshadows the imprisonment coming for them both, and the general fatality associated with trying to love in this society.

II

1. How has Julia's sash changed, in Winston's mind?

   Previously, it was a sign that her attractive body was off-limits to him. Now, it brings out the curve of her hips.

2. Why does Winston have difficulty at first with Julia?

   At first, his mind is overloaded…he feels "no physical sensation, except that of mere contact…[he] was glad that this was happening, but he had no physical desire" (p. 120). The sensation of intimacy is so overwhelming emotionally that it takes a while for his physical responses to catch up.

3. What is ironic about the fact that Julia saw Winston's rebellion from his physical expression?

   From Winston's perspective, he has been able to control his expressions of disgust with the Party. Also, if Julia has seen his winces, so has O'Brien.

4. Why is the singing bird so hard for Winston to comprehend?

   Winston wonders what is motivating the bird to sing. The significance is that there is no motivation for beauty to exist: it simply does. The fact that Winston does not know this shows how jaded his society is.

5. What does Winston find most erotically attractive about Julia?

   The fact that she has had sex with many men and that she enjoys the act in itself, shows depravity. When he sees her body, he thinks, "Anything to rot, to weaken, to undermine!" (p. 125). His initial motivation with her is political, and selfish.

III

1. Explain this sentence from page 131: "She hated the Party, and said so in the crudest words, but she made no general criticism of it."

   Julia only objects to the Party's interference with her own personal satisfaction. She hates that she cannot have sex when she wants; however, she does not have Winston's longing for a more pleasant "physical texture" of existence, because she cannot remember life without the Party.

2. According to Julia, why does the Party frown on sex for pleasure?

   She says that "when you make love you're using up energy; and afterwards you feel happy… [t]hey can't bear you to feel like that. They want you to be bursting with energy all the time. All this marching up and down and cheering and waving flags is simply sex gone sour" (p. 133). Julia accurately recognizes that sex is an escape for pent-up energies that the Party would prefer to use elsewhere.

IV

1. What is it that makes Winston at last feel tenderness toward Julia?

   Ironically, it is her unavailability for sex. The frustration that he feels reminds him of what a married man must feel occasionally, and so he wishes that they had the other domestic quirks that a married couple has.

2. How does Winston misunderstand the song of the prole woman below the window?

He thinks that "[p]erhaps it [is] only when people [are] somewhere near the starvation level that they [have] anything to sing about" (p. 142). He has not yet become able to understand or accept a basic comfort level, or satisfaction with his life.

3. How have Winston and Julia reversed traditional gender roles in this room?

There are several examples. One is the fact that Winston is the one who has the dread of rats, and Julia has the common-sense plan to get the rats out of the room.

4. What elements of foreshadowing appear in this section?

The repeated entrances of the rats foreshadow Winston's trip into Room 101; Julia's desire to clean behind the picture foreshadows the telescreen's surreptitious existence behind that picture.

V

1. What is the effect of the increased bomb raids leading up to Hate Week?

The people do not know that it is their own government bombing them, so their fear increases, as does their reliance on Big Brother to protect them.

2. What might the following sentence foreshadow?

> "Wandering about among his worthless stock, with his long nose and thick spectacles and his bowed shoulders in the velvet jacket, [Mr. Charrington] had always vaguely the air of being a collector rather than a tradesman." (p. 151)

Mr. Charrington is with the Thought Police; with this shop, he collects thought criminals.

3. What is the effect of diction in the paragraph that begins "Sometimes he talked to her…" on page 154?

The word "impudent" is used to describe Winston's forgeries. This word is often used to describe the rudeness of a child, which tends to distract from the seriousness of Winston's changes. In contrast is the "momentous" slip of paper that proved an error by Big Brother. To her, these forgeries are closer to the machinations of a child; to him, proofs of error are highly significant. The diction shows the difference between their perspectives on the fact that a government would make a business out of telling lies.

VI

1. Winston interprets O'Brien's oblique reference to Syme as a shared act of thoughtcrime. How is this later shown to be an example of irony?

   Clearly, Syme turned Winston in as a possible thought criminal—if O'Brien did not suspect Winston already, and was using this as a step in luring Winston into further crimes.

