

**SUMMER READING ASSIGNMENT:**

***1984* by George Orwell**

*1984* is a widely acclaimed dystopian novel that explores the dangerous ramifications of unchecked political power, as well as the role of language in shaping culture, identity, and perceptions of truth. Orwell's satire has not only secured its niche in literary academia, but also is commonly alluded to in contemporary popular culture.

As you read *1984*, keep a literary journal in which you note your appreciation and/or questions about Orwell's use of the following key elements of literature:

**PLOT/CONFLICT**

PLOT is an author's selection and arrangement of incidents in a story to shape the action and give the story a particular focus. Discussions of plot include not just what happens, but also how and why things happen the way they do.

**CHARACTER**

CHARACTER is established through (1) direct exposition (comment by the author directly to the reader, although this is nearly always filtered through a narrator or other character, whose reliability you must always question), (2) dialogue (what the character says or thinks), and (3) action (what the character actually does).

**SETTING**

SETTING is the physical, and sometimes spiritual, background against which the action of a narrative (novel, drama, short story, poem) takes place. It includes (1) geography (country / city/region), (2) time (day/night, season, century/year/era, historical and social conditions and values), and (3) society (class, beliefs, values of the characters).

**POINT OF VIEW**

POINT OF VIEW refers to who tells us a story and how it is told. The two broad categories are (1) the third-person narrator who tells the story and does not participate in the action and (2) the first-person narrator who is a major or minor participant.

**SYNTAX AND DICTION**

SYNTAX is the distinctive and unique manner in which a writer arranges words to achieve particular effects. DICTION is the author's choice of words that best convey his or her intended connotations. Consider your DADISPOT elements from last year.

**TONE, IMAGERY, AND SYMBOLISM**

## Brennan High School English IV Summer Reading Assignment

TONE is the author's implicit attitude toward the reader or the people, places, and events in a work as revealed by the elements of the author's style. An IMAGE is a word, phrase, or figure of speech that addresses the senses, suggesting mental pictures of sights, sounds, smells tastes, feelings or actions. A SYMBOL is something which is not only itself but also stands for or suggests or means something else. Recurring use of the same symbol is called a **MOTIF**. As with your understanding of DICTION and SYNTAX, your DADISPOT elements will be of use here.

### **THEMES**

Very simply, 'what the author has to say about life'. The 'take home ideas' or 'messages' of the text. Note that there may be various themes in a single text, as the author may be addressing several aspects of his or her experience of life, culture, or historical situation. THEMES typically form the backbone of any work. They are the author's reason for writing – the element to which all others are in service.

**Through your journal, you are conducting an ongoing literary analysis of *1984*. Your journal entries will be of great assistance to you in the first weeks of the new school year. There will be class discussion of the novel and these key literary elements, as well as, ultimately, a formal assessment of your ability to discuss the novel in writing.**

**NOTE: YOU MUST INCLUDE TEXT EVIDENCE IN YOUR JOURNAL FOR EVERY ENTRY. To facilitate class discussion (and to make things MUCH easier for yourself), cite your text evidence using the following format: (Book.Chapter.Paragraph). Example: (1.2.3.)**

In order to more fully engage and understand the text, it is also *strongly* suggested that you take the opportunity to research the author and his background, as well as the cultural/historical context in which he was working. Awareness of these issues will greatly enhance your knowledge of the text and help you to participate in class discussion with competence and confidence.