

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_

1984 Webquest  
Mrs. Allen

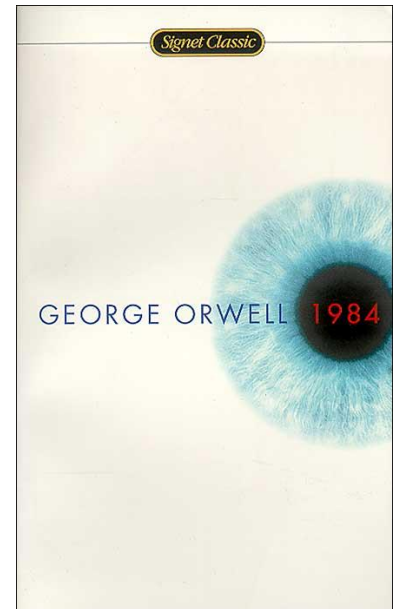
## Overview:

A webquest project uses the resources of the Internet to explore and answer questions pertaining to a particular topic. We are going to explore the background of *1984*. This webquest was designed to be used as a pre and post reading activity for the novel and combines the traditional elements of literature with the use of technology.

## Introduction:

You will soon begin reading the novel *1984* by George Orwell. In preparation, it is extremely important that you gain the necessary background information in order to understand certain situations within the plot. We are going to explore *1984*'s themes and how they have and continue to affect our society.

Orwell's *1984* provides thought-provoking materials that deals with themes of totalitarianism, manipulation of language, propaganda, isolation, government invasion of personal privacy, social class disparity, government control, loss of individuality, and abuse of power, just to name a few.



## Task:

Part 1 requires you to explore Web sites on various topics related to *1984*. You will be given a selection of web sites related to these issues from which to choose.

Part 2 will require you to gather information about one of the themes in *1984*. You will need to gather and print at least three sources to be used later as research for an essay.

## Process:

Explore these sites for information about the themes that George Orwell presents in *1984*. For this part of the webquest you will be responsible for handing in your answers to the questions that accompany each topic. (lined paper)

For part 1, which will be completed before reading the novel, click on the links below and answer the questions to help you understand some of Orwell's historical basis for the novel.

Part 2 will be completed after the unit and requires you to explore one of the themes in *1984* that is occurring today.

The culminating assessment for this unit will be to write a compare and contrast essay that discusses how that topic is used/shown in *1984* with a similar issue in today's modern world.

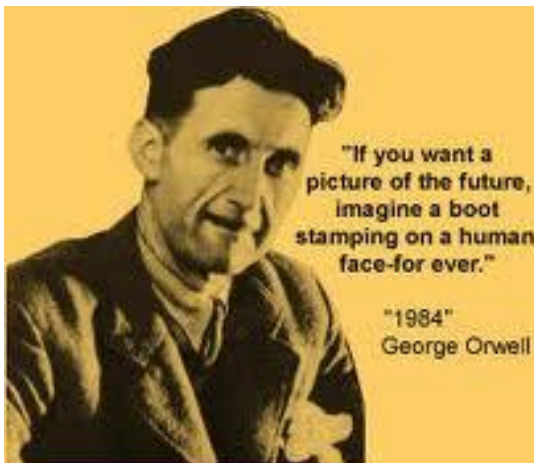
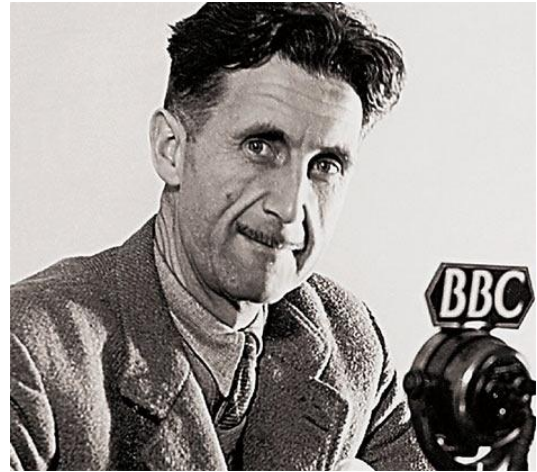
## Part 1: Background for 1984

### Topic 1: About the Author

In order to fully appreciate *1984* and its themes, it is important to know a little about the author, George Orwell, who led an incredibly interesting life that led to his inspiration for his various novels.

#### [George Orwell Biography](#)

1. What was George Orwell's real name and where was he born and raised?
2. On page two, the biography discusses Orwell's different experiences in Spain and Burma, which forever affected his political views. How does he feel about Communism and Imperialism? Socialism?
3. On page three, we learn about the publication of one of his most widely read titles *Animal Farm*. On what do many speculate he based this book?
4. After the success of *Animal Farm*, he published *1984*, which most consider to be his best novel. When was it published? What true political parties inspired this novel? Against what political state does Orwell warn against in *1984*? When did he die?