VII

1. What tendency in Winston's mother has been driven out of people in Oceania?

   Winston remembers the last time he saw his mother. Even after Winston ran off with the last of the chocolate ration, so that his infant sister had none, Winston's mother kept giving what she could to her daughter—lacking any material comfort, she gave love through a hug. Winston realizes that the Party's terrible act was "to persuade you that mere impulses, mere feelings, were of no account…"(pp. 164-165)

2. How is the following statement ironic?

   > "[The Party] can make you say anything—*anything*—but they can't make you believe it. They can't get inside you" (p. 166).

   This is Julia's comment when she is discussing the possibility of getting arrested. Ironically, the Ministry of Love DOES get inside both of their heads, and make them believe anything the Party says.

VIII

1. Winston cannot taste the wine he is offered, because of all the gin he had drunk throughout his life. What is the rhetorical effect of this?

   Just as Winston cannot, at first, appreciate love because he has been so accustomed to a life without emotions, he cannot appreciate the subtlety of wine because his palate has been assaulted by the awful gin for so long. The point clearly is that the quality of life created by the Party not only destroys enjoyment, but also the capacity for enjoyment.

2. How is the Brotherhood similar to the lottery?

The Brotherhood distracts Party members from true revolution, because its adherents, from the beginning, accept that their work will never make any difference. Similarly, proles buy lottery tickets, and they spend a good deal of time following the results in the news, even though no one they know ever wins the jackpot. Both of these are Party distractions to keep possible discontents from causing trouble.

IX

1. What is the significance of the tremendous amount of work that Winston's department has to do when Oceania's enemy changes?

Such a huge workload should make an indelible impression on anyone's memory. However, the principles of doublethink require that every member of the Ministry immediately forget that there ever had been a war against Eurasia.

2. According to Chapter 3 of Goldstein's book, why is War Peace?

It should be noted that war is designed to eat up an economy's productivity without adding to a society's material wealth, or capacity for leisure, and to keep the populace sufficiently afraid to question the edicts of government. As Goldstein writes, "the object of the war is not to make or prevent conquests of territory, but to keep the structure of society intact" (p. 199). In other words, war keeps order, and so is, in a way, peace.

3. What are the historical parallels for Ingsoc, Neo-Bolshevism, and Obliteration of the Self?

Orwell foresaw the splitting of the post-World War II world into the Western Allies, the Soviet Union, and the Asian Communists. All of these groups found different ways to stultify their populations and accept different forms of totalitarianism, in Orwell's opinion.

4. How do these enemies actually benefit each other?

Because they are of roughly equal strength, they can remain at war forever without a serious risk of total defeat.

5. What made the ruling class of Ingsoc different from ruling classes in prior eras?

According to Goldstein, this class was "less avaricious, less tempted by luxury, hungrier for pure power, and, above all, more conscious of what they were doing and more intent on crushing opposition" (p. 205). In other words, there was no possibility that this ruling class would let luxury or mercy soften it.

6. What is the primary reason that groups revolt?

According to Goldstein, masses that are "permitted to have standards of comparison" with past standards of living are the only ones that can become discontented. Controlling all forms of communication gives the Party a hold on public memory, and ways to become articulate, and get a message out to the public (p. 207).

7. What is ironic about Winston's attitude after reading Chapters 1 and 3?

Neither chapter tells Winston anything new: "it…merely [systematizes] the knowledge that he [possesses] already" (p. 217). This is clearly boilerplate material that the Inner Party has ready for any of the more clever thought criminals in the Party.

X

1. How does the tone in the first half of this section belie the second half?

The tone is idyllic. Julia and Winston are cuddling together, feeling as emotionally intimate as they ever have. The woman's song, which had annoyed Winston before, becomes part of the romantic mood. However, the dread fear of the Party cannot leave Winston entirely, and it is when they both say, "We are the dead" that the sequence leading to their separation and arrest begins.

THREE

I

1. Why doesn't Winston explore further the possibility that the woman in his cell might be his mother?

   While Winston appears to feel some guilt for his own survival, and this guilt may want to keep him from facing his mother, nowhere in the story does he express a desire to see her again, or a curiosity as to her whereabouts.

2. Does Winston truly love Julia?

   He says that he loves her, but that this is "only a fact, known as he [knows] the rules of arithmetic" (p. 229). He also says that he FEELS no love, and does not wonder where she is. It could be that he has sublimated his love for her under his desire to protect her, or it could be that their connection was only purely political and physical.

