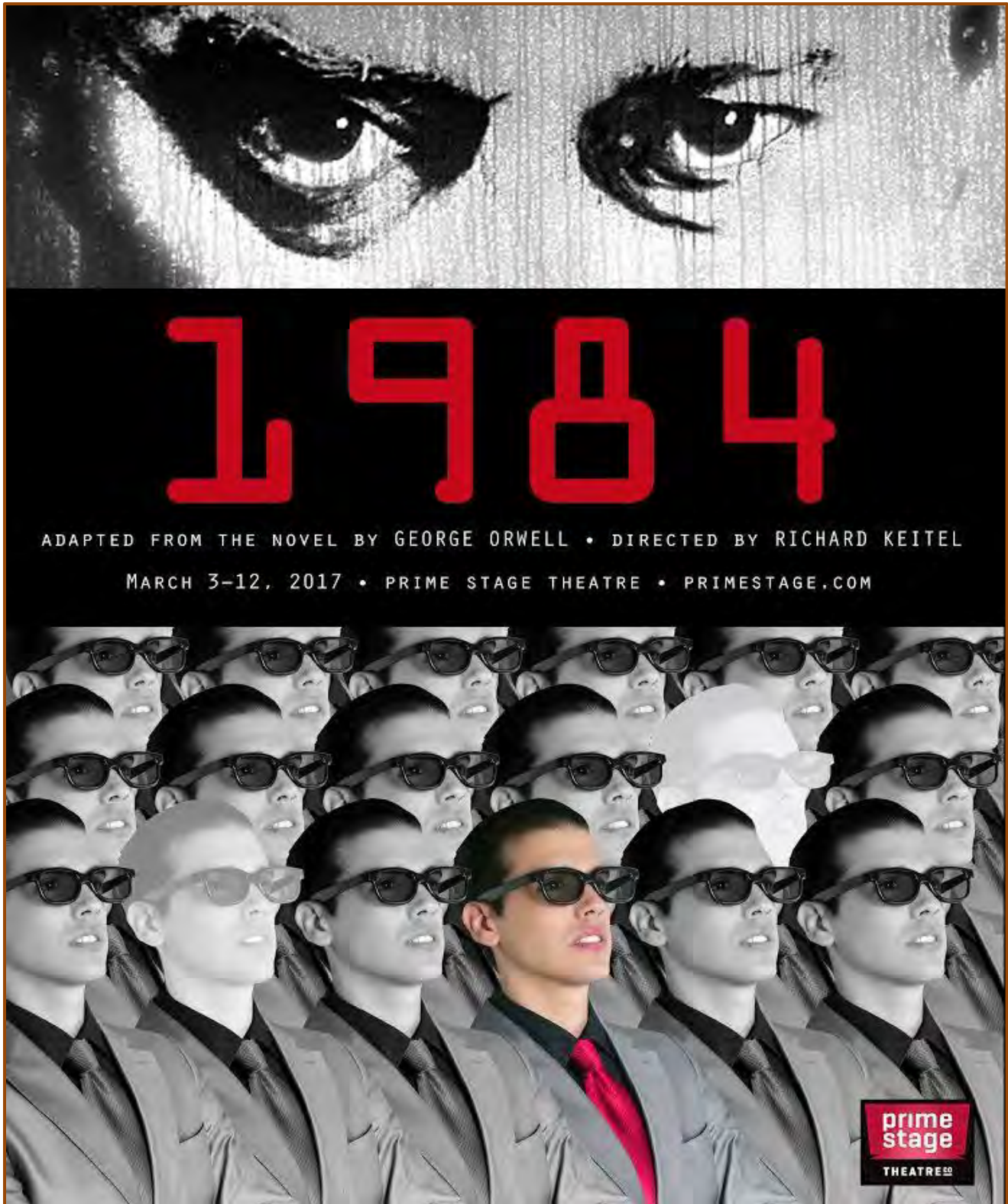




PRIME STAGE THEATRE RESOURCE GUIDE



Prime Stage Theatre Performances are located at The New Hazlett Theater Center for Performing Arts



WELCOME TO PRIME STAGE THEATRE
Bringing Literature to Life!

Dear Educator,

**Welcome to Prime Stage Theatre's 2016-2017,
20th Anniversary Season!!**

We are pleased to bring you *1984* adapted from the novel by George Orwell, our second production of the season.

All literature produced by Prime Stage is always drawn from middle and secondary Reading Lists and themes are in the current curriculum.

This Resource Guide is designed to provide historical background and context, classroom activities and curricular content to help you enliven your students' experience with the literature and the theatre. We encourage you to use the theatrical games and creative thinking activities, as well as the Theatre Etiquette suggested activities to spark personal connections with the themes and characters in the story of *1984*.

If you have any questions about the information or activities in the guide, please contact me and I will be happy to assist you and I welcome your suggestions!

Linda Haston, Education Director & Teaching Artist
Prime Stage Theatre
lhaston@primestage.com

**The activities in this guide are intended to enliven, clarify and enrich the text as you read,
and the experience as you watch the literature come to life onstage.**

Look for the following –
[Hyperlinks](#) in blue.



For things to look for in the production.

And “Special Quotes” from Orwell throughout the Guide.



DIRECTOR'S NOTES

I am very excited to have had the opportunity to work on this production of 1984. One of a director's main jobs is to make older scripts relevant to a modern audience. George Orwell wrote 1984 in 1948.

So how can an audience in 2017 relate to this adaptation? The election season and current political climate has brought about a renaissance of George Orwell references in the media. The word of the year is "post-truth". The terms "fake news" and "alternative facts" are mentioned daily. Winston Smith's main job at the Ministry of Truth is to provide fake news and alternative facts in the post-truth world that Orwell created.

It is Winston's struggle to rebel against this totalitarian world that I relate to and I am trying to bring to life with my talented design, production team and fabulous cast.

I find Orwell's premonition to foreshadow the future with his invention of the telescreen which can spy on the population of Oceania incredible. It is amazing to me that Orwell wrote this in 1948, before I-phones with GPS location devices that track our every move, before laptops with webcams that can spy on us even when they are turned off, before the NSA, which has the ability, to read our emails, texts, and listen to our phone calls. We are trying to bring out the idea that Big Brother is watching you with our stage design, video projections and our lighting and set design.

We look forward to seeing you at the theatre!



~ Rich Keitel, Director
Prime Stage Production of "1984", March 2017

Our Education Programming is funded in part by the following:

Literacy in Action

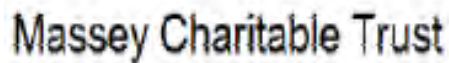
Student Matinee Field Trips

Theatre Mentor/Interns

Professional Development

Education Director

Teen Dating Awareness



THEATRE ETIQUETTE AND HOUSE RULES

Going to a play is a special experience, one that you will remember for a long time.