## Topic 2: Totalitarianism

Government control is arguably the most important theme in *1984* and is so intense that readers might have trouble finding the plot believable. However, you should know that he based the government in his novel on truth, so it's important to have some historical background.

### [Encyclopedia Britannica](#)

5. What is totalitarianism?
6. Who coined this term? When?



### [The Rise of Totalitarianism](#)

7. What are at least three examples of totalitarian governments in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (1900-1950)?
8. How did Stalin transform the Russian economy as part of his five year plan?
9. What are at least three of the ways Russian's totalitarian state controlled people and the media?
10. What was Mussolini's totalitarian government party called?
11. What are at least three of the ways Mussolini's party controlled people and the media?
12. What was Mussolini's well-known slogan?

### [Stalin's Purges: History.com Video](#)

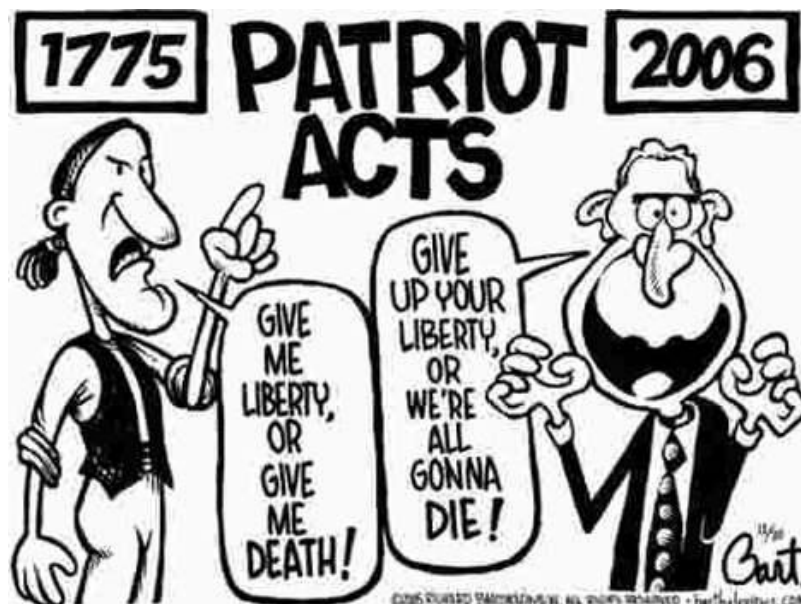
13. When did the purges occur and why?
14. What percent of the communist party membership was purged?
15. Why did his purges of the military backfire with Finland and the Germans?

## Topic 3: Infringement Upon Privacy

For the very first chapter of *1984*, readers should be startled by the systematic infringement upon characters' privacy, even in their homes and in their thoughts. However, all Americans should be aware of certain privacy issues affecting our Constitutional rights. Benjamin Franklin once said, "Those who give up their liberty for more security neither deserve liberty nor security." What do you think?

[Fox Business News Video: Patriot Act](#)  
[How Stuff Works: Patriot Act](#)

16. When and why was the Patriot Act passed?
17. What are some of the ways in which the Patriot Act contradicts and supersedes the Constitution? In particular, which amendments does this report say the Patriot Act violates?
18. What do supporters of the act say are its benefits? Why are critics so outraged?



## Topic 4: Propaganda

In 1984, you will quickly see that propaganda plays a large role. As you read, you might ask yourself, "How is it possible that people in this society buy into these ridiculous concepts?" However, George Orwell based many of the themes in his novels on true events in history, and propaganda is no exception.

### [Merriam Webster Dictionary](#)

19. What is propaganda? Using definitions 2 and 3, paraphrase the definition.

### [The Power of Nazi Propaganda Video](#)

20. Describe how much the Nazi seats in the German parliament changed from 1928 through 1932.
21. How does the narrator of this movie say that the Nazi's were able to gain popularity so quickly? How did the Nazis implement marketing to different groups?
22. After 1933-1934, the Nazis implemented the Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda as part of their governmental cabinet. What was the goal of the ministry? What did they control?
23. How did the Ministry aim the Nazi propaganda at Jews? For what were they blamed?
24. Why did Hitler believe so strongly in the spoken word over the written word?
25. According to the expert in the video, why is this concept important today to American society?





## Part 2: Exploring 1984's Themes in America Today

For Part 2 you will need to gather information about one of the themes below in terms of how that concept is present in modern American society today. You may choose from:

- Individuality
- Advertising / propaganda
- Control of language as a means to control
- Privacy
- Laws as control
- Totalitarian government control

First you will use [Google](#) to search the term and any related words or phrases. Your goal is to find three different sources.

Once you have located a source, you should skim through it to see if it is appropriate (and not too long). If you think the source is beneficial and appropriate, print it. Please be sure that you have all necessary information to cite your source.

Use a **highlighter** to go through your three printouts to find pertinent information to your topic. When you are done **highlighting** important information, you need to write a **7-10 sentence** paragraph summarizing your findings about how the theme is present in today's society.