GEORGE ORWELL’S 1984

A NIGHTMARE WORLD

You are going to learn something about 1984, a very famous book which is often mentioned in modern news and everyday speech. Read the article (but do not read the box “Orwell’s Words” yet). Find one factual mistake and one language mistake in each of the following sentences. Correct the mistakes.

1. The book 1984 takes place in an existing country where everything is controlled with a totalitarian government.

2. In Oceania, you must not question what the Party does even if you’re own judgment tells you something else – the Party is always wrong.

3. However Winston works for the government at the Ministry of Love, he doesn’t like the Party at all.

4. Winston thinks that O’Brien oppose the Party and is going to help him fight for a better future, but Winston is betrayed and found guilty of thoughtcrime: having politically acceptable thoughts.

5. People which do something against the government may be “vaporized”, which means they are imprisoned and any traces of their existence are deleted.

6. 1984 was written in the 1920s, when the technology Orwell described was just sci-fi.

ORWELL’S WORDS

Now look at the box “Orwell’s Words” and do the task. What do the Orwellian words mean in a modern context? Read the explanations and fill in the correct forms of the following verbs.

believe • delete • keep • refer • say • talk

1. By newspeak we mean words and phrases (such as euphemisms) which are used to control how people __________________________ about something controversial.

2. Doublethink is the psychological state of being able __________________________ two contradictory (= opposing) things at once.

3. A memory hole is any device to hide the past. You can also use “memory hole” as a verb meaning to destroy the evidence of something someone __________________________ or done. For example, if you __________________________ your old Tweets and YouTube videos without saying what you’ve done, you memory hole them.

4. Big Brother __________________________ to a state that is over-controlling. It is also a name of a television programme where people __________________________ in a house and watched in their every move.
THE ENDING OF THE BOOK

Scan the QR code or go to www.bridge-online.cz/casopis-bridge/bridge-may-june-2020 and play Track 7. Listen to the ending of the book once or twice and fill the missing words into the text.

The 1 ___________________ from the telescreen was still pouring forth its tale of prisoners and booty* and slaughter*, but the 2 ___________________ outside had died down a little. The waiters were turning back to their 3 ___________________.

One of them approached with the gin bottle. Winston, sitting in a blissful* dream, paid no attention as his 4 ________________ was filled up. He was not running or cheering any 5 ________________. He was back in the Ministry of Love, with everything 6 ________________, his soul white as snow. He was in the public dock, confessing 7 ________________, implicating* everybody. He was walking down the white-tiled corridor, with the feeling of walking in 8 ________________, and an armed guard at his back. The long-hoped-for bullet was entering his brain.

He gazed up at the enormous 9 ________________. Forty years it had taken him to learn what kind of 10 ________________ was hidden beneath the dark moustache. O cruel, needless* 11 ________________! O stubborn, self-willed* exile from the loving breast!

Two gin scented tears trickled down the sides of his 12 ________________. But it was all right, everything was all right, the struggle was 13 ________________. He had won victory over himself. He 14 ________________ Big Brother.

Now you have the complete text of the ending of the book. The following sentences sum it up. Can you put them in the correct order?

A  Winston looked at Big Brother.
B  Winston remembered how he admitted everything he’d done.
C  A waiter poured a drink for Winston.
D  Winston knew that he’d finally learnt to love the Party.
E  Winston cried.
F  Information about war was broadcast on a monitor.
G  Winston recalled how he had wanted to be shot.

What happens to Winston at the end of the book?

_______________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________

THE ENDING OF THE MOVIE

Scan the QR code or go to http://tinyurl.com/1984-TheEnding to watch the final scene of a movie adaptation of 1984 (the scene is about 6 minutes long). In what ways is it different from the ending of the book? In what ways is it the same? Write a paragraph (100–150 words) comparing the two.

You might want to think about the following questions:

• Where is the scene set?
• What do you know about Winston’s thoughts and feelings?
• What are the biggest differences between the book and the movie?

In the movie:

• What does Winston write on the table, and why?
• What does Winston say about the war? Why is it important?

GLOSSARY*

booty – any valuable things or money stolen by an army at war
slaughter – the killing of many people
blissful – extremely happy
to implicate – to show that someone is responsible for something bad
needless – completely unnecessary
self-willed – basing your actions on your own decisions without listening to advice from other people

UČITELSKÁ SADA ZDARMA

Učitelé, kteří objednávají 11 a více kusů předplatného, dostávají učitelskou sadu – časopis, CD, teachers’ file, kartu, výukový plakát a kalendář – zdarma.
**Have you heard the phrase “Big Brother is watching you”?**

It was invented by George Orwell in 1984, his novel about a society where the state has control not just of actions, but also of feelings, hopes, desires and dreams.