3. What does O'Brien mean when he says, "They got me a long time ago" (p. 238)?

   O'Brien suggests that, at some point, he had the mind and soul of an individual, a capacity for love and compassion, and all of the other positive traits we associate with human nature. Then, for whatever reason—possibly the allure of power or material comfort—he gave up all of his human qualities to lead the Party. He did not have to be rehabilitated or duped into adopting Party policies, he embraced them for his own profit.

II

1. What is the significance of this sentence from page 244?

   "He was the tormentor, he was the protector, he was the inquisitor, he was the friend."

   This description of O'Brien shows how Winston comes to focus on just one person for all of his interaction with the outside world. The use of anaphora here demonstrates how completely O'Brien dominates Winston. O'Brien comes to take the place that the Party, personified by Big Brother, should take in the mind of any true Party member. Note the alternation between negative and positive roles.

2. According to O'Brien, what is the true purpose of the Ministry of Love?

   O'Brien says that "[i]t is intolerable…that an erroneous thought should exist anywhere in the world" (p. 255). The aforementioned focus of the ruling class on pure power, on the crushing of all opposition, is emphasized here. O'Brien does not merely want to silence rebellion; he wants to drive it out of the minds of his prisoners.

3. How is punishment in the Ministry of Love equivalent to execution?

O'Brien says that "[w]hat happens…here is forever" (p. 256). Those who enter the Ministry of Love are completely emptied on the inside and filled with the ability to accept anything the Party says.

III

1. Why does O'Brien tell Winston the truth about the Party's motives?

When O'Brien tells Winston that he will drain him of the ability to feel human emotions, however, the inculcation of despair is a key element of this—note how, at the end, the news of Oceania's victory in Africa is key in making Winston finally give in and love Big Brother. The fact that there are no idealists anymore, not even any ideals, is key in driving the fight out of Winston's mind.

2. What is significant about Winston's recognition of his own physical degradation? Why does O'Brien refer to him as "the last man"?

As someone who has not totally succumbed to the Party's doctrines and methods, Winston believes he has maintained some bit of human dignity. When he sees the physical wreck he has become, he is forced to reevaluate his mental image of himself—both physically and intellectually.

3. What fact does Winston believe saves his humanity?

He has not betrayed Julia. Regardless of what he has told O'Brien about her, he has not grown to dislike or disregard her. His feelings for her—such as they are—have not been changed.

IV

1. What is one sign that Winston has been permanently weakened mentally by his time in the Ministry of Love?

Winston appears to have "lost the power of intellectual effort, now that the stimulus of pain…" is gone (p. 275). In other words, Winston's mind has associated thought with pain, because it was Winston's thoughts that led him to this painful place.

2. What betrays Winston's last level of resistance to Big Brother?

He wakes from a dream shouting Julia's name. This shows O'Brien that Winston has accepted Big Brother's dominion, but has not come to love Big Brother. As a result, Winston will still be capable of heretical thoughts—which it is O'Brien's mission to eradicate.

V

1. How does Winston know how to escape the rats, ultimately?

   Room 101 is designed to create total obedience. Even though Winston does not know how to escape them at first, the imminent, physical threat of the rats brings the correct answer instinctively to his consciousness.

2. Why is it significant how he escapes the rats?

   The fact that he had not "betrayed" Julia had been his one last source of self-respect. Now he does not have even that.

VI

1. What is the most significant change in Julia's body, according to Winston?

   Her waist has "grown thicker and, in a surprising way…stiffened" (p. 291). Winston compares her to a corpse he had had to drag out of the ruins of a building. This expresses Julia's inner deadness, a result of her confinement in the Ministry of Love. Of course, Winston's own revulsion about revisiting sex with her shows that he has some dead parts of his own consciousness.

2. What is the significance of Winston's increased consumption of gin?

   The fact that Winston needs even more alcohol to get through his days shows that, perhaps, his rehabilitation is not yet complete.

3. Near the end, Winston daydreams about the "long-hoped-for bullet…entering his brain" (p. 297). What is this bullet?

   The bullet is Winston's knowledge that he will be killed. His "rehabilitation" has not been effected so that he can now continue to live in the society; it has been effected so that, when he is killed, he will be forgotten. He will not be a vanished dissident, a possible source of inspiration for other dissidents. When he finally reaches the point at which he sincerely believes he loves Big Brother, it will not be long before he is shot.