Everyone in the audience has been looking forward to seeing the performance. The production team put in many long hours and hard work to mount this performance. If you keep in mind common courtesy for the performers as well as your fellow audience members, everyone's theatre experience will be terrific.

A few reminders for attending the theatre.

- When you arrive, stay with your group at all times, and wait for the ushers to help you find your seat.
- Gum, food, drinks, or candy, are never allowed in the theatre.
- Please go to the restroom before seating for performance or at intermission.
- **TURN OFF ALL** cell phones, pagers, beepers, alarms, anything that can disturb the production, actors and the audience during the performance.
- Lights will dim just before a performance and then go dark. Show your knowledge by sitting quietly and calmly.
- Do not talk during the performance. The actors on stage can hear you which is why you can hear them so well. Laughter is permissible at appropriate times.
- **No** taking of pictures or video recording is allowed.
- Stay in your seat until the cast has taken their curtain call at the end. Show your appreciation by clapping. The actors love to hear applause. This shows how much you enjoyed the performance!



Actors playing Julia , O'Brien and Winston in *1984*

FEATURED NATIONAL STANDARDS:

English/Language Arts Standards Developed by International Reading Association and National Council of Teachers of English

1. Students read a wide range of literature from many periods in many genres to build an understanding of the many dimensions (e.g., philosophical, ethical, and aesthetic) of human experience.
2. Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context and graphics).
3. Students use a variety of technological and information resources (e.g., libraries, databases, computer networks, and video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.
4. Students use a variety of technological and information resources (e.g., libraries, databases, computer networks, and video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.
5. Students participate as knowledgeable, reflective, creative, and critical members of a variety of literacy communities.
6. Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes (e.g., for learning, enjoyment, persuasion, and the exchange of information).

Theatre

NA 5-8.3 Designing by developing environments for improvised and scripted scenes

Students analyze improvised and scripted scenes for technical requirements

NA 5-8.7 Analyzing, evaluating, and constructing meanings from improvised and scripted scenes and from theatre, film, television, and electronic media productions

Students articulate and support the meanings constructed from their and others' dramatic Performances Students use articulated criteria to describe, analyze, and constructively evaluate the perceived effectiveness of artistic choices found in dramatic performances

NA 9-12.2 Acting by developing, communicating, and sustaining characters in improvisations and informal or formal productions

Students analyze the physical, emotional, and social dimensions of characters found in dramatic texts from various genres and media

NA 9-12.3 Designing and producing by conceptualizing and realizing artistic interpretations for informal or formal productions

Students analyze a variety of dramatic texts from cultural and historical perspectives to determine production requirements

NA 9-12.5 Researching by evaluating and synthesizing cultural and historical information to support artistic choices



Students identify and research cultural, historical, and symbolic clues in dramatic texts, and evaluate the validity and practicality of the information to assist in making artistic choices for informal and formal productions

NA 9-12.7 Analyzing, critiquing, and constructing meanings from informal and formal theatre, film, television, and electronic media productions

Students articulate and justify personal aesthetic criteria for critiquing dramatic texts and events that compare perceived artistic intent with the final aesthetic achievement

Students analyze and critique the whole and the parts of dramatic performances, taking into account the context, and constructively suggest alternative artistic choices



Orwell wrote during the 1930 and 1940s. (Look for – As you watch the play or read the book, what sayings or quotes are important for you?)



George Orwell

Every war when it comes, or before it comes, is represented not as a war but as an act of self-defense against a homicidal maniac.

In our time political speech and writing are largely the defense of the indefensible.

But if thought corrupts language, language can also corrupt thought.

All the war-propaganda, all the screaming and lies and hatred, comes invariably from people who are not fighting.

Political language... is designed to make lies sound truthful and murder respectable, and to give an appearance of solidity to pure wind.

War against a foreign country only happens when the moneyed classes think they are going to profit from it.

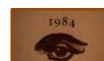
Nationalism is power hunger tempered by self-deception.

War is peace. Freedom is slavery. Ignorance is strength. (On the manipulation of language for political ends.)

We have now sunk to a depth at which restatement of the obvious is the first duty of intelligent men.

If liberty means anything at all, it means the right to tell people what they do not want to hear.

In times of universal deceit, telling the truth will be a revolutionary act.



**ALL PRIME STAGE PRODUCTIONS AND RESOURCE GUIDES
ADDRESS THE FOLLOWING:**

Pennsylvania Common Core Standards for 1984:

CC.1.3.9-10.A: Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.

CC.1.3.9-10.C: Analyze how complex characters develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.

CC.1.3.9-10.D: Determine the point of view of the text and analyze the impact the point of view has on the meaning of the text.

CC.1.3.9-10.E: Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within it and manipulate time create an effect.

CC.1.3.9-10.F: Analyze how words and phrases shape meaning and tone in texts.

CC.1.3.9-10.G: Analyze the representation of a subject or a key scene in two different artistic mediums, including what is emphasized or absent in each treatment.

CC.1.3.9-10.H: Analyze how an author draws on and transforms themes, topics, character types, and/or other text elements from source material in a specific work.

CC.1.3.9-10.K: Read and comprehend literary fiction on grade level, reading independently and proficiently.

CC.1.5.9-10.A: Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions on grades level topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

CC.1.5.9-10.G: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English when speaking based on grade 9-10 level and content.

CC.1.6.11.A: Listen critically and respond to others in small and large group situations. Respond with grade level appropriate questions, ideas, information or opinions.

CC.1.6.11.C: Demonstrate awareness of audience using appropriate volume and clarity in formal speaking presentations.

CC.1.6.11.D: Listen to and acknowledge the contributions of other students well introducing ideas and opinions to enrich the discussion



COSTUME DESIGN NOTES



"Clothing makes a statement. Costumes tell a story." - M. Cooley

The story that costumes tell in Prime Stage's upcoming production of George Orwell's "1984" reflect the timeless themes of class, wealth, power and socio economic conditions. Within this bleak future of a world at perpetual war (real or propaganda) and government control reflecting totalitarianism, clothing for the members of Oceania is merely utilitarian. It has no elements of personal expression or adornment. The unisex jumpsuits are a dull blue that is indicative of personality being washed out.

In marked contrast, the members of the Inner Party wear the "color" black- representing absence of light as well as power and intimidation. Accented with specialty pieces of luxury items that only Inner Party have access to (like O'Brien's double faced wristwatch and "lounging" clothes like a smoking jacket and soft slippers, the Inner Party and menacing guards evoke a sharp contrast to the lower classes of Oceania and proletarians like the Land Lady.

