

Nineteen Eighty-Four



By

George Orwell

A Novel Study
by Joel Michel Reed

Nineteen Eighty-Four

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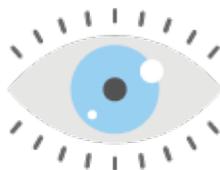


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Suggestions and Expectations

This curriculum unit can be used in a variety of ways. Each chapter of the novel study focuses on one, two, or three chapters of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and is comprised of five of the following different activities:

- Before You Read
- Vocabulary Building
- Comprehension Questions
- Language Activities
- Extension Activities

Links with the Common Core Standards (U.S.)

Many of the activities included in this curriculum unit are supported by the Common Core Standards. For instance the *Reading Standards for Literature, Grade 5*, makes reference to

- a) determining the meaning of words and phrases. . . including figurative language;
- b) explaining how a series of chapters fits together to provide the overall structure;
- c) compare and contrast two characters;
- d) determine how characters ... respond to challenges;
- e) drawing inferences from the text;
- f) determining a theme of a story . . . **and many others.**

A principal expectation of the unit is that students will develop their skills in reading, writing, listening and oral communication, as well as in reasoning and critical thinking. Students will also be expected to provide clear answers to questions and well-constructed explanations. It is critical as well that students be able to relate events and the feelings of characters to their own lives and experiences and describe their own interpretation of a particular passage.

A strength of the unit is that students can work on the activities at their own pace. Every activity need not be completed by all students. A **portfolio cover** is included (p.7) so that students may organize their work and keep it all in one place. A **Student Checklist** is also included (p.6) so that a record of completed work may be recorded.

Themes which may be taught in conjunction with the novel include fantasy adventures with unusual characters facing difficult circumstances, mortality, (dysfunctional) families, friendships, jealousy, relationships, politics, philosophy, and religion.

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List of Skills

Vocabulary Development

1. Locating descriptive words/phrases
2. Identifying synonyms
3. Identifying / creating *alliteration*
4. Use of capitals and punctuation
5. Identifying syllables
6. Identify *foreshadowing*.
7. Identify *personification*
8. Use of singular / plural nouns
9. Listing compound words
10. Identifying parts of speech
11. Completing a crossword
12. Identifying antonyms
13. Identify/create *similes*
14. Identify *anagrams*

Setting Activities

1. Summarize the details of a setting

Plot Activities

1. Complete a *time line* of events
2. Identify conflict in the story
3. Complete a story pyramid
4. Identify *cliffhangers*
5. Complete Five W's Chart

Character Activities

1. Determine character traits
2. Complete a character comparison
3. Relating personal experiences

Creative and Critical Thinking

1. Research
2. Write a newspaper story
3. Participate in a talk show
4. Conduct an interview
5. Write about personal opinions
6. Write a book review
7. Complete an observation chart
8. Identification activities

Art Activities

1. A Storyboard
2. Create a mural
3. Design a cover for the novel
4. Create a comic strip

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Synopsis

Winston Smith works for the Ministry of Truth in London, chief city of Airstrip One. Big Brother stares out from every poster, the Thought Police uncover every act of betrayal. When Winston finds love with Julia, he discovers that life does not have to be dull and deadening, and awakens to new possibilities. Despite the police helicopters that hover and circle overhead, Winston and Julia begin to question the Party; they are drawn towards conspiracy. Yet big brother will not tolerate dissent – even in the mind. For those with original thoughts they invented Room 101. (Penguin Books)

A complete synopsis and other helpful reviews can be found on the following website:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nineteen_Eighty-Four (Summary may contain spoilers)

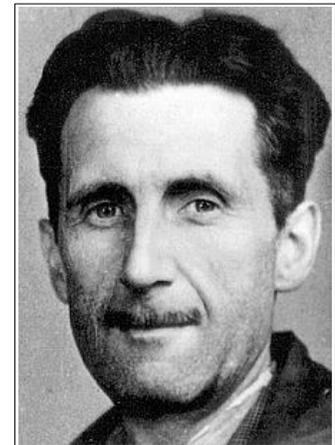
Author Biography

George Orwell

Eric Arthur Blair (25 June 1903– 21 January 1950), who used the pen name **George Orwell**, was an English novelist, essayist, journalist and critic. His work is marked by lucid prose, awareness of social injustice, and opposition to totalitarianism.