1984

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ONE

I

1. What is the effect of the juxtaposition at the beginning of this section?

2. What is the effect of the anaphora in this sentence? "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**" (p. 3).

3. How is paradox involved with the descriptions of the government ministries?

4. How is paradox found in the description of Victory Gin?

5. What is ironic about the statement that "nothing was illegal, since there were no longer any laws" (p. 6)?

6. What is the effect of the syntax in Winston's journal entry for April 4th, 1984? (pp. 8-9)

7. How is the Junior Anti-Sex League sash an example of paradox?

8. What contradictions appear in O'Brien's physical description?

9. Why does Goldstein's influence never seem to decline? Why doesn't the government ever capture him?

10. What are some techniques used on the telescreen to encourage the Party members' hatred of Goldstein?

11. What is the source of the power behind the hatred that the viewers feel?

12. Explain the allusion on page 15.

13. How does syntax reflect Winston's sexual frustration with Julia on page 15?

14. Why does the "B-B" chant fill Winston with horror?

15. What is the rhetorical effect of the word *voluptuously* on page 18?

II

1. What is the rhetorical effect of the physical description of Mrs. Parsons?

2. Explain the meaning behind the statement "We shall meet in the place where there is no darkness" (p. 25).

3. How can the reader tell that Winston has become desensitized to the war?

4. How does Winston's descent into thoughtcrime give his life more urgency?

III

1. Explain the significance of Winston's dream in the saloon of a ship.

2. Explain the effect of the allusion to Shakespeare on page 31.

3. What is the most powerful element of Julia's careless nudity on page 31?

4. Why does the Party never acknowledge when it changes from fighting Eurasia to Eastasia?

5. What is the effect of the anaphora on page 35, in Winston's explanation of doublethink?

IV

1. What is the metaphoric meaning of the memory holes?

2. What is the effect of the tone in the paragraph that begins with "Winston dialed back numbers" on page 38?

3. What is the effect of the oxymoron "armies of reference clerks" on page 42?

4. Why are people allowed to leave the Ministry of Love for a year or two before being executed for thoughtcrimes?

5. What is the effect of Winston's inner debate over how to honor Comrade Ogilvy?

V

1. In our own time, what might Syme have used to start his conversation with Winston?

2. What is perhaps the most grotesque sign of the desensitization that has taken place in Oceania with regard to violence, in Syme and Winston's conversation?

3. Is "ungood" clearer in meaning than "bad"? Why or why not?

4. What is Newspeak a metaphor of on page 52?

5. How is Winston's prophecy of Syme's imminent disappearance ironic?

6. What is the effect of comparing the man from the Fiction Department to a duck on page 54?

7. What is the effect of the repetition in this sentence from page 59?

> As compared with last year there was more food, more clothes, more houses, more furniture, more cooking-pots, more fuel, more ships, more helicopters, more books, more babies—more of everything except disease, crime, and insanity.

8. Why is this plenty not sufficient for Winston?

9. Why is it ironic that the Party puts forth the Aryan look (blond hair, blue eyes) as an ideal?

10. What is ironic about Parsons' praise for the Ministry of Plenty on page 61?

11. How is humor used at the end of this section?

VI

1. Why is the memory of the prostitute so frustrating for Winston?

2. According to the Party, what is the most harmful part of the sex act?

3. What has Winston come to want most about sex? What is the significance of this?

VII

1. Why is it ironic that the proles get so outraged by a shortage of cooking pots?

2. What is ironic about the Party's claims that, before the Revolution, children had been sold into factories at age six?

3. Why are the Party's statistics meaningless?

4. Identify the foreshadowing on page 80.

VIII

1. What is the effect of the whiff of genuine coffee at the beginning of this section?

2. How is the Party interaction at the Community Center compared to a machine?

3. What, to the proles, is a "serious piece of news" (p. 85)?

4. What is the effect of the old man's complaints about the change from pints to half-liters of beer?

5. Why does Winston purchase the piece of coral?

6. Why is it ironic that Winston chooses not to buy the picture on the wall on pages 98 and 99?

TWO

I

1. What is ironic (and even funny) about Winston's thoughts when Julia hands him a note?

2. What is the effect that Julia's note has on Winston?

3. What is significant about the statue of Oliver Cromwell on page 114?

4. Explain the effect of the juxtaposition at the end of this section.

II

1. How has Julia's sash changed, in Winston's mind?

2. Why does Winston have difficulty at first with Julia?

3. What is ironic about the fact that Julia saw Winston's rebellion from his physical expression?

4. Why is the singing bird so hard for Winston to comprehend?

5. What does Winston find most erotically attractive about Julia?

III

1. Explain this sentence from page 131: “She hated the Party, and said so in the crudest words, but she made no general criticism of it.”

