

1984 Comprehension Questions

Book I

Chapter I

1. Describe what the world of 1984 looks like. Describe the Police Patrol, Thought Police, and Big Brother. What do they do and how do they do it?
2. What is the slogan of Winston's workplace, The Ministry of Truth?
3. Where does Winston live? Describe the setting.
4. What is Newspeak?
5. What are the 4 Ministries of government and what do they do?
6. How does Winston feel about the government? How can you tell?
7. What is the Two Minute Hate and why do you think they have this ritual? Why is it impossible for Winston not to join in?
8. What do you think is the Anti-Sex league?
9. Who is Goldstein and what does he believe about Big Brother? How does Winston describe Goldstein?
10. The book, 1984, was written in 1948 and first published in 1949. What was happening in the world during this time that may have inspired Orwell to write this book?

Chapter II

11. Why is Mrs. Parsons afraid of her own children?
12. How will Winston know if someone finds his journal?

Chapter III

13. What does Winston think happened to his parents?
14. Why doesn't tragedy exist anymore?
15. Describe the effect that the absence of written record has on society.
16. What is doublethink?
17. Why does Winston have to control his facial movements so precisely?

Chapter IV

18. What does Winston's job at the Ministry of Truth entail?
19. What effect does "fixing the misprints" have on society?

Chapter V

20. What is the purpose of eliminating words and creating Newspeak?

21. Who does Winston think will be vaporized and why? Why does Winston think Syme will be vaporized? Why doesn't Winston tell Syme about his suspicions?

22. Why does Winston think Parsons will survive?

23. What is facecrime?

Chapter VI

24. What is the sole purpose of marriage?

25. Why did the Party encourage separation of couples who had no children?

26. What was Katharine like and why did they separate?

Chapter VII

27. Who are the proles and why isn't the Party concerned with them?

28. Winston remembers three men who confessed to crimes against the Party and were executed. Why is their story significant to Winston?

Chapter VIII

29. How was the lottery run?

30. What happened to thought criminals?

Book 2

Chapter I

31. Why does the girl with black hair fall in front of Winston?

32. How does Winston respond to the "love" note? How has it changed Winston's life?

Chapter II

33. Describe Julia.

34. What questions come to mind after reading this chapter?

Chapter III

35. What is "talking by installments"?

36. Why does Julia work so much and do so much volunteer work?

37. How is Julia similar and different from Winston?

Chapter IV

38. In what ways is Winston and Julia's relationship doomed?

39. Why is Winston's view of women and relationships so warped?

Chapter V

40. Which of Winston's predictions comes true?

41. How has Winston changed since he met Julia?

42. How are Julia and Winston's beliefs and values similar or different from each other?

Chapter VI

43. How are Winston's suspicions about O'Brien confirmed?

Chapter VII

44. What was Winston's childhood like?

45. Why does Winston gain a newfound respect for the proles?

46. Would Winston rather stay alive or stay human? Why? Put yourself in his shoes. How would you feel?

Chapter VIII

47. How is O'Brien's home different from Winston's?

48. What does Winston find out about Goldstein and the Brotherhood?

49. What is Winston willing to do and not willing to do?

50. What happens to people when they disappear?

Chapter IX

51. What does the book outline? What is the meaning behind War is Peace?

52. If you were to read this book during the 1940's, when the book was written, what effect do you think it would have? (Especially the part about the 1930's and "practices that had long been abandoned.")

53. What kind of statement is Orwell making by saying that "Jews, Negroes and South American Indians are found to be in the highest ranks of the Party."

54. What does the book say about membership of the Inner Party, Outer Party, and Proles?

55. How does the Party keep the proles submissive? Are proles allowed to join the Party?

56. Are children born into the Inner Party?

57. What is crimestop?

58. Why does the book say that the alteration/mutability of the past is necessary?

Chapter X

59. What does Winston discover about Mr. Charrington? Do you think his shop was a deliberate trap for wayward Party members?

Book 3

Chapter I

60. Why is Parsons arrested? Do you think he is guilty?

61. Why is O'Brien there? What do you think he meant when he said, "They got me a long time ago"?

Chapter II

62. What is O'Brien's role in the Ministry of Love?

63. How long was O'Brien watching Winston? Knowing now who O'Brien is, do you think Winston made a mistake in thinking he was part of the Brotherhood or do you think O'Brien deliberately looked at him that day during the Two Minute Hate in order to trap Winston?

64. What does O'Brien say is the reason they bring people to the Ministry of Love?

65. What do you think will happen to Winston? What do you think will happen or has happened to Julia?

66. Why don't you think O'Brien answers the question about the Brotherhood? Do you think they really exist? Do you think Big Brother really exists?

Chapter III

67. How, according to O'Brien, can people be immortal?

68. What does the future look like according to O'Brien?

69. When Winston looks in the mirror, what does he see?

Chapter IV

70. How has Winston changed during his time in the Ministry of Love?

71. Why is it decided that Winston must go to Room 101?

72. What do you think is in Room 101?

Chapter V

73. What does Winston face in Room 101 and how does he respond?

74. How does he betray Julia?

Chapter VI

75. When Winston and Julia see each other again after their arrest and release, what has changed? How are they different? Why? What do you think happened to Julia?

76. What do you think the rest of Winston's life will look like?