Being that all artists are "un persons" in "1984" and by extension, all costume designers would be "un persons" as well, my 8th show with Prime Stage offers me a stark look at a world with no beauty and no freedom of expression - and this minimalist approach supports the story Orwell laid out. The potential danger of Benjamin Franklin's observance rings true in the socio-political events of current America: ["Freedom of speech is a basic pillar of a democracy.; When that is taken away, tyranny stands upon its ruins."](#)

~Kim Brown, Costume Designer
Prime Stage production of "1984," March, 2017



SCENIC DESIGN



SET DESIGNER'S SCALED MODEL OF THE SET.



Look for where and how the ideas are created.

While designing the setting for 1984, I wanted to emphasize the dystopian and utilitarian world that George Orwell sets up for us in his novel. In starting to create Winston's world, I looked toward the art and architecture stylings of when Orwell was writing - the birth of Modernism in the early 20th century. Whereas the previous periods of [Art Nouveau](#) and [Art Deco](#) focused on the natural and fluid forms of structures and on the sleekness of ornamentation and luxury of

materials, [Modernism](#) was structured, purposeful, and cold. Great monoliths were erected out of concrete with little adornment and were constructed as hollow shells for work to be carried out in. Their façades were often emphasized with strong vertical lines, but devoid of ornamentation so as not to distract from their function.

To translate this to our play, I wanted to frame out the Ministry of Truth as an interior of one of these great concrete boxes. I created a backdrop of concrete panels that would be used as projection surfaces during our production. These 13 panels are all the same size, all the same shape, and all have the same concrete texture. They are devoid of ornament and their only function is to display images and media to help tell the story.

Similarly, all the furniture in Winston's world is only there to serve a function. At his office, everyone has the same desk, the same chair and even the same trashcan at their feet - the necessary tools to perform their function in society. In this world, everything is mass produced, grey and cold. This is the only world that Winston has ever known.

**~Johnmichael Bohach, Scenic Designer
Prime Stage production of "1984," March, 2017**





ACTIVITIES TO DO - BEFORE READING 1984 OR ATTENDING THE PLAY

Synopsis of **GEORGE ORWELL, Author, Journalist (1903-1950)**



(Look for – moments in Orwell’s life that are similar to you, to other authors, or to people you may know.)

What was he like as a young boy?

Born Eric Arthur Blair, in Motihari, Bengal, India, in 1903, he created some of the sharpest satirical fiction of the 20th century with such works as *Animal Farm* and *1984*. He was a man of strong opinions who addressed some major political movements of his times, including imperialism, fascism and communism.

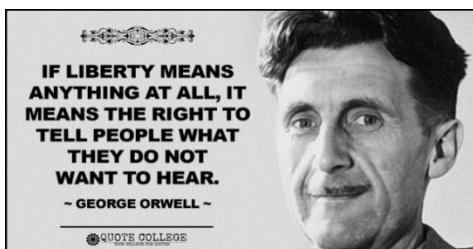
The son of a British civil servant, Eric spent his first days in India, where his father was stationed. His mother brought him and his older sister, Marjorie, to England about a year after his birth and settled in Henley-on-Thames. His father stayed behind in India and rarely visited. His younger sister, Avril, was born in 1908. Orwell didn't really know his father until he retired from the service in 1912. And even after that, the pair never formed a strong bond.

Orwell was bit by the writing bug at an early age, reportedly composing his first poem around the age of four. He later wrote, "I had the lonely child's habit of making up stories and holding conversations with imaginary persons, and I think from the very start my literary ambitions were mixed up with the feeling of being isolated and undervalued." One of his first literary successes came at the age of 11 when he had a poem published in the local newspaper.

Like many other boys in England, Orwell was sent to boarding school. In 1911 he went to St. Cyprian's in the coastal town of Eastbourne, where he got his first taste of England's class system. On a partial scholarship, Orwell noticed that the school treated the richer students better than the poorer ones. He wasn't popular with his peers, and in books he found comfort from his difficult situation. What he lacked in personality, he made up for in intelligence. Orwell won scholarships to Wellington College and Eton College to continue his studies. He was intent on being a writer.

What was his career like?

Orwell struggled to get his writing career off the ground. His first major work, *Down and Out in Paris and London*, (1933) explored his time eking out a living in these two cities. Not wishing to embarrass his family, the Eric published the book under the pseudonym George Orwell.



Sometimes called the conscience of a generation, Orwell next explored his overseas experiences in *Burmese Days*, published in 1934. The novel offered a dark look at [British colonialism in Burma](#), then part of the country's Indian empire. Orwell's interest in political matters grew rapidly after this novel was published. Also around this time, he met Eileen O'Shaughnessy. The pair married in June 1936, and Eileen supported and assisted Orwell in his career.



HOW DID ORWELL WRITE 1984?

George Orwell was fascinated by the relationship between morality and language. He started working for [David Astor's](#) "Observer" in 1942 as a book reviewer and correspondent. Their friendship is crucial to the story of *1984*. Random terror in wartime London was all around. In March 1945, suddenly Orwell was a widower and a single parent to his adopted son, Richard.

Astor offered Orwell to stay at his estate at [Jura in Scotland](#). Orwell arrived with a camp bed, a table, a couple of chairs and a few pots and pans. The locals knew him by Eric Blair, a 6 foot 2 inch, sad-looking man worrying about how he would cope on his own. Richard Blair remembers that his father "could not have done it without [Orwell's] sister, Avril." Orwell worked at a feverish pace to write what was first titled, "The Last Man in Europe." Visitors recall his typewriter pounding away in his bedroom. Richard said: "You could see how his mind worked, taking an idea and refining it and refining it." However, just before Christmas, he was diagnosed with TB. "I wanted to get on with the book." Orwell was admitted to a hospital near Glasgow in Dec 1947 and discharged at the end of July 1948. [Streptomycin](#) was obtained by David Astor and administered to its partial success.



Early in October, 1948 Orwell confided to Astor: "I am just struggling with the last stages of this bloody book [which is] about the possible state of affairs if the atomic war isn't conclusive." Orwell described it as "a Utopia written in the form of a novel." The more he revised the manuscript, the more only he could read and interpret it. "I am not pleased with the book but I am not absolutely dissatisfied. I think it would have been better if I had not written it under the influence of TB." And he was still undecided about the title: "I am inclined to call it NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR or THE LAST MAN IN EUROPE," he wrote, "but I might just possibly think of something else in the next week or two."

By mid-November, too weak to walk, he retired to bed to type the book. Sustained by endless pots of coffee, strong tea, cigarettes and the warmth of his [paraffin heater](#), he struggled on.