2. According to Julia, why does the Party frown on sex for pleasure?

IV

1. What is it that makes Winston at last feel tenderness toward Julia?

2. How does Winston misunderstand the song of the prole woman below the window?

3. How have Winston and Julia reversed traditional gender roles in this room?

4. What elements of foreshadowing appear in this section?

V

1. What is the effect of the increased bomb raids leading up to Hate Week?

2. What might the following sentence foreshadow?

> "Wandering about among his worthless stock, with his long nose and thick spectacles and his bowed shoulders in the velvet jacket, [Mr. Charrington] had always vaguely the air of being a collector rather than a tradesman." (p. 151)

3. What is the effect of diction in the paragraph that begins "Sometimes he talked to her…" on page 154?

VI

1. Winston interprets O'Brien's oblique reference to Syme as a shared act of thoughtcrime. How is this later shown to be an example of irony?

VII

1. What tendency in Winston's mother has been driven out of people in Oceania?

2. How is the following statement ironic?

> "[The Party] can make you say anything—*anything*—but they can't make you believe it. They can't get inside you" (p. 166).

VIII

1. Winston cannot taste the wine he is offered, because of all the gin he had drunk throughout his life. What is the rhetorical effect of this?

2. How is the Brotherhood similar to the lottery?

IX

1. What is the significance of the tremendous amount of work that Winston's department has to do when Oceania's enemy changes?

2. According to Chapter 3 of Goldstein's book, why is War Peace?

3. What are the historical parallels for Ingsoc, Neo-Bolshevism, and Obliteration of the Self?

4. How do these enemies actually benefit each other?

5. What made the ruling class of Ingsoc different from ruling classes in prior eras?

6. What is the primary reason that groups revolt?

7. What is ironic about Winston's attitude after reading Chapters 1 and 3?

X

1. How does the tone in the first half of this section belie the second half?

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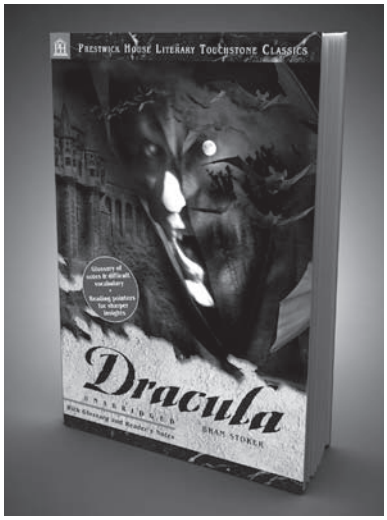

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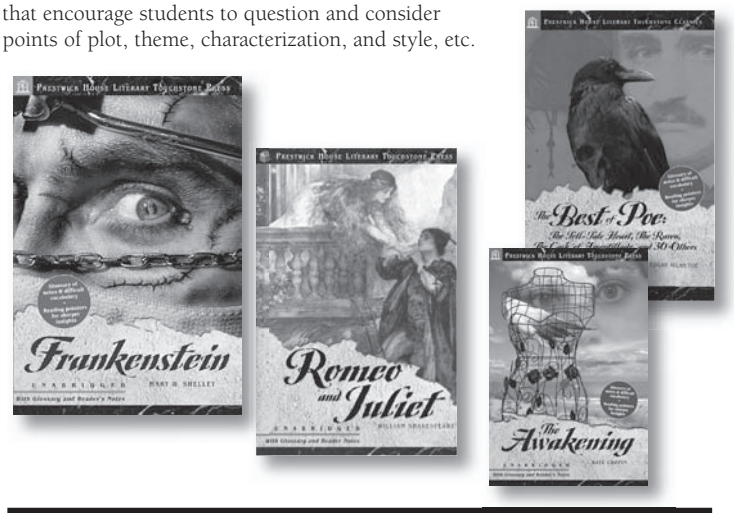

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