**The Masters of Fear**

1984 is one of the most famous 20th-century dystopias. It is set in an imagined country called Oceania, ruled by a totalitarian government called the Party. The Party has had absolute control for as long as most people can remember. The country is always at war, people’s every act is controlled by the government, and they are taught not to question anything. According to the Party, this is necessary for the greater good of all.

The Party’s three slogans are “war is peace”, “freedom is slavery” and “ignorance is strength”. Do they sound contradictory? It does not matter. You should trust the Party over your own judgment. When your instinct tells you one thing, but the Party another, it is the Party which must be right.

**The Place without Darkness**

The novel tells the story of Winston Smith, who works at the information-controlling Ministry of Truth but who, very secretly, does not feel any love for the Party. Winston is a classic antihero; he isn’t particularly heroic, brave or clever. He falls in love with a woman named Julia and starts a relationship with her. He also discovers a group of people who oppose the regime. The leader of this group, O’Brien, assures Winston that they will meet, one day, in a place where there is no darkness. Winston believes he means in a future where everyone is happy. For a while, we think the dull, grey, world of Oceania might have some life in it after all. Together with his love and his new friends, Winston is going to fight for freedom and the right to love.

Many people believe that Orwell’s vision of the future could become a reality at any time.
Throughout his life British author George Orwell (1903–1950) was interested in the impact of politics on normal human life. His other famous work, the political allegory Animal Farm, tells the story of farm animals who rebel hoping to create a society where they are all equal but end up under a dictatorship. It reflects the Russian Revolution of 1917 and the Stalinist era of the Soviet Union.

A World without Privacy
In Orwell’s invented world, every action is observed. Each house is installed with telescreens that pick up your every movement. Children are encouraged to spy on their parents, and any dangerous act can be registered by the Thought Police and may result in vaporisation: killing the person and removing all evidence of their existence.

One of Winston’s jobs is to rewrite newspaper articles so that the names of vaporised people disappear from history.

Orwell wrote the book in the 1940s, when 1984 was a year in the far future. The Communist regimes of Eastern Europe were young and had not yet put in place the level of surveillance state that was to come. The technology in Orwell’s Oceania was pure science fiction.

These days, the technology is all around us. It’s no great surprise that many of the terms in Orwell’s book have entered our daily vocabulary (see “Orwell’s Words”). Many people believe that in a world of surveillance cameras and electronic passports, public information on the internet and anti-terrorism laws where people can be arrested without trial, Orwell’s vision of the future could become a reality at any time. If it hasn’t done so already.

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GLOSSARY*
contradictory – very different from each other (so they cannot both be true)
judgment – opinion
torturer – a person who causes great physical or mental pain to somebody
surveillance – careful watching of a person or place, especially by the police or army

LANGUAGE POINT
A dystopia is a nightmarish, terrible world (or a story set in such a world). It comes from its opposite, the word utopia, which was invented by a 16th-century English writer describing a fictional island where everybody is happy. He took the word from the Greek, meaning “nowhere”.

TASK: ORWELL’S WORDS

Some of the terms that Orwell invented for 1984 have become part of our everyday language.

First, see what they meant to the citizens of Oceania. Then look at the sentences taken from modern newspapers. Can you fit the correct Orwellian word into each gap?

Big Brother
At one end of the hall was a coloured poster. It showed an enormous face, more than a metre wide: the face of a man about forty-five, with a heavy black moustache and ruggedly handsome features. This is Big Brother, the leader of the Party. We never learn if he exists or not, but we learn that to live in Oceania you must love him.

Doublethink
In Oceania, it is not enough to show loyalty through your language and your actions. You also must be loyal in your thinking. Winston, for example, knows that the people he deletes from newspaper articles once existed. Yet to be loyal in his thinking, he must also know they didn’t. Doublethink is: To know and not to know, to be conscious of complete truthfulness while telling carefully constructed lies.

Newspeak
It is not just people’s behaviour that must be controlled. Newspeak is an invented, simplified language which aims to reduce thought. Winston’s colleagues, who are writing Newspeak dictionaries, aim to get rid of all irrelevant words until all that is left is the bare minimum necessary to function and obey. In the end we shall make thoughtcrime impossible, because there will be no words in which to express it.

Memory hole
In every room at the Ministry of Truth is a hole where any unauthorised document can be instantly made to disappear. It would be whirled away on a current of warm air to the enormous furnaces (= fires) which were hidden somewhere in the building.

1. The term “attitude adjustment” was the very first example of ________ by the junta.
2. The result is a curious form of ____________, where global warming is literally happening in backyards, while global warming is a hoax, a big lie.
3. Last week, the Boston Globe became the latest news outlet to ____________ one of its own pieces.
4. Americans realise ________ is watching them online, but don’t know why.