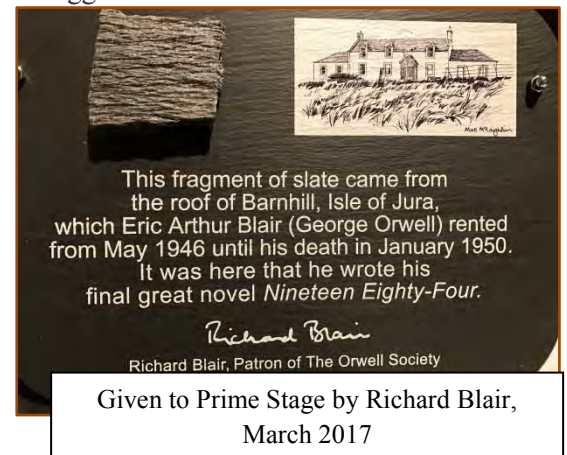


By November 30, 1948 it was virtually done. His publisher recognized its qualities at once ("amongst the most terrifying books I have ever read") and so did his colleagues. As word of *1984* began to circulate, Orwell joked to Astor that it wouldn't surprise him "if you had to change that profile into an obituary." *1984* was published on June 8, 1949 (five days later in the US) and was almost universally recognized as a masterpiece, even by [Winston Churchill](#), who read it twice.

Orwell's American publisher claimed that the title derived from reversing the date, 1948. Orwell was always unsure of the original title, "The Last Man in Europe."

His publisher suggested that *1984* was more commercial. Orwell wrote, "Writing a book is a horrible, exhausting struggle, like a long bout of some painful illness. And yet, it is also true that one can write nothing readable unless one struggles to efface one's personality."

[Visit this excellent documentary by the BBC \(British Broadcasting Corporation\)](#)



ORWELL AND RICHARD BLAIR, HIS SON

By George Packer (The New Yorker Magazine) March 25, 2009



Orwell and his wife Eileen adopted a son, Richard in 1944. Ten months later, Eileen died on the operating table. And that's about all people know of Richard Blair has kept his silence throughout his life—until now.

So who is Orwell's son? A retired engineer, who lives in a picturesque village in Warwickshire, has happy memories of having spent his first six years with his father. Orwell, by his son's account, was a wonderful father. He gave Richard his devoted if rather rugged attention. A small boy's life with the great writer was an endless adventure

in the wonders of the natural world around their country house.



George Orwell's son, Richard Blair

The relationship between Orwell and Richard became close when Orwell moved to the estate of his friend, David Astor, on the Scottish island of Jura because it was a healthier location to overcome his illness of Tuberculosis. Richard remembers that it was so cold that “if you move six feet away from the fireplace, you freeze.” His memories from those days are of a loving father who made wooden toys, who had a strange sense of humor, and whose parenting style had none of the political correctness of modern upbringings. “My father was quiet and sort of laid back. Essentially he was a very good father who was absolutely devoted to me.”

Richard shares that after his mother died in 1945 and his father in 1950, he was brought up by his father's younger sister Avril and her husband Bill Dunn. After schooling, Richard went into agriculture, followed by 11 years with Massey Ferguson in their marketing and training department until 1986. He made a complete change of direction and with his wife bought and developed a holiday complex on the west coast of Scotland, “which was where I was brought up. We sold the cottages in 2008 and since then I have devoted my time as Patron of [the Orwell Society](#) and as a Trustee to the Orwell Awards and Orwell Youth Prize main committee.”

His wife Eleanor, a retired teacher and magistrate, and Richard have two sons, who are in their early fifties and have a grandson and four granddaughters. They live in the Midlands of England, not far from Stratford-upon-Avon. Richard says, “It is my intention to continue to promote the works of my father for the foreseeable future.”

Prime Stage is honored to have Richard Blair help us bring his father's literature to life!





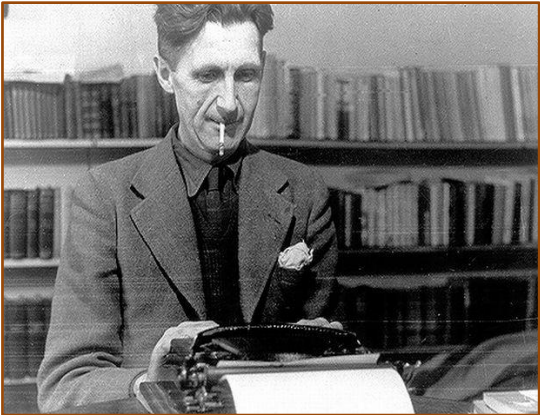
GEORGE ORWELL AND RICHARD BLAIR

Richard was 14 when he read *1984* and “enjoyed it.” He loves his father’s work, familiarizing himself with the man he lost too soon. Richard was only 10 months when his adoptive mother died. Friends suggested to Orwell that he “unadopt” him. “He wouldn’t hear of it. He was determined to hang on to me.”

When the war was over, Orwell escaped London to rent Barnhill, an isolated house reached only by boat or by walking the last six miles along a rugged track at the road’s end. Richard, two, arrived a couple of months later with his nanny Susan Watson.

Richard said: “I did have a lot of freedom to play there. I remember being happy and spending time with my father. It was hard for him because he wasn’t well a lot of the time.” During the day, Orwell shut himself upstairs and worked. Richard said: “He was a heavy smoker. He would sit in his room, puffing away and there was a paraffin lamp that gave off a terrible stink. A tubercular lung didn’t need that, but I suppose he wasn’t aware of the danger.

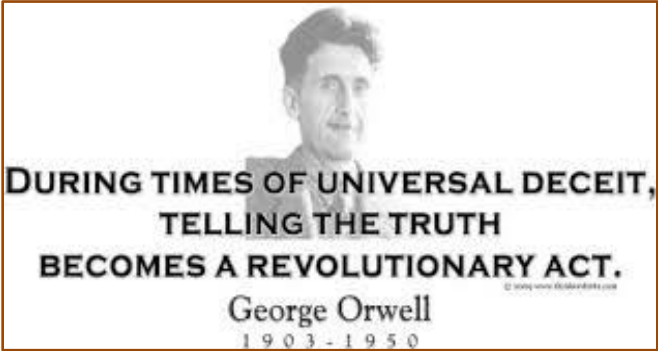
He would be clattering away on the typewriter and when writing he liked to be alone. He either typed or he wrote in longhand and had no one to help him.” Orwell wrestled with finding the perfect wording. Richard said: “You could see how his mind worked, taking an idea and refining it and refining it.”



Orwell also spent hours in the pure air. Richard remembers eating the fresh vegetables they grew on the farm. Orwell was helped by disabled veteran Bill who learned farming and married Avril.

While camping in June 1947, Orwell’s boat capsized. Richard was on Orwell’s knee when he realized he had miscalculated the tides, their outboard was swamped in the clashing waters. Orwell jumped off. “I remember being under the water but because I was on father’s knee he managed to get me. “The tide was running and we could have been dragged away and been drowned. There would have been no *1984*.”

