

Activity 3: Diary Writing

Part One: Chapters II – VIII

Objectives: Relating literature to life and identifying the major concerns and thematic ideas of the text

Put yourself in Winston's situation. Imagine you have just started your secret diary. After you have scribbled "DOWN WITH BIG BROTHER" numerous times, been accosted by the Parsons children, and been told the chocolate ration is reduced, you sit down in order to begin writing a meaningful entry into your diary.

When Winston first begins to write, he believes that he is writing for the future, for the people who will live after the reign of Big Brother, after the end of INGSOC.

Imagine what kind of information you, as Winston, want to preserve for the future. Which descriptions, facts, and events do you need to include in your diary to enable future generations to understand the way of life in *1984*? What advice and what warnings do you want to write down in order to ensure that the age of Big Brother will never be repeated and that future generations can live in a state of peace and equality?

1. Write the diary entry, recording as much information as possible about your (Winston's) era. Ensure that your fears about the future are clearly outlined.
(450 – 500 words)

Activity 4: Mind-map

Part One: Chapter VII

Objectives: Recognizing thematic ideas and relating literature to life and history

In 1984, Orwell describes Winston's view on the Oceanian political system, INGSOC, and the possibility of rebellion:

If there was hope, it must lie with the proles, because only there, in those swarming disregarded masses, eighty-five percent of the population of Oceania, could the force to destroy the Party ever be generated. The Party could not be overthrown from within. Its enemies, if it had any enemies, had no way of coming together or even of identifying one another. Even if the legendary brotherhood existed, as just possibly it might, it was inconceivable that its members could ever assemble in larger numbers than twos and threes. Rebellion meant a look in the eyes, an inflection of the voice, an occasional whispered word. But the proles, if only they could somehow become conscious of their own strength, would have no need to conspire. They needed only to rise up and shake themselves like a horse shaking off flies. If they chose they could blow the party to pieces tomorrow morning. Surely sooner or later it must occur to them to do it.

The Party claimed, of course, to have liberated the proles from bondage. Before the revolution they had been hideously oppressed by the capitalists, they had been starved and flogged, women had been forced to work in coal mines (women still did work in the coal mines, as a matter of fact), and children had been sold into the factories at the age of six. But simultaneously, true to the principles of doublethink, the Party taught that the proles were natural inferiors who must be kept in subjection, like animals, by the application of a few simple rules. In reality very little was known about the proles. It was not necessary to know much. So long as they continued to work and breed, their other activities were without importance.

Critics have argued that Orwell responded to some of the political issues of his time in 1984. The novel was written in 1949. Use the internet to research the terms **socialism**, **communism**, and **totalitarianism** in relation to Orwell's time. Collect your finding in a mind-map.