Baker Street Readers

Great reads for all ages

‘If there is no word for freedom, how can anyone be free?’

Winston Smith lives in a nightmare world where the Thought Police spy on everyone and children are taught to betray their parents. Even the smallest sign of disagreement with the Party results in torture, imprisonment, or death. Big Brother oversees everything – but who is he?

Winston tries hard to keep his thoughts and fears to himself. But then he meets Julia, a strong-minded young woman who is willing to run the terrible risk of their being found together. Will kindly Mr Charrington keep their secret? Can Winston and Julia find happiness despite the dangers that threaten them?

Lexile® Level	AR Level	Word Count
900L	5.6	5,606

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ISBN 978-1-912464-45-6

“Miniature masterpieces”

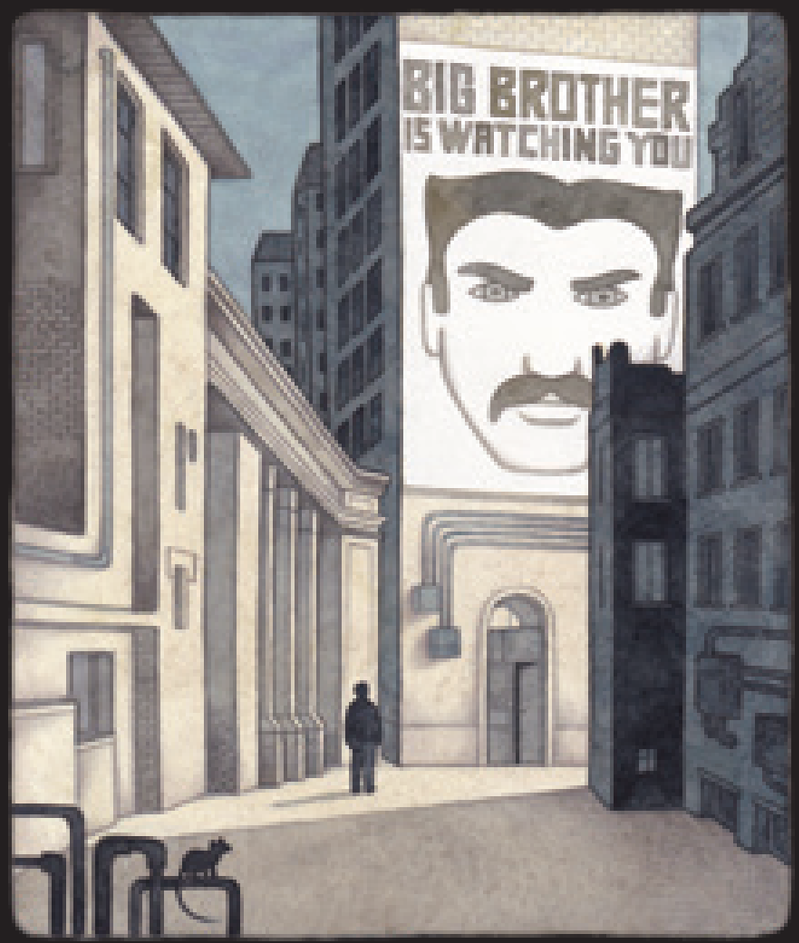
- BBC R4, Open Book

NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR

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TEACHER'S EDITION ONLY

Baker Street Press

Newbury, Berkshire, UK
www.bakerstreetpress.co.uk

First published in 2021
Reprinted 2021

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ISBN 978-1-912464-45-6

Accelerated Reader

Level 5.6
Word count: 5,606

Lexile® level: 900L

A catalogue record for this book is available
from the British Library

Typeset in Baskerville and Scala
Printed in Turkey by Imago Ltd.

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THE CHARACTERS



Winston Smith

Winston is unhappy with life, and decides to write a diary to record his thoughts and feelings. What happens when he meets Julia, a young woman who works in the same office as Winston?

Julia



Julia is a confident and clever young woman. She seems very interested in Winston. But can he trust her – or have the police asked her to spy on him?



O'Brien

O'Brien has an important job within the Inner Party – the most powerful group of people in the country. Winston thinks he is a friend. Can O'Brien help Winston?

Mr Charrington

Mr Charrington owns a junk-shop, and seems to be a kind and helpful old man. He sells Winston an old writing book to use as a diary. Will Winston get him into trouble?