As they were leaving the island their car suffered a puncture and Richard and Orwell stayed in the vehicle as the others got help. “We chatted and he read poems and told me stories. “It was one of those rare and intimate periods when, with just the two of us, he may have felt it was the last he might have with me. Richard said: “My time with him was cut short and I know him much better now than I did. I was too young at the time to idolize who he was. To me, he was just dad.”



1984 IS RELEVANT AND HAS BEEN RELEVANT FOR MANY YEARS.



Articles through the years.

[THE MESSAGE FOR TODAY IN ORWELL'S '1984'](#)

Edmond van den Bossche, New York Times, **January 1, 1984**

[60 YEARS AFTER ORWELL WROTE 1984 AND WAS DESTROYED BY THE BOOK, A CHILLING REMINDER THAT HIS SINISTER VISION IS ALMOST REALITY](#)

Robert Harris, Daily Mail, **June 2009**

["ORWELL'S "1984" BECOMING A REALITY IN MODERN-DAY AMERICA"](#)

Michael Payne OpEdNews Op Eds, **5/2/2010**

["SO, ARE WE LIVING IN 1984?"](#)

Ian Crouch, THE NEW YORKER, **June 11, 2013**

["4 PREDICTIONS FROM ORWELL'S '1984' THAT ARE COMING TRUE TODAY"](#)

Alasdair Denvil, **June 18, 2013**

["A LOOK AT SOME OF THE WAYS GEORGE ORWELL'S '1984' HAS COME TRUE TODAY"](#) <http://www.nydailynews.com/news/national/ways-george-orwell-1984-true-article-1.2662813> Keri Blakinger, New York Daily News, **June 6, 2016.**

[ORWELL 2016: CENSORSHIP IN THE AGE OF SOCIAL MEDIA](#)

Catherine Skakdam, **Sept 2016**

[2017 ISN'T '1984' – IT'S STRANGER THAN ORWELL IMAGINED](#)

The Conversation | Contributor, **Jan. 27, 2017**





1984 ANTICIPATION/REACTION GUIDE

Part I Directions: Prior to reading or seeing *1984*, in the “Before” column, respond to each statement by putting a plus sign (+) if you agree with it, a minus sign (-) if you disagree, and a question mark (?) if you are unsure of your belief.

Part II Directions: For one of the statements below, write a Deep Thoughts response of 500 words or more as to why you have the belief you do.

Part III Directions: After seeing the play, in the “After” column respond again to the statements. Then, reply by writing a 500 words or more Deep

Thoughts response to a statement where your belief changed since reading the play. If not, write about a different statement than you responded to in Part II.

Before	Statement	After
1. ____	An ideal community permits couples to marry but discourages love.	1. ____
2. ____	The Party can torture a person and make him say anything but cannot make him believe it.	2. ____
3. ____	An ideal community would not have any unemployment.	3. ____
4. ____	All people should have equal possessions and privileges at a certain age, regardless of their status.	4. ____
5. ____	Life would be much better and easier if we did not carry bad thoughts in our heads.	5. ____
6. ____	Overpopulation is such a problem that families should not be allowed to have any children.	6. ____
7. ____	There is no real need to learn about world history.	7. ____
8. ____	There is no real need to learn about one’s own family history.	8. ____
9. ____	People are much closer when they share feelings and memories with each other.	9. ____
10. ____	Freedom in society is best determined by one person.	10. ____

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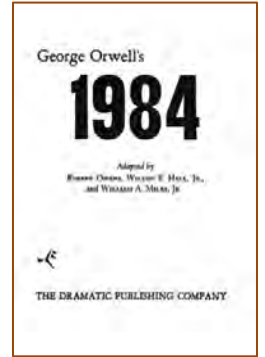




1984 in rehearsal

NOVEL VS. THE STAGE PLAY

1984 is adapted for the stage by **Robert Owens, Wilton E. Hall, Jr.** and **William A. Miles Jr.** from the classic **George Orwell** novel. To create an adaptation of the novel in ways that respect the intent of Orwell, the adaptation we are using is referred to by Dramatic Publishing as “the authorized version” of the novel. It is the earliest one, written in 1963.



Look for comparisons with the novel

The character of Julia:



Jessie Wray Goodman

In the book, she is a mechanic who passes Winston a note saying she loves him. They begin a secret affair, based mostly on the fact that they both hate the Party and see love as a legitimate way to rebel against the Party’s rigid control of their lives.

In the play, Julia is transferred to Winston’s department in order to be near him. She tells him she loves him, and then arranges for them to be secretly married in a Prole church. Winston rents a flat where they can at least pretend to make a

home for themselves. The play retains Julia’s sensuality—she wants to feel feminine, and to enjoy Inner Party food. Their marriage makes for a stronger statement of their rebellion, and “raises the stakes” much higher for them to succeed against Big Brother.

Some characters are combined. For instance, **the owner of the junk shop:**



Tracey D. Turner

In the book, Charrington, a prole, is sympathetic to Winston and rents him a room about his junk shop. However, he is secretly a member of the Thought Police. Winston hears a Prole woman singing in the courtyard, romanticizing her struggles to survive. He comments that the Proles sing, but the Party members do not. “We are the dead,” he says.

In the play, the Landlady is a combination of Charrington and the Prole woman. Winston and Julia are fascinated by her with vivid memories of a time before the Revolution.

Another character is **Syme**.



Michael Lane Sullivan

In the book, he is the chief architect of Newspeak, and an ardent supporter of its aims. Winston is aware that Syme is too intelligent and too articulate for his own good. It is not wise to bluntly state that Newspeak is to control thought.

In the play, the character of Syme is combined with that of **Ampleforth** (in the novel, a co-worker of Winston in the Records Department who respects poetry and language). In this way, the philosophy of Newspeak can be introduced naturally by someone who is both an expert in the language and a colleague of Winston.



ADAPTING A PLAY by Lindsay Price

Telling a story onstage presents challenges never faced by the author of a novel, such as Limited time, limited space, the need to portray visually both ideas and objects. This requires some departures from a strictly literal approach to adaptation. Sometimes the play makes changes to the characters portrayed.

What steps does it take to turn a work of fiction into a stage play?

Copyright

If what you want to adapt is in the public domain, they you can adapt the work without obtaining permission. Make sure though! Just because an author is deceased doesn't mean their work is free reign. If it's literature written in the 20th century onward, assume you need to make inquiries.

What Do You Want To Do?

That's the first question to ask: What do you want to present? What's the audience experience? What's the most important part? It's impossible to put a Dickens novel word for word in a play. So, what's your approach? The more you can envision the final product, the easier the process will be along the way.

Become an Expert

Know the original work inside and out. Read it once, twice, and keep reading. Read about the work. Highlight anything in the work that leaps out at you as a theatrical image. Highlight the character and story elements. Be able to talk about the characters and the story. Character and story are the backbone of your play.