Orwell wrote literary criticism, poetry, fiction, and polemical journalism. He is perhaps best known for his *dystopian* novel ***Nineteen Eighty-Four*** and the allegorical novella ***Animal Farm***.

Orwell's work continues to influence popular and political culture, and the term *Orwellian*—descriptive of totalitarian or authoritarian social practices - has entered into modern day language together with many of his neologisms, including, but not limited to, *cold war*, *Big Brother*, *Thought Police*, *Room 101*, *Memory Hole*, *double-think*, and *thought-crime*.



Courtesy of Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Orwell

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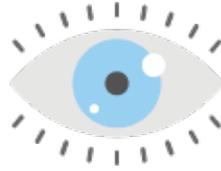


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Name:

Nineteen Eighty-Four

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Part One: Chapters 1-2 (1-2 Days Reading)



Before you read the chapter:

Nineteen Eighty-Four is frequently classified as a 'dystopian' novel. Do a bit of research in your school library or the Internet and list five other novels that also fit into this unique category.

Novel 1		Author 1	
Novel 2		Author 2	
Novel 3		Author 3	
Novel 4		Author 4	
Novel 5		Author 5	



Vocabulary:

The reader is introduced to a number of unique words and phrases in our novel. Draw a straight line to connect the vocabulary word to its definition. Remember to use a straight edge.

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| 1. Big Brother | A. A system of government that requires obedience to the state. |
| 2. Newspeak | B. The rejection or all religious and moral principles. |
| 3. Nihilism | C. The religious theory that self is all that can be known to exist. |
| 4. Futurism | D. Controversial thinking, considered to be a criminal offense. |
| 5. Memory Hole | E. An organization exercising total control over a society. |
| 6. Totalitarian | F. Concern with events/trends that have yet to take place. |
| 7. Solipsism | G. A visual display terminal. |
| 8. Doublethink | H. Ambiguous euphemistic language used in propaganda. |
| 9. Telescreen | I. The acceptance of holding contrary beliefs at the same time. |
| 10. Thoughtcrime | J. An imaginary place where inconvenient or unpleasant information is put and quickly forgotten. |

Questions



1. Describe the setting of our story as Chapter One begins.

2. What is meant by the phrase '*BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU*'?

3. Do you think it is ***always*** wrong for a government to spy on their own citizens?
Be sure to defend your answer.

b. Do you believe personal privacy to be a right for every individual? Why or why not?

4. What are the three slogans or phrases used by the Party?

5. Why was it considered normal for parents to be frightened of their children?

Language Activity



A. A **simile** is a comparison using the words **like** or **as**. The following is an example from Chapter One: *“In the far distance a helicopter skimmed down between the roofs, hovered for an instant like a bluebottle, and darted away again with a curving flight”*

What two things are being compared in this example?

--	--

Invent two of your own **similes** comparing two different people or objects with something from your own imagination:

1

2

B. Foreshadowing is a literary device used by authors to provide clues for the reader so that they are able to predict what might occur *later* in the story. How might the following statement taken from Chapter Two be considered an example of this literary device? *“Years ago – how long was it? Seven years it must be – he had dreamed that he was walking through a pitch-dark room. And someone sitting to one side of him had said as he passed: ‘We shall meet in the place where there is no darkness.’”*



C. The Eight Parts of Speech

Find at least 4 examples of each of the eight parts of speech from these chapters and list them in the appropriate section of the chart below.



Interjections	
Nouns	
Pronouns	
Conjunctions	
Prepositions	
Adjectives	
Adverbs	
Verbs	

Extension Activity

Storyboard

A storyboard is a series of pictures that tell about an important event in a story. A storyboard can tell the story of only one scene – or the entire novel.



Complete the storyboard below illustrating the events described in the first two chapters of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. You may wish to practice your drawings before you begin.

1	2
3	4
5	6