**Socratic Seminar—Dystopian Fiction [40 points]**

*Final 1984 Socratic Seminar*

**Quotes and Analysis score 2x raw points**

**#Protip:** Students who come with 5-10 quotes analyzed tend to score well.

1. Is 1984 a modern example of Greek Tragedy? What is the evidence for and against this claim? Why is or isn’t Winston a tragic hero? Can catharsis exist in dystopia?
2. Why was Orwell so concerned about ‘lies passing into history’? To what extent do we live in a Post-Truth world? What does this mean?
3. Analyze the motif of “2+2=5” in *1984*.
4. What thematic concern (loss of privacy, power, post-truth, state mandated violence, etc) from *1984* is most prevalent in our world today?
5. Discuss specific examples of Orwell showing that language is important to freedom in *1984*.
6. Do laws protect freedom in Orwell’s *1984*? In Orwell’s *Animal Farm*? Why or why not? To what extent do our laws protect us?
7. If Orwell’s book tells Winston’s story in 1984, what do you think that 1994 would be like in this Orwellian world?
8. How does Oceania use fear to repress undesirable behaviors? How effective is their fear-based method of governance? Where do you see fear-based rule happening in the real world and to what end?
9. Orwell published *1984* in 1949. How prophetic was this novel? How true is this novel? What did *Orwell* get wrong?
10. What is the role of women in *1984*? How does Orwell portray Mrs. Parsons, Julia, and other female characters? Does Oceania provide equality for women? Is Winston a misogynist? What about Orwell?
11. Discuss the motif of love in this novel. What does love mean to individual characters and to the government?
12. Are the means or the ends of a political agenda more important? What does Orwell’s narrative say? What do you think? What does the U.S. government think, in your opinion?
13. What moral and political lessons does *1984* teach its readers? How does Orwell make choices with language and literary conventions to support those lessons?
14. What things about our current existence is George Orwell warning us about? Is he right? Is *1984* worth reading? Is *1984* an important book? Is it a good book? Why or why not, in your opinion?
15. Would it be a bad thing if the members of the Inner Party forgot the real events of history for the made up ones? Why?
16. What roles does *Doublethink* play for the Party?
17. What flaws exist in the narrative structure of *1984?* What flaws exist in Goldstein’s book? What about Orwell’s inclusion of the text in *1984*? Is it necessary? Does it matter to readers why the Party is the way it is?
18. What does rebelling against the Party mean to Julia? What about to Winston?
19. To what extent is the Inner Party oppressed? If they are, does it make Big Brother’s **potential nonexistenc**e more sinister?? Is the Party’s view of power and control different from today’s authoritarians?
20. What is totalitarianism? What parts of totalitarianism do you see in the world today? How do truth and privacy play into totalitarianism?
21. To what extent are the characters in *1984* similar to *Homo-Sovieticus?* How does revisionist history, fake news, and unreliable information play a role in creating *Homo-Sovieticus*?
22. Which country is more Orwellian: China, Russia, Turkey, or Myanmar?
23. Discuss and juxtapose the ‘beautiful prole’ (2.10) and ‘ugly prole’ (3.1). Are the proles capable of rebelling, like Winston hopes? Also, what does Orwell see as ‘human-nature’? To what extent does he believe the Party can destroy this?