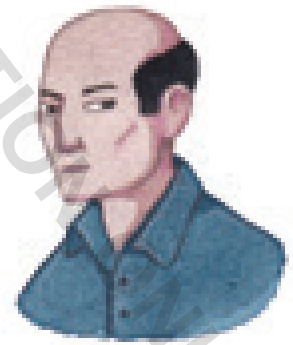


Syme

Syme is one of the most intelligent people that Winston knows. He is fascinated by the new language that the Party is creating. But will his cleverness and enthusiasm do him any good?

Parsons

Parsons would do anything to please Big Brother. He spends all his spare time raising money and organising marches and parades. Will he be rewarded for all his efforts?





Big Brother

Posters of Big Brother are everywhere. He is in charge of everything and watches everyone closely. But who is he? Has anyone ever met him?

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NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR

It was a bright cold day in April, and the clocks were striking thirteen. Winston Smith pushed open the glass doors of Victory Mansions and started up the stairs to his seventh floor flat. He could not face his work canteen and had decided to go home for his mid-day break that day. The lift was out of order, and as usual the entrance hall smelt of boiled cabbage and old rag mats. On every landing the same large poster was stuck to the wall. It showed an enormous face, more than a metre wide. It was the face of a man about forty-five, with a big black moustache and a serious expression, underneath large letters which read:

BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU

When Winston stepped into his flat he was greeted with a voice babbling away from a flat screen which was fixed to the wall opposite him – the telescreen, it was called.

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There was no way to switch this screen off, although Winston was able to turn the volume down slightly. The announcer was saying something about how more goods than ever had been produced that year. Winston knew that this was nonsense – there were always shortages of everything, from shoelaces to razor blades – but he was careful to look as if he was pleased to hear the announcer's news. The telescreen received and transmitted simultaneously, and Winston knew that it was always possible that he was being carefully watched by the Thought Police. No one knew how they decided when they were going to spy on someone. If they discovered that you were thinking the wrong thing – 'thoughtcrime', it was called – then you were sure to be arrested and sent to a prison camp or worse.

Winston looked out of the window at the rows of decaying old houses that surrounded his flat. On every corner he could see huge posters of Big Brother. A kilometre away the

Ministry of Truth, his place of work, towered vast and white above the grimy landscape. It was an enormous pyramid of glittering concrete, and it was just possible to read the three slogans of the Party – the organisation which now ruled Airstrip One – written in large letters on one of the walls.

WAR IS PEACE
FREEDOM IS SLAVERY
IGNORANCE IS STRENGTH

Winston had his back to the telescreen, so he allowed himself to frown. He could remember when he was a very young child, before his parents disappeared and he was sent to the children's home, that 'Airstrip One' used to be called 'England' and was not part of Oceania. He was sure that there had been many countries in the world then. Now there were only three: Oceania, Eurasia and Eastasia. Had life been better or worse when he was young, he wondered?

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they think. *Nineteen Eighty-Four* continues to give us an important message about the dangers of state control and totalitarianism.

Filling in the spaces

The loss of so many of George Orwell's original words is a sad but necessary part of the shortening process. We have had to make some difficult decisions, omitting subplots and details, some important, some less so, but all interesting. We have also, at times, taken the liberty of combining two events into one, or of giving a character words or actions that originally belong to another. The points below will fill in some of the gaps, but nothing can beat the original.

- Winston describes the Two Minutes Hate which takes place in his office, and everywhere else in the country. The telescreen shows a picture of the leader of the Brotherhood, Emmanuel Goldstein, who is supposed to be plotting against the Party. Everyone shouts at Goldstein until in the end the face of Big Brother appears and calms them down.

- Winston describes how he once found a

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photograph which showed that on the day that three men had been found guilty of travelling to Eurasia to give away important secrets, they were in fact in New York (part of Oceania). This proves to Winston that the Party lies about the past.

- We learn more about Winston's childhood. He is ashamed because he stole food intended for his younger sister.

- O'Brien asks Winston and Julia to meet him in his flat. Because he is a member of the Inner Party O'Brien has much better living conditions and is able to switch his telescreen off. He tells them that he is a member of the Brotherhood (the secret organisation plotting to overthrow the Party). He lends Winston a book, which is supposed to have been written by Emmanuel Goldstein, called *The Theory and Practice of Oligarchical Collectivism*. This book describes the system of government in Oceania. Long passages from the book are quoted by Winston.

- We learn more about the life of the 'proles', the ordinary people who make up 85% of the population. Winston meets an old man in a pub and tries to get the man to talk about what life

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