When to be Faithful

If you're dealing with something familiar to your audience, give them the parts of the work they know. Can you imagine a version of *A Christmas Carol* without the ghosts of Christmas Past, Present and Future? You never want to take your audience out of the world of the play by missing something. Go through the work with two different colored highlighters. Mark what's essential for the story and then what's essential for the audience. Finally with a pencil (so you can change your mind) mark what can be cut without hurting either.

When to Change

There must be changes. For example, descriptive passages do not work on the stage. What you change depends heavily on what you've decided your final product is going to look like.

No Narrators!

It's tempting to throw in a narrator to fill in descriptions. Resist the urge! If you must include one, make the narrator three-dimensional. Give a name, give a purpose in the play beyond sharing information, a want, an obsession, a flaw.

Write the Play

Finally, it's time to write the play! Remember above all else that this is a play. Plays depend on the actions and reactions of the characters. Adaptations can be fun to write and illuminate the original work. It's always interesting to look at a piece of literature from a different point of view.

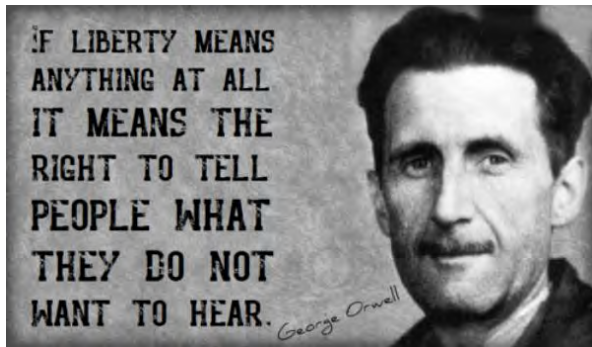


WHILE READING THE BOOK/ SEEING THE PLAY

It is helpful to have students consider questions or engage in activities that relate to themes in the book before reading it. The following suggestions may be used as group or individual activities.

1. Surprise attack. On the first day you begin *1984*, inform your students as they walk into class that a new set of classroom rules will be followed from today forward. Make the rules unnecessarily stringent and inflexible and enforce them for 15-20 minutes. When the exercise is over, ask students to respond, discussing their feelings and thoughts about the activity.

2. List the freedoms you enjoy both in your home and in your community. Follow-up activities could include writing an essay on the subject or creating a collage depicting freedoms enjoyed.



3. What is your fear? Write an essay describing your worst fear and why it is that you fear that thing. Artwork would be a good addition. Think about this when seeing the play.

4. Keep a diary for a week. Record everyday happenings, thoughts, feelings, and dreams. After a week, ask yourself what are some advantages to keeping a diary.

5. Examine the [U.S. Constitution](#) and the [Bill of Rights](#) to find freedoms granted to you as an American citizen. Are some freedoms available to citizens of other countries?

6. Discuss: How do governments or the private sector intrude upon the privacy of citizens?

7. Interview people who lived in 1949 to learn what life during and after World War II was like.

QUESTIONS

Questions can be discussed or used as topics for writing assignments.

1. **Language/Logic, Setting:** What does the opening sentence suggest about the book? ("...the clocks were striking thirteen" denotes another time and place not familiar to us.)

2. **Irony, Language/Logic, Character:** The name "Winston" means "from a friendly country." "Smith" is a common last name. From these names, can you suggest a possible irony? Also, consider the association of Winston Smith with Winston Churchill. What similarities do you see between the two? What else do we know about Winston concerning his age, abilities, and occupation?



Look for where the slogans are used in the play. Look also for the responses of characters to the sayings.



3. **Irony/Paradox, Language/Logic:** What are the Party mottos? What is unusual about them?

4. **Language/Logic, Theme:** What is Newspeak? What is its purpose? Why is it essential for the Party to rid the language of synonyms and antonyms?

5. **Language/Logic:** Who is Big Brother and what is the significance of his name?



6. **Language/Logic:** What is Facecrime? Why is it so easy to commit?

7. **Theme, Irony/Paradox:** How does the Party control history? Why? How do you feel about the choice of to control the future, we must erase the past so the citizens won't question or challenge what is done in the present.

8. **Plot, Theme:** Who is Emmanuel Goldstein and how is he presented to the people of Oceania?

ACTIVITIES



1. **Language/Logic:** Create a Newspeak dictionary, prepare a speech written in Newspeak, or rewrite a newspaper article in Newspeak. Present it to the class.

2. **Point of View:** Make a cassette recording of Winston's secret diary.

3. **Plot, Character:** Act out scenes or give a dramatic reading of a scene.

4. **Theme:** Winston says that "Your worst enemy...was your own nervous system." Have you ever experienced a time when you felt this way? Have you ever felt helpless or not in control of your own life? Write a short essay explaining the situation and how you dealt with it.

5. **Irony/Paradox:** Identify examples of doublethink. Discuss examples of doublethink from recent history.

6. **Language/Logic, Theme:** Discuss how language is important to freedom.

**"During times of universal deceit, telling the truth becomes a revolutionary act."
George Orwell**



GEORGE ORWELL'S IDEA AND TODAY
1984 AND LANGUAGE
Politics and the English Language, by George Orwell

Newspeak

What the Party does to language is an important theme. In most languages, new words are constantly added, but in Newspeak, the language of Oceania, words are being destroyed. Syme is a specialist in Newspeak and is one of a team engaged in putting together the Newspeak Dictionary.

In the play, he explains to Julia how words like “bad”, “excellent” and “splendid” will disappear, being replaced by variations on the word “good”; such as “ungood”, for “bad”, “plusgood” for “excellent” and “doubleplusgood” for “splendid.”

The Party uses Newspeak to limit the way people think, because, without words, there is no way to express thought. Without words, people will not commit thoughtcrime and so cannot rebel against the Party. The Party will have complete control of people’s minds.

The Party will also destroy the literature of the past in the form it was written. An example of the Party’s slogan: “Who controls the past controls the future: who controls the present controls the past.”

1984	Today
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telescreens are everywhere, except where the Proles live and work. • Workplace monitoring—Winston can’t look at a note on his desk or dwell too long on a single document. • Thought Police interpret people’s actions and ideas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FBI surveillance • Corporations collect data, Internet privacy issues • Employers monitoring employees’ e-mails, phone calls, or facial expressions and voice intonations • Spies

ACTIVITY - Write down words that you think could be replaced by Newspeak - “ungood”, “plusgood” and “doubleplusgood.”



GROUP OR PAIRED ACTIVITY. In 1984, people can be watched all the time and Room 101 is the place of their greatest fear. We are now surrounded by closed circuit cameras and speed cameras. Satellite surveillance is used by the military and GPS guides our travels.

Explore whether our world is becoming one in which we are being watched too much. Or discuss what you would be most afraid to find if you were taken to Room 101.



