

# Advanced Placement English Language

## 2024 Summer Assignment

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Welcome to AP English Language and Composition. To ensure that we can promptly begin the fall semester, please complete the following assignment, which is due on the first day of class—Thursday, Aug. 15 (A Day) & Friday, August 16 (B Day).

**READING:** Long before the dystopian *Hunger Games* and *Divergent* series, there was George Orwell's *1984*, a post-World War II novel set in a not-so-distant future. Please acquire a copy of the book—**either from the school library, Amazon, or a local bookstore**—and read it conscientiously before the first day of class. Be conversant with the plot points, characters, and themes of the novel, and be ready to take a reading quiz in the early days of the new school year. I think you'll find the story engaging and, arguably, still relevant.



**Forms of Control:** While I am not collecting any formal annotations of the novel, you may wish to jot down notes about each of the following forms of control found in the story, as you will be discussing them in the writing assignment described below.

- **Language control:** how does the Party control its citizens through the manipulation of language?
- **Political control:** how does the Party control its citizens with political ideology and propaganda?
- **Social control:** how does the Party control the way its citizens interact and socialize with each other?
- **Psychological/mental control:** how does the Party control the way its citizens think and perceive reality?
- **Physical control:** how does the Party employ physical means to control the behavior of its citizens?

**WRITING ASSIGNMENT:** Write a letter to George Orwell in which you describe to him the roles that **at least two of the topics listed below** play in modern American society, and explain what similarities and/or differences they reveal in relation to the forms of control Orwell describes in *1984* (see previous Forms of Control bullets). Bring him up to date on American culture in 2024, while comparing and contrasting it to the world of *1984*.

Please choose at least two of these topics to write about in your letter:

- Social media
- Cancel culture
- Technology (e.g., GPS, cell phones, the internet, etc.)
- Political parties
- Entertainment (e.g., films, books, tv, music, etc.)
- Social movements (e.g., Black Lives Matter, LGBTQ, #MeToo, recent protests related to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, etc.)

In your letter, please **make references to specifics from the novel—including two short quotes—as well as specifics/examples from present-day society**, as you compare and contrast American culture to the world of *1984*. You may write in first-person (I/we).

Essay Format: Your letter should consist of a short introduction (“Dear George Orwell...”), at least two body paragraphs, and a short conclusion. Your letter should be a minimum of **2 pages** (no more than 3, please) in length (12 pt., Times New Roman, double-spaced, 1” margins). Please compose your essay on a **Google Doc** that you’ll submit to Google Classroom by or before the first day of class.

It goes without saying—though I will anyway—that your letter should be original and your own.

Please don’t hesitate to email me with questions: [ecoursey@wusd.org](mailto:ecoursey@wusd.org)

Enjoy your summer.

-Mr. Coursey