ARTS ACTIVITIES

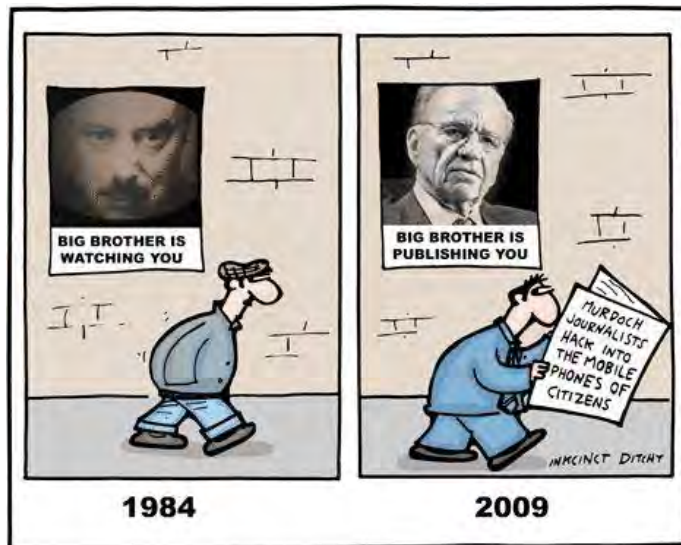
Brotherhood Cartoons.

Ask students to create political cartoons that may have appeared in a secret publication of the Brotherhood. Encourage them to use contemporary political cartoons from newspapers and magazines as models.

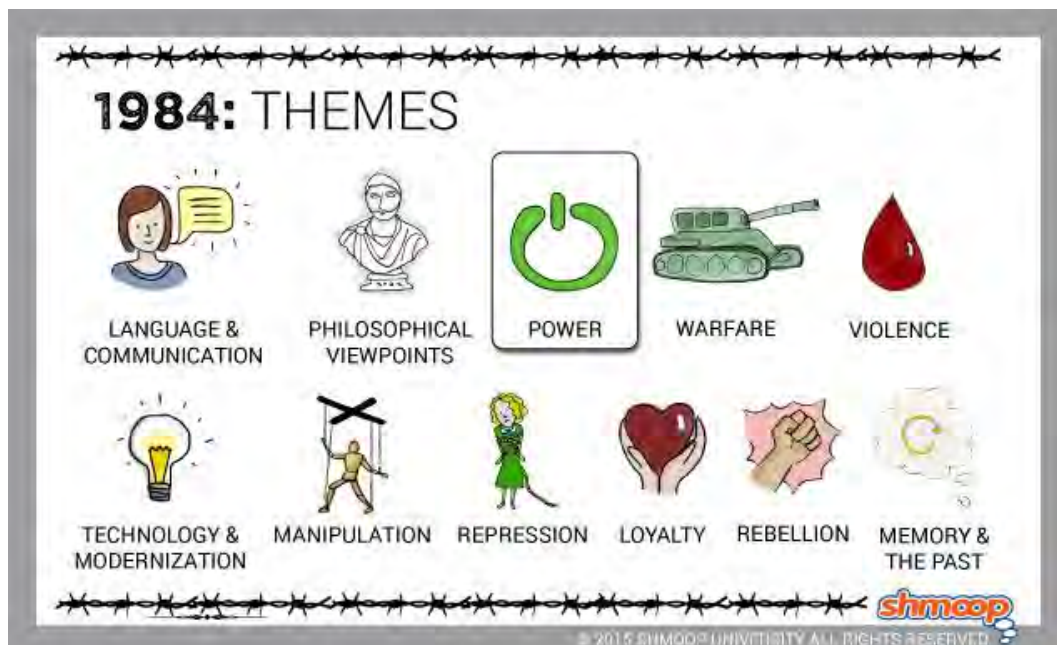


Posters

Ask students to create political slogans using sayings in Newspeak that would appear in Oceania. Encourage them to research political posters from history as models.



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LESSON PLANS FOR 1984

WORKSHOP I

Theatrical Warm-up and Get students engaged!

Objective: Students will develop physical awareness as it relates to self-expression and vocal production. Stretching limbers the muscles and connective tissues so that they can move with the demands of any dramatic situation.

Procedure:

- Begin with movement/vocal warm-up

Start with head/neck roles

The Puppet –

1. Stand in a circle with some room around you to move.
2. Imagine a string is attached to each of your shoulders. Let the string pull your shoulders up to the ceiling. Try and touch the ceiling with your shoulders. Really try.
3. Now imagine the string is attached to your elbows. Let it lift your elbows to the ceiling. Try and touch the ceiling with your elbows.
4. Now imagine the string is attached to your wrists. Try and touch the ceiling with your wrists.
5. Now imagine the string is attached to your fingertips. Try and touch the ceiling with your fingertips. Stretch and reach to the ceiling.
6. Release your spine from the waist with a big “uhhh” sound. Hang bent over at the waist like a rag doll, relaxing everything in your body but those few muscles required to keep you on your feet.
7. Breathe a big sigh and let out any tension remaining.
8. Now roll up your spine, stacking one vertebra atop the other. Leave your head, shoulders and arms released until the very last minute when your head will float into place above the spine.
9. Breathe another big sigh and release the tension.
10. Repeat the entire exercise double time.

6-8 minutes -----



VOCABULARY – READING AND RESPONDING TO TEXT



Objective: Students will strengthen inter-personal skills with knowledge of vocabulary used in different ways throughout their reading and writing. Using and understanding different vocabulary will also expedite comprehension and focus. It allows for **audibility**: projecting your voice so your audience can hear and understand you; **pronunciation**: recognizing words before you say them and pronounce all sounds correctly; **articulation**: using your tongue, mouth and lips to pronounce all the sounds correctly; **vocal variety/expression**: using appropriate pitch, volume and flow.

Pennsylvania Academic Standards for Reading, Writing, Listening, Speaking
The following standards are addressed in this lesson plan:

1.6.11.A: Listen critically and respond to others in small and large group situations. Respond with grade level appropriate questions, ideas, information or opinions.

1.6.11.C: Demonstrate awareness of audience using appropriate volume and clarity in formal speaking presentations.

1.6.11.D: Listen to and acknowledge the contributions of other students well introducing ideas and opinions to enrich the discussion

Vocabulary

Objective: Students will strengthen inter-personal skills with knowledge of vocabulary used in different ways throughout their reading of *1984*. Using and understanding different vocabulary will also expedite comprehension and focus.

Divide class into teams. Use vocabulary cards and distribute copies to the students for example:

contrived
sordid
archaic
sanctioned
demeanor
unorthodox
disdainful
intricate
supersede
incredulous



Ask students to refer to the definitions they wrote on their vocabulary cards to answer each question below. The questions require them to apply the meaning of the words to their own experiences.

1. What is an experience that you find **incredulous**?
2. When have you seen something that was **archaic**?
3. Describe the **demeanor** character from the play.
4. Tell about a **sordid** event from the news.
5. What would you describe with the word **unorthodox**?

20 minutes

Objective: Students will strengthen inter-personal skills with knowledge of vocabulary used in different ways throughout their reading. Using and understanding different vocabulary will also expedite comprehension and focus.

- **Comprehension Focus**

ANALYZE THEME

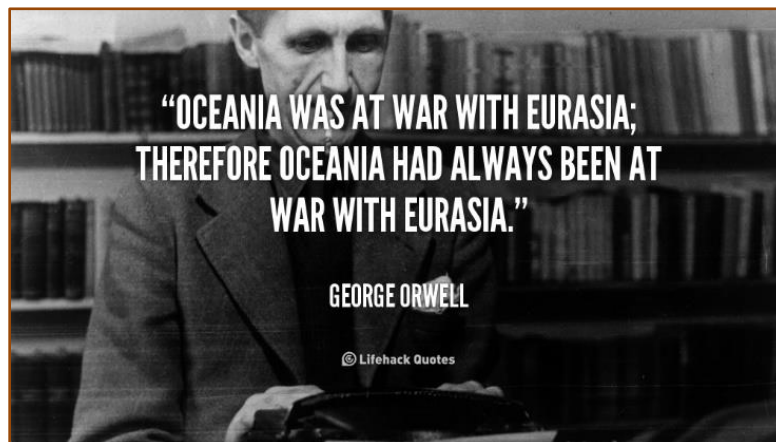
COMMUNITY VS INDIVIDUAL

In George Orwell's *1984*, Winston Smith wrestles with oppression in Oceania, a place where the Party scrutinizes human actions with ever-watchful Big Brother. Defying a ban on individuality, Winston dares to express his thoughts in a diary and pursues a relationship with Julia. These criminal deeds bring Winston into the eye of the opposition, who then must reform the nonconformist. George Orwell's *1984* introduced the watchwords for life without freedom: **BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU.**

Divide students into teams

1. Using all the characters in *1984* distribute “Character” cards to the teams.
2. Allow them to discuss amongst themselves for 4 minutes how the characters contribute to the theme and movement of the play.

19-20 minutes End of Workshop I



WORKSHOP II

Objective: Students will develop physical awareness as it relates to self-expression and vocal production. Stretching limbers the muscles and connective tissues so that they can move with the demands of any dramatic situation.

Procedure:

- Begin with movement/vocal warm-up from Workshop I

6-8 minutes

Theatre Game:

OBSERVING CHANGE

This exercise focuses entirely on your power of observation. It becomes more difficult for your partner as your attention to detail improves. This exercise will all also discipline the student to focus and observe the performance for comprehension and clarity.

1. Sit on the classroom floor across from a partner.
2. Spend two minutes observing everything about your partner in as much detail as possible.
3. Turn away. Your partner will then change three small things about his or her appearance.
4. Turn back when your partner is ready.
5. Try and guess the three changes.
6. Switch roles.

This exercise can be done with four students at a time so that the class can observe changes.

20 minutes

Objective: Training students on how to be an “audience” member.

THEATRE ETIQUETTE

1. Bring in a playbill – explain the importance of reading the contents of the Playbill.
2. Bring in picture of the set – explain the importance of observing the set and how important it is to the movement and tone of the play.

Explain how important it is to respect performers on stage by being quiet and listening to the performance. Students will learn the proper way to attend a theatrical performance by being observant and focused on the playbill, then listen to the language and have an enjoyable experience. You be able to ask the actors intelligent questions about the literature and performance at the Question & Answer period.

20 minutes



END Workshop II

WORKSHOP III

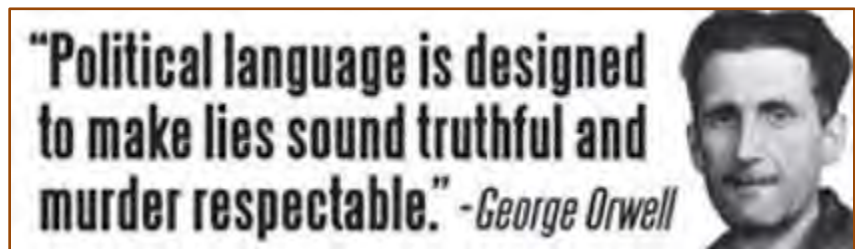
AFTER THE PRODUCTION

EVALUATION, REFLECTION AND COMPREHENSION

Objective: To evaluate the learning experience of the play and comprehension quality of the experience. Reflections on student experience.

Procedure: Initiate and participate with students in collaborative discussion on various aspects of the play. Do a Question & Answer period for the entire session.

To properly evaluate the learning experience for the students, the Instructor can pose questions on paper from Workshops I and II and the theatre experience. **40 minutes**



SUGGESTED RESOURCES FOR 1984

We encourage you and your students to explore further by checking out the following resources:
ORWELL SOCIETY WEBSITE - <http://www.orwellsociety.com/>

George Orwell - List of Works

<https://www.thoughtco.com/george-orwell-list-of-works-740980>

Articles and essays

Orwell wrote hundreds of essays, book reviews and editorials.
<http://gutenberg.net.au/ebooks03/0300011h.html>

Pamphlets

Starting with *The Lion and the Unicorn* (1941), several of Orwell's longer essays took the form of pamphlets. <https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/pamphlet-literature-by-george-orwell>

Poems - Orwell was not widely known for writing verse, but he did publish several poems
<https://www.poemhunter.com/george-orwell/>



THE RESOURCE GUIDE STUDENT EVALUATION FORM

Please go to our website: <http://www.primestage.com> to find this form and send it back directly online! Or you can mail it to us at: Prime Stage Theatre, P.O. Box 99446, Pittsburgh, PA 15233.

Thank you!

YOUR
NAME _____

NAME OF
SCHOOL _____

GRADE _____ NAME OF TEACHER _____

What part/parts of this story did you enjoy when you were seeing the play?

What part/parts of this play confused you while reading or watching the play?

What part/parts of the stage version helped you understand the book?

What did you learn from reading or seeing this play?

Which character would you like to play?



THE RESOURCE GUIDE TEACHER EVALUATION FORM

Please go to our website: <http://www.primestage.com> to find this form and send it back directly online! Or you can mail it to us at: Prime Stage Theatre, P.O. Box 99446, Pittsburgh, PA 15233. Thank you.

Prime Stage constantly assesses the work provided by our education department. Your feedback is vital to our ongoing need for funding for this program. Please fill out the following forms and mail or email them to the address given below.

YOUR
NAME _____

NAME OF
SCHOOL _____

EMAIL
ADDRESS _____

Which part(s) of the play and experience you find most helpful for you and your students?

Was the guide useful to you?

Which part(s) did you find most helpful?

How can we improve the theatrical experience for the future?

